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## LORD PATTEN ON UK TRIP: A HUGE SUCCESS AND TRIUMPH

### **Says Westminster Speech Will Impact Public Debate for Years to Come**

LONDON, SEPT. 27, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org)).- The government representative who oversaw Benedict XVI's Sept. 16-19 journey to the United Kingdom has evaluated the trip as a "huge success" and a "triumph."

Lord Chris Patten, who was appointed by the prime minister in June to oversee the papal visit, told ZENIT that by "common consent Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Britain was a huge success."

"His four days with us in September were a triumph for His Holiness, for the Catholic Church and its partner Christian denominations, for other faith groups in our country and for all those from civil servants to police officers who helped to organize his visit," he said.

Lord Patten spoke of the "huge and enthusiastic crowds of well-wishers, Catholic and non-Catholic alike" who greeted the Pope.

"I will long remember the crowds in Edinburgh when he arrived, the throng along the Mall in London on his way to the Hyde Park prayer vigil and the mix of worshippers -- young, old, and from every race and class -- on all the pastoral occasions," he said.

Citing the role of Catholic education in the country and the government's partnership with the Church on certain issues, Lord Patten said that the visit "reminded us, in case we had forgotten, the role that faith groups play in our domestic life."

He affirmed that the Pope was "clearly impressed by the evidence that the Christian legacy is -- in his own words -- 'strong and still alive in every level of social life' in Britain."

Lord Patten called the Pope's series of speeches and homilies "remarkable," and said that he "challenged us all to observe the relationship between reason and religion and the importance of establishing an ethical foundation for political action and policy making in the public arena. Success is not just about advances in consumerism."

The government official made particular reference to the Pope's speech to representatives of British society at Westminster Hall. He said this address "will have a substantial impact on public debate for many years to come."

"So Pope Benedict's stay with us was in the most profound sense a visit to remember," Lord Patten concluded. "Some of its lessons and messages will reverberate down the years."  
[Reporting by Serena Sartini]

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On the Net:

Benedict XVI's U.K. visit: [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/travels/2010/index\\_regno-unito\\_en.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/travels/2010/index_regno-unito_en.htm)