



Thursday 3 July 2008: Lecture by the Lord Chief Justice at the London Muslim Centre

Opening and Closing Remarks of Robin Knowles CBE, QC, Chairman of Pro Bono in the LMC (and Chairman for the Lecture)

Opening Remarks

Thank you Dr Abdul Bari. And thank you London Muslim Centre.

Our immediate audience is very welcome. We welcome also a wider audience through the BBC, Sky, and a number of other television channels, as well as through the national, regional and local press.

Our immediate audience comprises Muslims and non-Muslims; members of the general public; leaders from politics, education, religion and journalism; judges, lawyers and students; ambassadors, doctors, academics, police officers and charity workers. Our wider audience will be equally diverse.

Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers is the Head of the Judiciary across England and Wales. He joins us with his wife Lady Phillips. His visit could not be more welcome, timely or important. Your Excellencies, members of the community, friends – the Lord Chief Justice.

Closing Remarks:

May I confine my closing remarks this evening as follows.

I pay public tribute to Khadija Ali and to Mizan Abdulrouf. We have them above all to thank for the initiative that is known as Pro Bono in the LMC. Pro Bono in the LMC has quietly been making sure that there is better access to legal help, and that the community has better knowledge of the law that affects it. This has brought non-Muslims into this great centre, and has enhanced the readiness of Muslims to access facilities outside it. It has been my privilege to look on as Mizan and Khadija have given themselves to this work. I have nothing but admiration for them, and for the many volunteers that assist them. And I have nothing but praise for London Muslim Centre, for Muslim Council of Britain and for London Borough of Tower Hamlets for supporting their work.

And it is their work that has led to tonight. So may I therefore move on to express gratitude to the Lord Chief Justice. If ever there was an important speech, the one we have just heard is it. May I suggest we have the opportunity not leave that speech here tonight. It is open to each of us to take with us what we have heard and commit to using it. Equality and understanding – every one of us can do something to improve equality and help understanding. That is the way to a strong, safe and fair future. The Lord Chief Justice affirms the commitment of the judiciary to it. Let our thanks to him be not just by our applause tonight but by our actions tomorrow. ...That said, perhaps we should not overlook the applause tonight! Lord Phillips, thank you