

*ECPR Capital Lecture Series*  
*Religion, Democracies and Civil Liberties*  
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**WELCOME REMARKS BY**  
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With the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the ideological confrontation between the rival superpowers, religion has coming back as an intervening variable of international and domestic politics. Once the world has become defrosted by the long term struggle between alternative models of social and political organization and once the world has been globalized through a shared pattern of economic production, new divisions have emerged at both the international and domestic level.

Some of those divisions have been mobilized by skilful political entrepreneurs, others have reflected deep-seated structural differences within the world community. The divisions between both religious and secular and authorities and within the different religious visions and faiths have got the centre stage in the public debate. Contrary to the secularist interpretation of human history, the international and domestic systems have had to face a challenge that it was supposed to become more and more irrelevant: how to accommodate the various religious faiths with the values of democracy and the requirements of a global governance coherent with the principles of mutual respect between different religious communities.

The LUISS School of Government (SoG) is happy to host the 2011 Capital Lecture of the ECPR on “Religion, democracy and civil liberties”. The SoG has been created with the aim of educating and training future public and academic elites able to better govern the international and domestic systems because both knowledgeable about the great challenges of our time and enlightened by an understanding of their moral underpinnings. We thus welcome the scholars, students and authorities participating to this intellectual and scientific initiative, sure as we are that it will enrich our comprehension of the complexity and the opportunities of the world we live in.