

Geoffrey Robertson QC to hand out NSS Secularist of the Year prize

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The National Secular Society is delighted to announce that human rights barrister Geoffrey Robertson QC will hand out the Secularist of the Year prize at its [Secularism 2019](#) conference.

Geoffrey is an academic, author, broadcaster and NSS [honorary associate](#) whose books include *The Case of the Pope*. The book highlights the Vatican's silencing of victims of paedophile priests and argues that the Vatican should not be considered a sovereign state.

Geoffrey has been counsel in many landmark cases in constitutional, criminal and media law in the courts of Britain and the commonwealth. He makes frequent appearances in the Privy Council and the European Court of Human Rights.

[Secularist of the Year](#) is an NSS prize which has been [awarded since 2005](#) to celebrate the outstanding groups and inspiring individuals advancing secularism and related human rights. This year's winner will be awarded £5,000.

The prize will be handed out on Saturday 18 May 2019 at the conclusion of the NSS's Secularism 2019 conference at The Tower Hotel in central London.

NSS chief executive Stephen Evans thanked Geoffrey for agreeing to hand out the prize.

"Geoffrey Robertson is eminently qualified and has a wealth of experience in fields directly relevant to the NSS's work.

"It's a privilege to have him as an honorary associate and it will be a privilege to hear him give his view on the role of secularism in defending human rights on 18 May."

Geoffrey is the final addition to a line-up of 10 speakers. The speakers also include journalist and author Nick Cohen, the lead commissioner for countering extremism Sara Khan and the UN's special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief Dr Ahmed Shaheed.

Rachel Laser, the CEO of the campaigning group Americans United for Separation of Church and State, will deliver the keynote address.

[Listen to the whole series.](#)

Secularism 2019: Reclaiming Religious Freedom

This conference will serve to highlight that true "religious freedom" means freedom of belief for people of all religions and none, and will also explore the limits of religious freedom when it impedes on other human rights, including bodily autonomy, equality and freedom of expression.

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