

Festival of Politics to debate Scotland's Place in the World



The ninth Festival of Politics gets underway today examining 'Scotland's Place in the World'. The three day festival takes place in the unique setting of the Scottish Parliament and explores what has defined Scotland's past and debates the big issues that will shape its future.

With sessions on defence, immigration, broadcasting, the power of small nations and Scotland's identity, this year's event brings together respected commentators and academics.

In a first for the Festival of Politics, the Scottish Parliament is also opening its doors and welcoming visitors to its own Festival café. This vibrant new space will allow festival-goers and participants to come together to continue the debate in an informal and relaxed way.

The Festival of Politics opens with a session led by Mark Muller QC examining how culture can connect people on a human level and provide solutions beyond the reach of politicians alone. The Festival café opens at 4pm that afternoon where visitors can browse exhibitions including the World Press Photo exhibition, caricatures by leading political cartoonist Frank Boyle and the works of five photographers including Kieran Dodds. Music will be provided by That Swing Sensation.

Saturday's events continue to push the debate, with sessions exploring the themes of the future of small nations in Europe, economics, broadcasting, and art. The Happy Lands film will be screened and the Scottish Youth Theatre will perform 'Now's

the Hour'. Jai McDowall performance in the Festival café will bring the day to a close.

Sunday is the final day of the Festival of Politics and closes with a session exploring the power of social media, followed by the Main Street Blues Duo in the Festival café.

FRIDAY 23 AUGUST

The Power of Cultural Diplomacy and of Small Nations in Overcoming Conflict

Friday 23 August, 16:30-18:00. £5.00/£3.50

This event will explore the power of cultural diplomacy in overcoming cultural conflict. Join chair Mark Muller QC, barrister and international mediator, Chair of the Bar Human Rights Committee, as he discusses the issues and explores the key role that small nations such as Scotland can play in world cultural diplomacy with panellists Manny Ansar, founder of the Festival in Exile; William Burdett-Coutts, Artistic Director Assembly Edinburgh; and US Ambassador Cynthia P Schneider, non-resident senior fellow in the Project on US Relations with the Islamic World at Brookings.

In association with Beyond Borders

Festival of Politics Partners

Now in its ninth year, the Scottish Parliament's Festival of Politics includes a three day programme of politics, music, art, theatre and debate under the theme of Scotland's Place in the World. Events take place on Friday 23 – Sunday 25 August at Holyrood, the home of the Scottish Parliament.

The Festival partners are Carnegie UK Trust and Cameron Presentations.

Programme availability and tickets

- Online via www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk
- A limited number of tickets are available via the Scottish

Parliament in person and via telephone on 0131 348 5200.

- Full details of the festival programme are available from www.festivalofpolitics.org.uk
- Hard copies of the programme are available from most Waterstones and Blackwells.

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