



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**MINISTRY FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE, SPORT & LEISURE**  
310 Main Street  
Gibraltar

**PRESS RELEASE**

No. 212/2008

Date. 17 September 2008

**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE**

The Minister with responsibility for Culture, the Hon Edwin Reyes, has sent a congratulatory message on behalf of the people of Gibraltar to Maestro Karel Mark Chichon on the occasion of his much acclaimed recent success at the renowned Vienna State Opera.

Last week, that is on 8<sup>th</sup> September, Karel Chichon conducted the world-famous and prestigious Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in their performance of Rossini's "Il Barbiere di Siviglia". This performance was highly praised by both the audience and critics alike and, consequently, Karel Chichon has already been offered contracts for future performances at the Vienna State Opera which includes Verdi's "Aida", "La Traviata" and Puccini's "Tosca". Another contract recently accepted by Karel is Bizet's "Carmen" to be performed, in a new production at the Teatro Massimo, in Palermo. Karel will soon commence preparations and rehearsals for these popular Operas once he completes his current engagements at the Moscow Conservatoire.

The Minister for Culture said he "is particularly proud of Karel's recent debut performance at the Vienna State Opera", and more so, "as only a handful of British Conductors (with Karel being the first Gibraltarian) have ever been honoured with the privilege of conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in such a significant and influential venue". Karel Chichon has now become the youngest ever British Conductor to perform at the Vienna State Opera and has, therefore, joined the ranks of distinguished British Conductors like Sir Colin Davis, Sir Simon Rattle, Sir Charles Mackerras and Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

Gibraltar's music lovers were very fortunate to have had a foretaste of Karel's talent and ability to conduct "Il Barbiere di Siviglia" as the Maestro conducted this same piece at St Michael's Cave, last November, as part of the Gibraltar Philharmonic Society's 2007 programme.

The Minister for Culture ended his congratulatory message to our Maestro Chichon by wishing him all the best for the future and reminding him of the many Gibraltarians who eagerly look forward to be enthralled by his next performance on the Rock.

**Editors Note:**

Photos of Maestro Karel Mark Chichon, are obtainable from Angelo Sanguinetti of the Gibraltar Philharmonic Society - telephone 200 72134 or mobile 56011000.