

BENETTON WANTS THE WORLD TO UNHATE



The **clothing** giant Benetton is once again in the **headlines** over a **controversial advertising campaign**. The company has a history of using **shocking ads** for its products. In the past it has used photos of two horses mating, an AIDS victim and a bloodied newborn baby on **billboards** and in magazines.

This time it has used **doctored** photos of world leaders looking like they are kissing. One of these shows what looks like Pope Benedict XVI brushing lips with Imam Ahmed el Tayyeb – one of Egypt's top religious leaders and imam of Cairo's al-Azhar. Benetton **pulled** the ad after **complaints** from the Roman Catholic Church. However, the Vatican has told its lawyers around the world to "take the proper legal measures" to stop further use.

Benetton's new ads are part of a campaign called "Unhate," which it says **aims** to "battle the culture of hate". Similar images show political rivals **seemingly** with locked lips. These include Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas kissing the Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, smooching North and South Korean leaders, US President Barack Obama kissing Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy with German Chancellor Angela Merkel. A **spokesman** for the Imam described the advertisement as "irresponsible and absurd," while the Vatican said it was "damaging not only to the dignity of the Pope and the Catholic Church but also to the feelings of believers".