

World Council of Churches

Letter to the heads of Muslim religious communities throughout the world

on the occasion of 'Id al-Fitr (end of Ramadan) 1431 H. / 2010 a.d.

Sent to Muslim leaders and dialogue partners on 8 September 2010

Your Eminences,
Your Excellencies,

Dear friends,

On the occasion of your celebration of *Eid al Fitr* at the ending of the month of Ramadan, in which the Holy Quran was revealed to Prophet Mohammad, we greet you in peace and friendship. May the Almighty God bless you in this significant season!

Religious celebrations such as this provide an opportunity for cultivating relationships of trust and respect, compassion and solidarity within our multi-faith communities. Remembering Christ's commandment to love our neighbours as ourselves, as a fellowship of Churches all over the world we take this occasion to stand by our Muslim sisters and brothers in interfaith solidarity.

The WCC is deeply concerned about reports that a small church in Gainesville, Florida plans to burn a copy of the Holy Quran on the anniversary of the 11 September attacks. This call has been firmly rejected and condemned by the WCC and its member churches, ecumenical partners, including in the United States as well as by people of faith and good will elsewhere.

Religious leaders have a unique role and the moral responsibility to work towards reconciliation and healing within their own communities and between communities. We are encouraged therefore, by the interfaith solidarity expressed by the churches, religious communities and leaders in the United States, including in the State of Florida.

I experienced such an act of solidarity last week, on the last Friday of the Ramadan, while participating in the *Iftar* hosted by the heads of churches of Jerusalem for their Muslim sisters and brothers, celebrating *al-Quds* day together and giving signs of genuine cooperation and standing together strongly for justice and peace. In this way the World Council of

Churches remains strongly committed to the dialogue between Muslims and Christians.

As companions on the long journey of interfaith dialogue and solidarity, I look forward in the years ahead to renewing such friendships and to developing many new ones.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General secretary
World Council of Churches