



World Council of Churches

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Geneva, December 21, 2016

Mrs Geraldine Hawkes
General Secretary
Ecumenical Council South Australia
Adelaide
Australia

Dear Mrs Hawkes,

I take this opportunity to bring you Advent Christmas greetings and to express my deep gratitude for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality I received during my recent visit to Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia. As you are aware it has been over a decade since the last visit of a WCC General Secretary to the two countries, so my October 2016 visit with you was historically significant for that reason.

I was inspired by the faithful and life-long commitment to the ecumenical movement I observed, as well as the depth of knowledge about global ecumenical issues and world affairs. Amongst the many gifts the churches in Australia and New Zealand have to share with the global ecumenical movement, and indeed the world, include good practices in cohesive multicultural communities and inter faith relations.

Thank you for the day's program which you organised in Adelaide. It was an honour to meet with church leaders from so many different backgrounds, and in particular the hospitality of Bishop Suriel and our Coptic Orthodox hosts was outstanding. Although my program was full I will remember fondly the day and the interactions we had together. Thank you to you and your ecumenical staff and team for your wonderful leadership and dedication which made the day such a huge success.

On behalf of the WCC, I pledge our commitment to continue to pray with and for you, your respective churches and ministries, and your ecumenical endeavours, as together we strive to respond to Christ's call to unity.

With my best wishes to you and ecumenical colleagues during this Advent Christmas season and wishing you a holy and blessed Christmas,

Your brother in Christ

Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit
General Secretary