



Geneva, 17 April 2023

Greetings to all Muslims at Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr

Dear Muslim sisters and brothers,

It is a joy to extend cordial greetings to Muslims around the world on behalf of the World Council Churches (WCC) as you have been observing the month of Ramadan and as you will celebrate Eid al-Fitr by the end of this week. May this be a blessed season for you.

The month of Ramadan, marked by fasting and praying, by reflecting and gathering as community, is an important part in Muslim life. This experience draws you closer to God and to one another, as you feel human need as well as human solidarity, and as you focus your attention on God's mercy.

Your devotion to God and your compassion for fellow human-beings is a profound spiritual practice, it is a social commitment and a witness to the wider society. It can be seen as an invitation to more deeply understand what it means to be human, and to strengthen the relationship within and across communities.

This year, your fasting coincides with the season of Lent and Easter in the life of Christians. This season has been for us a profound faith experience that deeply connects us with God and with one another.

Both Christians and Muslims are called to more deeply understand and live out what it means to be human in light of our faith. In a world marked by stark injustice, by de-humanising suffering and exploitation, by bloody conflict and war, by violence in homes and in streets, against children, women and men, people of faith are called to work for justice and peace, to care for the afflicted and downtrodden and to challenge the structures, mindsets and systems that have nurtured these appalling realities.

Last year, in September 2022, the Eleventh Assembly of the WCC at Karlsruhe (Germany) has underlined the importance of interreligious dialogue and cooperation. We affirmed that we want to join hands to respond together to the serious challenges which humanity and indeed the whole earth faces: "We also invite all people of faith and goodwill to trust, with us, that a different world, a world respectful of the living earth, a world in which everyone has daily bread and life in abundance, a decolonized world, a more loving, harmonious, just, and peaceful world, is possible." At this Assembly we were blessed to have a number of Muslim guests who followed our invitation to attend our assembly. Their presence and their participation was much appreciated.

Moreover, since I have taken office as general secretary at the beginning of this year, I have welcomed several Muslim visitors at the WCC offices in Geneva, both senior leaders as well as students. I also have been invited to meetings hosted by Muslim partners and friends. This experience of hospitality and embassy, of welcoming and being welcomed is an important dimension of Christian-Muslim relations. It is a cornerstone for building trust and for engaging in collaboration for justice, peace and reconciliation.

As the Ramadan season draws to a close and you anticipate celebrations of Eid al-Fitr I wish you:
Eid Mubarak! Blessed Eid-al Fitr!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Pillay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jerry" being more prominent and the last name "Pillay" following in a similar style.

Rev. Prof. Dr Jerry Pillay
General Secretary
World Council of Churches