

Jewish-Christian relations discussed at conference in Rome

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Reflections on the past, present and the future of Christian-Jewish relations were shared by Dr Clare Amos, the World Council of Churches (WCC) programme executive for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation, at a major conference of the International Council of Christians and Jews in Rome.

Held from 28 June to 1 July, the conference celebrated in particular the 50th anniversary year of *Nostra Aetate*, the fundamental Vatican II Declaration which opened a vital gateway for relations between Christians and people of other religions, especially Judaism.

In her presentation at the final plenary, Amos shared her perceptions on Christian-Jewish relations, taking into account the WCC's strong condemnation of anti-Semitism at its first ever Assembly at Amsterdam in 1948, reminding the conference participants of the shifting global context of Christianity.

“I am proud of the powerful language that the WCC used at its first Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 in repudiating anti-Semitism, ‘Antisemitism is sin against God and man.’ It is believed that this statement influenced voices in the Vatican, and so could be described even as a precursor to *Nostra Aetate*,” said Amos.

She added, “Speaking about the future of the Jewish-Christian relationship: this for me is a critical starting point. We need to realize the vast shift in Christianity – that increasingly its centre of gravity both in terms of demography and in terms of institutional power – is moving, or already has moved, to the Global South, to Asia, Africa and importantly, given we are here in Rome, also to Latin America. And it is vital that our Jewish dialogue partners also more fully realize this and appreciate its significance for our common future.”

The conference featured presentations and workshops. Members of the conference were also received by Pope Francis in a private audience. The Pope spoke of how *Nostra Aetate* “represents a definitive ‘Yes’ to the Jewish roots of Christianity and an irrevocable ‘No’ to anti-Semitism.”

[Full text of the speech by Dr Clare Amos](#)

[Contributions from the Assembly at the ICCJ website](#)

[WCC programme for inter-religious dialogue and cooperation](#)

The World Council of Churches promotes Christian unity in faith, witness and service for a just and peaceful world. An ecumenical fellowship of churches founded in 1948, today the WCC brings together 345 Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican and other churches representing more than 550 million Christians in over 120 countries, and works cooperatively with the Roman Catholic Church. The WCC general secretary is the Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, from the [Lutheran] Church of Norway.

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