

Ground-breaking Jewish/Christian/Muslim dialogue holds its 50th session

J-Wire Newsdesk, 20 December 2017

The Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims Jews (ANDCMJ) celebrated its 50th session by revisiting its history, discussing the concept of “light” in Christian, Jewish and Muslim liturgy and tradition, then lighting Chanukah candles and learning about the Jewish Festival of Lights, at Sydney’s Emanuel Synagogue.



50th Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims & Jews, The Emanuel Synagogue Sydney, 14 December 2017

Jeremy Jones, Director of Community and of International Affairs of the Australia/Israel & Jewish Affairs Council (AIJAC), Chaired the Dialogue on behalf of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry (ECAJ).

As President of the ECAJ, he was the original Chair in 2002, and Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins of Emanuel Synagogue and Sister Trish Madigan, a Catholic representative of the National Council of Churches’ delegation, were also part of both the first and the fiftieth discussions. Other members of the ECAJ delegation were Honorary Life Member Josie Lacey, Rabbi Ben Elton of the Great Synagogue, Rabbi Jacqueline Ninio of the Emanuel Synagogue, ECAJ Councillor Yair Miller, ECAJ Research Officer, Julie Nathan and ECAJ Executive Director Peter Wertheim.

The delegations from the National Council of Churches and the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils also represented internal diversity from those Abrahamic faiths.

Jeremy Jones outlined the history and achievements of the Dialogue, which had been meeting informally but became public after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September, 2001.

“We perceived a need to demonstrate that we could work together for the common good, and the record shows that we have made a significant contribution in Australia, the Asia/Pacific region and globally”, Mr Jones said.

The meeting was enhanced by the presence of participants in the Australian-Indonesian Muslim Exchange Programme, who were completing a visit which had included Melbourne and Canberra. The Indonesians actively engaged on the subject of light, with particular reference to Muslim traditions relating to Moonlight.

Earlier in the day, the Muslim delegation had been given a tour of the Sydney Jewish Museum by Jeremy Jones, and had conducted afternoon prayers in the Museum before making their first visit to a synagogue.