



Engaging with Europe's pluralist reality, Foundations for Action

The EEA wishes to stimulate prayer, reflection and positive action to strengthen healthy relationships in pluralist cultural Europe. Our actions are guided by the following opinions:-

Europe has been profoundly shaped by Christianity, though not exclusively. Europe is now home to many cultures and likely to become more so. There are worrying signs of growing suspicion of those of different cultures and faiths, especially Jews and Muslims.

Many of the current international events that dominate our news are sometimes interpreted as a struggle between Islam and the West. Muslims generally assume the West is Christian. These beliefs challenge us to pay special attention to how Christians relate to Muslims in Europe.

History and current affairs provide plenty of stories of injustices committed by and to both Christians and Muslims. Hurt and fear have historic roots.

Islam and Christianity are both missionary faiths. Muslims and Christians would like to see Europe become full of believers of their own faith. Other worldviews in Europe also want to expand their influence (e.g. radical secularism).

“Muslims” are a hugely varied series of communities and individuals. Muslims do not all think or do the same thing.

Scripture exhorts us to love and welcome those regarded as “foreign” and treat them as neighbours. It also implies that those of other cultures should adhere to the laws of their host country.

Evangelical Christians are deeply concerned about the general lack of religious freedom in Muslim countries. The EEA believes that freedom of belief must be protected for people of all faiths and worldviews. At the same time, all should exercise their freedoms with responsibility and sensitivity.

Christians are called to proclaim and live the Gospel for it is relevant to people of all faiths and none. They are called to be salt and light: and to be part of the answer to the fears, hurts and political tensions in Europe today. The EEA encourages Europe's Christians to pray, to befriend neighbours of all faiths and none, and to reflect on very real socio-political problems.

The EEA is not naïve about the real challenges. At the same time, the EEA encourages Christians to reject fear and promote hope. Christianity is a relational faith. Christians are, empowered by God's love, called to build healthy relationships and to help create a context for others to do the same.

EEA's Authorisation Team, Spring 2007.