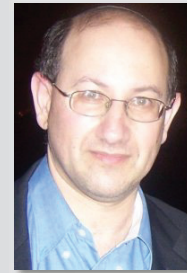


Jeremy Jones AM

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Jeremy Jones AM has researched, analysed, written and lectured on human rights issues including racism, antisemitism and religious freedom, and been a leading figure in interfaith dialogue in Australia and internationally, for more than thirty years. He is widely published and quoted, and has been a delegate to, and plenary conference speaker at, major international conferences in countries in Africa, West, South and South-East Asia, Europe, the Americas and the Pacific region on issues relating to social cohesion in multicultural societies. He is a co-chair of the Global Forum for Combating Antisemitism and his honours include the 2007 Australian Human Rights Medal and Membership in the Order of Australia in 2005.

Building Social Cohesion in a Religiously Diverse Society

This paper will consider the way religious affiliation can be an obstacle to social cohesion and alternatively can be used to contribute to an inclusive, harmonious society. It will assess the successes and failures of thirty years of formal interfaith dialogue in Australia, with emphasis on the success of dialogue in building relationships and in developing strategies to deal with bigotry and prejudice. Recent research in to attitudes towards "the other" will be surveyed; It will consider the way adherents of different faiths have jointly navigated the complex territory of the intersection of minority religious practice with majority culture, reaction to militant secularism and the complexities of bigotry which invokes religious justification. The paper will include reference to recent deliberations of the Australian National Dialogue of Christians, Muslims & Jews on the utility of formal dialogue and to the debate at the 2015 Global Forum on Combating Antisemitism on the role of organised religion in contributing to social cohesion in general and specifically in combating prejudice.

