

## FIVE THOUGHTS

- 1 A number of people have raised concerns about the EU not taking religious bodies seriously enough. They need to be aware that Article 17 of the Lisbon Treaty commits the institutions to “open, regular and transparent” dialogue with churches and religious communities. That commitment needs to be preserved and enhanced because churches and religious communities are grounded in localities and have many insights to contribute.
- 2 We cannot emphasise enough that the EU was in its origins a peace project making countries’ economies so interdependent that they could not go to war again. Too often, the arguments are reduced to “the price of fish” (or any other commodity). The anxiety which young people feel about security means that the EU must revive itself as a peace project and a leader in the fight against climate change.
- 3 Even if some member states of the EU were not colonial powers, Europe as a whole benefitted from the fruits of colonialism and slavery. This calls the EU to treat states in the Southern part of the world as equals and partners and be willing to work for just terms of trade.
- 4 Europe is one of the birthplaces of human rights and it needs to set an example in their implementation in Europe and to spread them through its actions and policies in the wider world.
- 5 Europe needs to recognise the changing geopolitical landscape and, in doing so, develop its common foreign policy which should be based on a realistic assessment of trends, ethical values and the pursuit of the common good.

*Prior to his retirement, Keith Jenkins was Associate General Secretary of the Conference of European Churches and Director of its Church and Society Commission.*