

Report of the Meeting of Primates of the Anglican Communion

April 17, 2002

International Study Centre, Canterbury

10-17 April 2002

The concluding day of the 2002 meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion was devoted to a point-by-point discussion of a report of the meeting which reflects both the spirit and the substance of their work over the six days in Canterbury. The report is included here, along with an Action Plan which points to their ongoing commitments.

1. The Primates, as the spiritual leaders of the 38 Provinces of the Anglican Communion, met from 10 April to 17 April 2002, at the newly constructed International Study Centre in the Close adjacent to Canterbury Cathedral. The Centre was officially opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent on the last day of the meeting.
2. This was the last meeting of Primates to be chaired by Archbishop George Carey, who retires as Archbishop of Canterbury at the end of October 2002. It was thus very appropriate that this particular meeting was held at Canterbury. During the course of the meeting the Primates took the opportunity to bid farewell to Archbishop and Mrs. Carey and to thank them for all they have contributed to the life of the Anglican Communion over the last eleven years. The Primates wished them both every blessing and abundant happiness in retirement. At a very enjoyable function in the Deanery hosted by the Very Revd Robert Willis on Sunday 14 April, a presentation was made to the Careys by the Primates.
3. God has entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation. As Primates we are conscious of this call at a time of tension in the world and in the Communion. The Primates' Meeting took place in the context of prayer and deepening communion. Primates were able to worship each day in Canterbury Cathedral, where they celebrated the Eucharist together and joined in the regular Cathedral Evensong. Bible Studies each morning on the theme of "Reconciliation", were based on a selection of Johannine texts. These studies were led, as at the previous two Primates' Meetings, by Professor David Ford of Cambridge University. Bible study took place in the context of Morning Prayer, and was followed by group discussion and prayer. The experience of worship and shared Bible study has clearly become an important dynamic in welding the Primates together in a spirit of prayerfulness, mutual listening, and grappling together to discern the will of God through the breaking open of God's Word. The deliberations of the meeting were thus grounded in a profound experience of our communion in God the Holy Trinity.
4. The meeting was convened against the background of the horrendous escalation of the violence in the Middle East, the continuing war against terrorism in Afghanistan and the legacy of the trauma of September 11. The Primates prayed earnestly for peace and heard an impassioned plea for assistance from the Rt Revd Riah H. Abu El-Assal, the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem. A statement of support for suffering Christians, and for Muslims and Jews of goodwill, and calling on the leadership of Palestine and Israel, and all world leaders, to make a more concerted and

urgent commitment to achieving a just and lasting peace in the Middle East is appended to this report (Appendix I - [ACNS2955]).

5. The first major topic of the business agenda was to receive a report of the Consultation of Anglican Communion Legal Advisors, which met at Canterbury from 6 - 13 March 2002. The formation of this Consultation was an initiative of the Primates' Meeting of 2001 at Kanuga, North Carolina, USA, following a presentation by Professor Norman Doe of the Centre for Law and Religion at the University of Wales, Cardiff, and the Revd Canon John Rees, Registrar of the Province of Canterbury. This year the Primates were pleased to receive a report of a representative group of more than twenty Church Lawyers from around the Communion who had clearly worked harmoniously and very productively.

The Legal Advisers' Consultation had identified an initial list of forty-four shared principles of canon law common to the Churches of the Communion, covering

Order in the Church
Ecclesiastical Government
Ministry
Doctrine, Liturgy and Rites
Church Property
Inter Anglican Relations

In addition, the Consultation's Report identified a list of fifteen topics representing legal issues on which further work may need to be done. The Primates responded to this Report and sought to prioritise topics for the group to address at a future meeting.

6. The Primates recognized that the unwritten law common to the Churches of the Communion and expressed as shared principles of canon law may be understood to constitute a fifth "instrument of unity" along with the four instruments identified in The Virginia Report of the Inter Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (1997) - the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates Meeting, and the Anglican Consultative Council. Given that law may be understood to provide a basic framework to sustain the minimal conditions which allow the Churches of the Communion to live together in harmony and unity, the observances of the ministry of Word and Sacrament call us all to live by a maximal degree of communion through grace. It is clear that the Churches' legal advisers have a very important role to play, both in the internal life of the respective member Churches and in the life of the Churches together as a world-wide Communion. The Primates enthusiastically thanked those who had worked so effectively to produce the Report and endorsed the need for further work to be done.
7. Between two sessions of the Meeting that considered the Legal Advisers' Consultation Report there was a session of theological reflection on the nature of the Church and her mission in the world. Stimulating papers were read by the Most Revd Rowan Williams, Primate of Wales and the Most Revd Michael Peers, Primate of Canada. These broke fresh ground in relation to the possibility of developing new ecclesial structures so as to free the Churches of the Communion for more effective mission in the context of a rapidly changing world. Reflection on these papers

highlighted the need for Primates to be open to the development of new patterns of ministry within the inherited legal framework of our tradition. For example, non-geographical networks within our geographically structured dioceses, and perhaps even transcending diocesan boundaries along the lines of the work of religious orders with specific ministry commitments, were considered. A think tank was proposed to do some basic work on the exploration of these possibilities.

8. On each of the first three nights of the Meeting, the collegial leadership of the Primates, in the unity of their common mission, was deepened by the sharing of pastoral experiences, as each Primate addressed the question of "How we live with issues that challenge us." Each Primate of the Communion was thus given the opportunity to focus on experienced tensions and difficulties and the means of resolving them. We were also encouraged by stories of new hopes and accounts of Churches rising to meet new challenges in ministry and mission. Reports on the local pastoral situation in each Province were received in this way.
9. The Primates also met with the Archbishops' Appointments Secretary, Mr Tony Sadler, and the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary, Mr William Chapman, as Joint Secretaries of the Crown Appointments Commission. The Primates noted with satisfaction that the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council is also a member of the Commission. This Commission is charged with the work of appointing the next Archbishop of Canterbury. First the composition of the Crown Appointments Commission was outlined to the Primates along with details of the process to be followed for the election of two candidates whose names will be submitted to the Prime Minister of Great Britain.

Primates were then invited to share their perceptions of the issues and challenges facing the Anglican Communion with a view to identifying the qualities most desired in the next Archbishop. The Primates appreciated both the opportunity to contribute to the process and the frankness of the exchange.

10. The Report of the Primates' Working Group on Theological Education was presented by Ms. Sue Parks of SPCK. This working group resulted from the Action Plan of the 2001 Primates' Meeting at Kanuga, following a paper presented by the Revd Professor Dan Hardy on the need for the Churches of the Communion to receive advice on such matters as the formation of the Church's leadership in holiness, truth, wisdom, and spirituality as well as acquiring knowledge. The Group also addressed the need for the sharing of educational resources across the Communion, including consideration of the distribution of resources over the internet. The Report urged the Primates to develop a clear strategy to improve the quality of the theological education of both clergy and laity and to develop priorities and means for providing for the delivery of theological education, particularly where resources are limited. The Primates also recognised the need for the in-service training of bishops and for the need for them to be as well equipped theologically as possible in order to exercise their teaching office with integrity and credibility. In the context of the exuberant individualism of contemporary society the Primates recognized the responsibility for all bishops to be able to articulate the fundamentals of faith so as to maintain the Church in truth. A statement of the Primates in relation to fundamental doctrine is attached to this Report. (Appendix II - [ACNS2960]). The Primates resolved to pursue the re-developing of

theological education by appointing a small strategic planning group to continue this work and report back to the next Primates' Meeting. The Report may be downloaded from the Anglican Communion website.

11. Addressing Global issues:

(a) Archdeacon Taimalelagi Fagamalama Tuatagaloa-Matalavea, the Anglican Observer at the UN addressed the gathering, reviewing her work to date. She stressed the importance of the Global Anglican Congress on the Stewardship of Creation to be held in Johannesburg the week before the UN Summit, from 19 - 23 August 2002. She also drew attention to the need to observe and contribute to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010). In order to serve the Communion effectively the Observer asked for the assistance with providing solid facts to allow her to deal effectively with any issues she is asked to bring before the UN and the Ambassadors.

(b) Christian Muslim Relations. The Rt Revd Michael Nazir-Ali, Bishop of Rochester, one of the three Bishop Presidents of the Network on Inter Faith Concerns for the Anglican Communion NIFCON (together with the Rt Revd Josiah Idowu-Fearon, representing Africa, and the Rt Revd Kenneth Fernando, retired Bishop of Colombo, representing Asia), addressed the Primates on the historical origins of Islam. Amongst other matters he made the point that there is no time in history in which Muslims have not had dealings with Christians; also there has been a long history of theological dialogue between Christians and Muslims. From the very beginning the Constitution of Medina gave Christians and Jews equal rights with Muslims in the State of Medina. Bishop Nazir-Ali suggested that this is the most original way there is of being an Islamic State.

Bishop Nazir-Ali also outlined a suggested agenda of key items for the future Christian/Islamic dialogue. His paper is available on the Anglican Communion website.

(c) The Most Revd Peter Akinola, the Primate of Nigeria, addressed the question of Shariah law in some states in Nigeria, which is threatening national integrity. In these states Christians are discriminated against. This has given rise to a concerted Christian opposition to the movement towards making all Nigeria a Muslim nation.

(d) The Archbishop of Canterbury reported on the Anglican Communion dialogue with the esteemed centre of Muslim learning in Cairo, al-Azhar al-Sharif. Dr Carey is seeking names of suitably qualified Anglican scholars for this dialogue. The next meeting is set for 11 September 2002. This initiative received the endorsement of the Primates. Dr Carey concluded his remarks by making a point about reciprocity: There are 1500 mosques in the United Kingdom, but in many parts of the world churches are burnt down, and freedom of worship is not allowed. Our hope is that Christians in Muslim countries will receive the hospitality which Christians seek to secure for Muslims in countries where they are in the minority.

12. HIV/AIDS. The Primate of Southern Africa, Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane reported on progress in planning the continuing response to HIV/AIDS for the Anglican Communion. The Archbishop introduced a power-point presentation by the Revd Canon Ted Karpf and the Revd

Colin Jones, which again reminded the Primates of the horrendous statistical dimensions of this pandemic, and of the human tragedy and havoc it is creating. Primates were concerned to learn that, after two decades in which the world community has been struggling to address the problem of HIV/AIDS, some governments are still in denial and are thus not acting decisively to initiate effective HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programmes. In some countries the Church is experiencing difficulty in persuading governments that the situation is as seriously threatening to human survival and well being as it is. Archbishop Ndungane urged that, in addition to admitting its failure, it is clearly time for the Church to become more assertive in its response to this problem. The Church should be less prone to silence, less judgmental, less fearful, and more strategically committed to a global Anglican response to preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and care for those affected by the disease. The Church should support and encourage joint effort between church agencies and governments to provide education programmes, and adequate care of those infected and living with it by ensuring access to counselling, treatment, essential pharmaceuticals, and appropriate medical assistance. A Primatial statement on this crisis is appended to this Report (Appendix III- [ACNS2961]). A Step by Step Guide to HIV/AIDS for the Anglican Communion can be found on the Communion website.

13. A report on the Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) was given by the Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Archbishop of the West Indies. IASCER reports regularly to the Primates of the Communion as it is a Commission mandated to oversee our ecumenical dialogues, and therefore deals with many issues of faith and order that touch upon the life of the Communion as a whole. In his report Archbishop Gomez reviewed the major international dialogues in which the Communion is currently engaged. These are with the Baptist World Alliance, the Lutheran World Federation, the Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Orthodox Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. He also pointed out some significant developments in national and regional ecumenical agreement in several countries around the world.
14. Archbishop Peter Carnley of Australia then presented a report on Roman Catholic relations, concentrating on the work of the new International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) which came out of the May 2000 Meeting of Roman Catholic and Anglican Bishops in Mississauga, Canada. The specific tasks of IARCCUM are: to oversee the preparation of a Joint Declaration of Agreement between the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church; to promote and monitor the reception of ARCIC agreements; and to develop strategies for translating the degree of spiritual communion reached between us into visible and practical outcomes. The Primates endorsed the work of this new Commission and a statement is appended (Appendix IV [ACNS2962]).
15. The Revd Canon David Hamid, the Anglican Communion's Director of Ecumenical Affairs and Studies, gave an update on the study of the Inter Anglican Theological and Doctrinal Commission (IATDC) on "the nature, basis and sustaining of communion in the Church with particular reference to the Anglican Communion". The IATDC has invited Primates, Bishops, Theological Colleges and interested individuals to respond to 4 key questions that will guide its study at this stage. The questions are available on the Anglican Communion website and responses are requested by 31 May 2002.

16. The Primates are grateful to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury and to the staff of the International Study Centre who provided such a fitting venue for the meeting and whose hospitality and service to the participants has been most warm and accommodating. They thank also the Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council and the staff of the Communion and Lambeth Palace for their untiring support and efficient management.

17. The Primates thank God for the deepening unity that the meeting has experienced. We leave the meeting determined to wrestle together with challenging issues, and steadfastly affirm our commitment to work as one Communion to the glory of God and in service of his Kingdom.

Source: <http://www.aco.org/acns/news.cfm/2002/4/17/ACNS2959>

Statement of Anglican Primates on the Middle East

We, the Primates of the Anglican Communion representing 75,000,000 Anglican Christians in 164 countries of the world, gathered in Canterbury, have taken counsel following a message concerning the escalating conflict in Israel/Palestine which we received from the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem the Right Reverend Riah H Abu El-Assal. This was delivered to us by the President Bishop of the Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East, the Most Reverend Iraj Mottahedeh.

We are deeply shocked and saddened by the spiralling violence which is creating more widows, orphaned children, mourning fathers and mothers, and which is intensifying hatred and bitterness on both sides of the conflict. We pledge our solidarity with all who have suffered loss of life, injury, and destruction of property in the area.

We denounce the shelling, suicide bomb attacks, and military incursions as both evil and futile. We see no way in which such acts can lead to peace with justice and security for the Holy Land and its peoples.

We urge the leaders of the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to act without delay to break the spiral of retaliation on both sides of the conflict. Every death puts resolution, reconciliation and justice further off. In particular, we urge the Government of Israel to cease activities in the occupied territories that threaten the lives of so many innocent civilians and put the human rights of so many communities at risk. We also call for an end to suicide bombing and for a clear condemnation of the morality of such acts from leaders of all faiths in the Middle East.

We fully endorse The First Alexandria Declaration of the Religious Leaders of the Holy Land (21 January 2002) which declares that according to the Muslim, Christian and Jewish faith traditions, the killing of innocents in the name of God is a desecration of his Holy Name, and unite ourselves to the pledges and commitments of the religious leaders contained in the statement.

We call upon Anglicans and people of good will everywhere to unite in earnest prayer for an end to the violence and bloodshed.

We pledge our prayerful support to all Christian people, the Patriarchs and Heads of Churches and the leaders of other faiths in Jerusalem.

We commit ourselves and our Churches to support the efforts of all religious, national and international leaders who are seeking a just peace.

Canterbury
14 April 2002

Source: <http://www.aco.org/acns/news.cfm/2002/4/14/ACNS2955>

Statement of Anglican Primates on the Doctrine of God

Report of the Meeting of Primates of the Anglican Communion: Appendix II

In the light of current challenges to historic Christian doctrine from various quarters, and of the growing influence of different kinds of "post-modern" theory which question the very idea of universal and abiding truth, the Primates wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Anglican Communion to the truths of the fundamental teachings of the faith we have received from Holy Scripture and the Catholic Creeds.

1. Our God is a living God

We believe that God is real and active, creating and sustaining the universe by power and freedom, and communicating with us out of unlimited holy love so that we may share his joy. God is infinitely more than a thought in our minds or a set of values for human beings.

2. Our God is an incarnate God

We believe that God the eternal Son became human for our sake and that in the flesh and blood of Jesus of Nazareth God was uniquely present and active. All claims to knowledge of God must be brought to Christ to be tested. Through Christ alone we have access to the Father. We believe that Christ's Resurrection is the act of God in raising to life the whole identity and reality of Jesus. We believe that it is not simply a perception or interpretation based on the subjective experience of the apostles.

3. Our God is a triune God

We believe that by the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we are able to share the eternal intimacy and delight which is the very life of God in the mutual love of three divine persons.

4. Our God is a faithful God

We believe that God is always as he shows himself to be in Jesus. In Holy Scripture we have a unique, trustworthy record of the acts and promises of God. No other final criteria for Christian teaching can supplant this witness to the self consistency of God through the ages.

5. Our God is a saving and serving God

We believe that God calls us into the Church and commissions us to proclaim and work in active hope for the dawning of God's kingdom in the world.

Source: <http://www.aco.org/acns/news.cfm/2002/4/17/ACNS2960>

Statement of Anglican Primates on HIV/AIDS

Report of the Meeting of Primates of the Anglican Communion:
Appendix III

We, the Primates of the Anglican Communion, gathered in Canterbury, have received a report from the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the African continent. The presentation was led by the Archbishop of Cape Town, the Most Revd Njongonkulu Ndungane, who was mandated by the Primates in March 2001 to co-ordinate a Communion-wide strategy to address this immense global crisis of human suffering.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic affects every region of the world. It is, however, the poor who are hit hardest. It is the poorer nations, already weakened by the burden of debt, who need our support the most. This problem is not localised in one area of the world. It is a problem of increasing seriousness across the Global South, in many countries of Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America. However, we have given particular attention in our commitment to the continent of Africa because it is in African nations that women, men and children are living with and dying from HIV/AIDS in greatest numbers. It is in Africa that the disease's destructive effects on social, and economic growth and development are most deeply felt.

We are grateful to Archbishop Ndungane for the leadership he has accepted on our behalf and commend the other African Primates and Churches for the direction they have given us. Recognising his strategic position within South Africa and within the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa, we are pleased to re-mandate the Archbishop of Cape Town to spearhead our policy development and global strategy.

We raise our voices to call for an end to silence about this disease – the silence of stigma, the silence of denial, the silence of fear. We confess that the Church herself has been complicit in this silence. When we have raised our voices in the past, it has been too often a voice of condemnation. We now wish to make it clear that HIV/AIDS is not a punishment from God. Our Christian faith compels us to accept that all persons, including those who are living with HIV/AIDS, are made in the image of God and are children of God.

Our concern over this crisis arises from our ministry as pastors of God's people. We are called to this ministry by our God, the God of love. As pastors we are called to walk with those who are affected by this disease, to offer support and compassion and bring the Christian message of love, forgiveness and hope to the world. We are inspired and guided by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ who ministered to all without fear or discrimination.

We also have a solemn duty to speak a word to the world of the scale of this crisis. We wish to encourage collective action with government and non-governmental organisations, development programmes, health and pharmaceutical agencies and with Christians and people of good will everywhere. We believe that such co-ordinated and joint action is the only way to address the enormity of this challenge, and express our regret that certain governments continue to criticise those who lead us in this prophetic witness.

We would remind both governments and pharmaceutical companies that it is a basic human right that all who require treatment have access to that treatment. We affirm, therefore, that safe and effective pharmaceutical treatment should be more widely available to alleviate suffering and extend life, and join our voice to the Secretary General of the United Nations in his plea that the profit motive not override the urgent humanitarian need for readily available and cheaper drugs.

We call upon our Churches to stand compassionately with those who are living with the disease, those who mourn and those who are dying. We encourage a realistic and Christian approach to funeral practices, so that families are not pauperised by bereavement.

We seek to guide and educate our people in prevention of the disease and encourage Christian teaching which is frank and factual about abstinence and faithfulness. We reaffirm the teaching of the Church on marriage and commend the value of this God-given sign of committed and covenantal love.

We are committed to develop a global response to the AIDS pandemic and encourage a sharing of financial resources through the Anglican Consultative Council to provide assistance to Churches seeking to develop strategies and programmes to address this crisis. We will also seek to facilitate access to international funds which will support such programmes.

We commend the six-fold response to AIDS which has been agreed by the All Africa Anglican AIDS Planning Framework to Churches beyond Africa in their strategic planning and policy development to confront this crisis and minister among all affected with this disease.

We believe that for this task Christians are sustained by the love of God the Father, the work and example of our Lord Jesus Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit.

Canterbury

16 April 2002

Source: <http://www.aco.org/acns/news.cfm/2002/4/17/ACNS2961>

Statement of Anglican Primates on IARCCUM

Report of the Meeting of Primates of the Anglican Communion:
Appendix IV

Statement of Anglican Primates on the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission (IARCCUM)

We, the Primates of the Anglican Communion, meeting in Canterbury from 10–17 April 2002, welcome the statement Communion in Mission and the accompanying action plan resulting from the international meeting of Roman Catholic and Anglican bishops in May 2000 in Mississauga, Canada. We are grateful for the initiative of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Edward Cassidy which was instrumental in bringing about this milestone in Anglican-Roman Catholic relations.

We also welcome the establishment of the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission which will oversee the preparation of a Common Statement and which will take other steps to further growth towards unity in mission.

We encourage our Provinces and Churches to give their support to this new stage on the journey to full visible unity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion.

Source: <http://www.aco.org/acns/news.cfm/2002/4/17/ACNS2962>