

**Towards an Understanding of the Purpose and Scope of the Primates' Meeting**  
**A Working Document**  
**Approved by the Primates Meeting January 29, 2011**

**1 Purpose**

2 The Primates' Meeting is a gathering of the Primates and Moderators of the Churches of the  
3 Anglican Communion convened by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

4 Archbishop Coggan was the first to call for "meetings of the Primates of the Communion reasonably  
5 often, for leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation ..." (Lambeth Conference 1978, Report, p  
6 123.)

7 *The Windsor Report* expressed the hope that the Primates' Meeting 'should be a primary forum for  
8 the strengthening of the mutual life of the provinces, and be respected by individual primates and  
9 the provinces they lead as an instrument through which new developments may be honestly  
10 addressed'. (*The Windsor Report*, Appendix One, paragraph 5)

11 By God's grace we strive to express that unity in diversity which is the Spirit's work among the  
12 Churches of the Communion and the community of Primates. That unity is expressed and fostered  
13 by our study of the Scriptures together, prayer and the celebration of the Eucharist. We look to the  
14 Spirit to nurture our bonds of affection as we endeavour to work together with the other  
15 Instruments of Communion in the service of the Gospel.

**16 Our Life and Work Together**

17 The Primates:

- 18 - bring the realities, expectations and hopes of the context from which they come, thus
- 19 representing the local to the global
- 20 - learn the realities, expectations and hopes of other contexts, and
- 21 - carry home and interpret the global to the local

22 The Primates together:

- 23 - give leadership and support as the Communion lives out the Marks of Mission<sup>1</sup>
- 24 - seek continuity and coherence in faith, order, and ethics
- 25 - provide a focal point of unity
- 26 - address pressing issues affecting the life of the Communion
- 27 - provide guidance for the Communion
- 28 - address pressing issues of global concern
- 29 - are advocates for social justice in these situations

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<sup>1</sup> The Five Marks of Mission were summarized in the *Missio* report of 1999 and reiterated in *The Anglican Covenant*. They are:

To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom  
To teach, baptize and nurture new believers  
To respond to human need by loving service  
To seek to transform unjust structures of society  
To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

30 We endeavour to accomplish our work through:

- 31 - prayer
- 32 - fellowship
- 33 - study and reflection
- 34 - caring for one another as Primates and offering mutual support
- 35 - taking counsel with one another and with the Archbishop of Canterbury
- 36 - relationship building at regular meetings
- 37 - being spiritually aware
- 38 - being collegial
- 39 - being consultative
- 40 - acknowledging diversity and giving space for difference
- 41 - being open to the prophetic Spirit
- 42 - exercising authority in a way that emerges from consensus-building and mutual discernment
- 43 leading to persuasive wisdom
- 44 - the work of the Primates' Standing Committee<sup>2</sup>

45 **Commitment**

46 In our common life in Christ we are passionately committed to journeying together in honest  
47 conversation. In faith, hope, and love we seek to build our Communion and further the reign of God.

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<sup>2</sup> The Primates Meeting of 2011 approved a document entitled 'Standing Committee' which outlined the role and purpose of the Primates' Standing Committee.

## **Standing Committee**

- **Role Towards the Primates Meeting**
  - Care for the life and spirit of the Primates Meeting between meetings
  - Acts as a consultative council for the Archbishop of Canterbury:
    - Has possibility to speak on behalf of the Primates Meeting
    - Pastoral role
  - Sustain and strengthen relationships among all Primates and connect with other Instruments of the Communion
  - Help to shape the Primates Meetings
  - Ongoing bridge building role between Primates Meeting and the regions



# THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

## **A Letter to the Churches of the Anglican Communion from the Primates of the Anglican Communion following their Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, between 24 and 30 January 2011**

During our meeting we discussed the nature and prevalence of gender based violence.<sup>1</sup> Building on consideration of the issue during the Council of Anglican Provinces in Africa (CAPA) conference of bishops in 2010, we shared stories of violence against women and girls from both the southern and northern hemispheres, including an account of unremitting sexual violence against women and girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo as a legacy of conflict, and of domestic and many other forms of abuse in the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. We acknowledged with grief that gender based violence is a global phenomenon and that all but a very small percentage of such violence is perpetrated by men against women, with devastating effects on individuals, families and society.

In considering the pervasive nature of violence against women and girls, our churches must accept responsibility for our own part in perpetuating oppressive attitudes towards women. In penitence and faith we must move forward in such a way that our churches truly become a living witness to our belief that both women and men are made in the image of God. To think and behave in ways that do not live out this belief but disempower and marginalise, is to mar the divine image and therefore to offend humanity and God.

In recent years we have seen a growing resolve in the Anglican Communion to engage with the eradication of gender based violence. In 2009 the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) resolved to support the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls and encouraged all Provinces to participate in programmes and events that promote the rights and welfare of women, particularly as expressed in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. The ACC also called on the churches to take appropriate steps to assist the healing of indigenous families, including the protection of women and children from violence and human trafficking.<sup>2</sup> The bishops gathered at the Lambeth Conferences of 1998 and 2008 considered violence within and beyond the Church and asked the churches to engage in raising public awareness about the victimisation and exploitation of women and children. We noted that several of the official Anglican Networks have raised violence against women and girls as a priority issue for their own memberships and for the broader Communion.

We were heartened to know that there is an increasing amount of work being undertaken in the Communion as churches engage with awareness raising, advocacy, changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence, the care and reintegration into society of victims/survivors of violence, and work

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<sup>1</sup> Defined by the United Nations in 1993 as '...violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.'

<sup>2</sup> ACC Resolutions 14.33: International Anglican Women's Network, and 14.19: Anglican Indigenous Network

with perpetrators of violence. We thank God for these efforts and rejoice in them, and we commit to strengthening our mission and ministry in these areas.

To this end we have asked the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, in association with the Networks and the Anglican Alliance, to continue to map activities already responding to gender based violence, and to identify theological and practical resources and consider how these might be made broadly available for reference and adaptation in other local contexts.

As individual Primates we are committed, in each of our Provinces, to raise the profile of Millennium Development Goal 3 ('Promote gender equality and empower women'); to affirm and pray for God's blessing on initiatives already in place in our dioceses and parishes in response to violence against women and girls; to gather other church and faith leaders together to discern what we might say and do together; and to attend to the training of clergy and pastors so that they are aware of the nature and dynamics of gendered violence and how certain attitudes and behaviours can be challenged and transformed. We are also committed to ensuring the development and accessibility of local, contextual and accessible resources, including liturgies, for example, for 25 November which is the annual International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women as well as White Ribbon Day,<sup>3</sup> and the first day of the global '16 Days Activism for the Elimination of Violence against Women'. Furthermore, through teaching and example, we will work with our young people so that our boys and girls, young men and young women, are enabled to honour themselves and one another as human beings cherished equally by God, and empowered to be agents of change among their peers.

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<sup>3</sup> White Ribbon is a movement of men and boys against violence against women and girls.



# THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

## **A statement on climate change by the Primates of the Anglican Communion following the Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland 24 and 30 January, 2011**

We note that the scriptures call humanity to a careful stewardship of creation. We undertake to ensure that issues of climate change and the responsible management of our natural resources, are items which are given urgent priority for reflection, study and action in our own provinces.

Climate change is a normal characteristic of our planet but it has become an urgent concern because of the evidence of the impact that humanity has had on the earth by our use and abuse of its natural resources.

We commend the development of the Anglican Communion's study course on the 5th mark of mission; and also the importance of Anglican Communion's Environmental Network and its meeting in Peru.

We encourage all Anglicans to recognise that global climatic change is real and that we are contributing to the despoiling of creation. We underline the increasing urgency of this as we see the impact of climate change in our provinces, especially in the Pacific region.

We press Government, industry and civil society on the moral imperative of taking practical steps towards building sustainable communities, and urge them to work to achieve agreement on the way forward at the 17th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 17) in Durban in November.



# THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

**An open letter to the President of Zimbabwe by the Primates of the Anglican Communion following their Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, between 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.**

Open letter to:

His Excellency Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe.

Copies to:

The Heads of Government of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zambia.

The Secretary General of the United Nations

The Chair of the African Union

The Secretary General of SADC

The Secretary General of AACC

The General Secretary of CAPA

The General Secretaries of Councils of Churches of South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Swaziland, Botswana

Your Excellency,

The Primates of the Anglican Communion, meeting at the Emmaus Centre near Dublin in the Republic of Ireland, have been deeply distressed to hear of the continuing bullying, harassment, and persecution being suffered by their brothers and sisters in Christ in the Diocese of Harare and beyond.

We have heard claims that the police have been ordered to prevent clergy and worshippers from using their church buildings despite the Makarau judgement of January 2008, and the Mavhangira judgement of June 2010.

On Sunday 16 January 2011 the congregation of St Andrew's Church, Chipadze in Bindura, gathered for worship in the grounds of the rectory, was harassed by priests associated with Dr Nolbert Kunonga, supported by police and riot police allegedly acting on the authority of a 'new order' for which no documentary evidence has been produced or offered.

We believe that the appalling situation experienced by members of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe seriously infringes their right to justice, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and personal security under the law guaranteed by the constitution of Zimbabwe and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. Therefore, we respectfully beseech you to use all the power and authority of your office to put an end to these abuses forthwith. We are convinced that the unmerited, unjust, and unlawful persecution of the members of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe damages further the good name and reputation of the Republic of Zimbabwe and results in untold and unnecessary additional suffering for many thousands of people.

We wish you to be aware that throughout the Anglican Communion Christians are holding their brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe in their prayers; and we, as Primates of the Communion, stand in solidarity with the bishops, clergy, and people of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe.



## THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

**A statement on Haiti by the Primates of the Anglican Communion following their Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, between 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.**

We stand in solidarity with the people of Haiti as they continue to suffer the effects of a disaster that overtook them over a year ago.

We are dismayed by the lack of progress in rebuilding the nation and urge the governments who promised aid to deliver on those promises.

We hold the people of Haiti in our prayers and support them in their desire for good governance. We support Bishop Duracin and the people and clergy of the diocese in their reconstruction work. We rejoice in the generosity of Anglicans from around the world.

The people of Haiti give us hope; in the face of disaster and destruction they show us what faith is.



## THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

**A statement on the murder of David Kato by the Primates of the Anglican Communion following their Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, between 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2011.**

We would like to express our support for the statement of The Archbishop of Canterbury in response to the horrific murder of David Kato in Mukono, Uganda.

We join him in saying that no one should have to live in fear because of the bigotry of others.

We reiterate that 'the victimisation or diminishment of human beings whose affections happen to be ordered towards people of the same sex is anathema to us' (Primates Meeting 2005).

We reaffirm that 'any demonising of homosexual persons, or their ill treatment, is totally against Christian charity and basic principles of pastoral care' (The Windsor Report).

We call on all our people to minister pastorally and sensitively to all irrespective of sexual orientation and condemn irrational fear of gay people (1998 Lambeth Conference).