

Statement of Bishop of Egypt, North Africa and the Horn of Africa, 14 November 2003

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Statement of Bishop of Egypt, North Africa and the Horn of Africa regarding Gene Robinson
[ACNS source: Diocese of Egypt] It is with the deepest sadness and alarm that I have learned of the confirmation by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the United States of Gene Robinson as bishop of New Hampshire.

We have a great respect for the church in North America but we cannot comprehend a decision to elect as bishop a man who has forsaken his wife and the vows he made to her in order to live in a sexual relationship with another man outside the bonds of his marriage.

We feel profoundly let down, as this decision will unquestionably damage our interfaith relations with our Muslim friends among whom we live. It will also have a negative impact on our relations with the Orthodox and Catholic Churches in our area, which continue to hold fast to the apostolic faith and teachings from the first century. We will definitely be seen by them now as heretical.

We had not expected this to be done to us by brothers and sisters who are in communion with us. We had expected that they would think of us before taking such a grave step. It showed great disrespect to the majority of the members of the Anglican Communion and the church worldwide. In fact, the decision shows disregard for the value of being in communion and part of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. It also places in doubt the future of the Lambeth Conference. When its resolutions are no longer respected by members of the conference what purpose does it have?

The Communion now faces a crisis over what holds us together and indeed whether we can remain together if we hold not merely diverse but contradictory views of the Scripture and what it teaches.

In these difficult days, we wish to make it clear that we support those dioceses and parishes who remain committed to the wider Anglican Communion and its teaching. We stand in unity with other bishops around the world in promising our fullest moral and pastoral support for them

We call upon all in the Communion at this time of distress to prayer.

+ The Rt Revd Dr Mouneer Anis