

Statement at the Lambeth Conference 2008 - Global South Primates

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1. *"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin" (1 John 1:5-7).*

We the undersigned Primates, Archbishops and Bishops and our Episcopal colleagues from all over the Communion are gathered together at the Lambeth Conference 2008 to seek the face of God, to hear His Word afresh and to be renewed by His Spirit for discipleship and obedience to Christ—Lord of the Church and Light of the world, and the mission of God. In the midst of the current critical crisis in the Communion we strive faithfully and honourably to ensure the Communion remains and continues steadfast in and to the faith once delivered to the saints. In this, the Holy Scripture – which, as the testimony to God's work given by the Spirit of God is the written Word of God – is the final authority for Christian belief, teaching, life and conduct. Authentic traditions of doctrine and practice acknowledge its supremacy. It underpins all bonds of affection, expressions of fellowship and shaping of structures in the Communion.

2. We are consciously mindful of the absence of our fellow Episcopal colleagues from Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and elsewhere, who, for principled reasons could not be present at this Lambeth Conference. We thank God for their costly faithfulness and vigilance. We acknowledge the issuing of the [Jerusalem Declaration](#) which deserves careful study and consideration. At the same time, we also stand in solidarity with all the faithful Bishops, Clergy and Laity in the United States and Canada and elsewhere who are suffering recrimination and hostility perpetrated upon them by their dioceses and/or national churches which have not unequivocally complied with the specific Windsor proposals required of them in full.

3. We rejoice that the fellowship of orthodox episcopal leaders continue to grow in maturity in common faith and witness. Early in the Conference we, some 200 bishops, were greatly blessed when we met at a special gathering on 22nd July for fellowship and sharing, co-hosted by 17 Global South Provinces. We were very encouraged by the presence of three Bishops of the Oriental Orthodox churches and for their words of encouragement and challenge to faithfulness. We were encouraged to learn and endorsed the reaffirmation of the "total and collegial commitment to the solemn vocation of the Global South" in the [Statement of the Global South Primates Steering Committee Meeting on 13-15 March 2008](#). We are greatly inspired by and endorsed the [Statement of the Sudanese Bishops to this Lambeth Conference on the ECS Position on Human Sexuality](#) which was issued at great cost. The [Final Report](#) of the "Global South Anglican Theological Formation and Education Task Force Anglican Catechism in Outline: A Common Home Between Us" was also warmly received. Since the historic "Red Sea Encounter" of 2005, Global South provinces have moved forward in close fellowship and partnership in ministry and mission, in theological reflection and formation, and sharing of human, skills and material resources.

4. We gather at a critical time when the Anglican Communion as a communion of ordered churches is at the probable brink of collapse. We are encouraged by the [Archbishop of Canterbury's First Presidential Address](#), and the related presentations by the Anglican Covenant Design Group and the Windsor Continuation Group to the Conference at the opening evening of the Conference. We expect all attending this Conference at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the words of his Advent 2007 Letter, to be willing and accepting "to work with those aspects of the Conference's agenda that relate to implementing the recommendations of Windsor, including the development of a Covenant".

5. We fully affirm the Windsor process in the Anglican Covenant Design Group proposals and the [Windsor Continuation Group presentations](#). We urge the official endorsement of the proposed Anglican Covenant by ACC 14 in May 2009. We further urge this Lambeth Conference to give clear endorsement and immediate implementation of the interim proposals of the Windsor Continuation Group on the swift formation of the Pastoral Forum with the terms of reference as set out: in particular, "the Pastoral Forum should be empowered to act in the Anglican Communion in a rapid manner to emerging threats to its life, especially through the ministry of its Chair, who should work alongside the Archbishop of Canterbury in the exercise of his ministry. The Forum would be responsible for addressing those anomalies of pastoral care arising in the Communion against the recommendations of the Windsor Report. It could also offer guidance on what response and any diminished standing within the Communion might be appropriate where any of the three moratoria are broken."

6. We expect the Lambeth Conference, as a significant instrument of unity of the Communion, to give vital leadership towards resolving the present crisis over faith and order. This should be effected only on the agreed

consensus of communion and moral commitments made in resolutions of successive meetings which provide the proper framework and basis towards addressing and resolving the crisis: the Lambeth 1998 Resolution I.10; the respective [Communiqués of the Primates' Meetings of 2003](#), [Dromantine 2005](#), and most explicitly [Dar-es-Salaam 2007](#): in particular, on the complete cessation of (a) the celebration of blessings for same-sex unions, (b) consecrations of those living in openly gay relationships, and (c) all cross border interventions and inter-provincial claims of jurisdiction, as the Windsor Continuation Group rightly observed.

7. We deeply regret that during the Conference proceedings substantial theological voices outside of the Western world have not been present in the evening plenary sessions of the Lambeth Conference. We are concerned with the continuing patronising attitude of the West towards the rest of the churches worldwide. We regret attempts to cause divisions and break the bonds between churches in the Global South, and are distressed that the realities in our churches are often misrepresented and misunderstood in the West.

8. However, we greatly rejoice that the Word of God has unleashed its saving power and has breathed life in our churches and peoples. God has preserved for the Communion his saints and testimony of their faith and our forebears throughout the Anglican Communion not least in the southern continents for its common good. We thank our Lord, in the midst of our current crisis, for increasing in us the conviction and confirmation of the prophetic and priestly vocation of the Global South as a precious gift to the Anglican Communion.

9. We were encouraged that the [Global South Primates' Steering Committee at its meeting in March 2008](#) has agreed to consult one another after GAFCON (June 2008) and Lambeth (July 2008) on how to move the global Anglican Communion substantially and effectively forward. We look forward to the 4th South-to-South Encounter on a broadened representation sometime in 2009. We are encouraged that the emphases will be on the pastoral and missional needs for focused leadership and development, the deepening of collegial foundation and framework for the transformation and renewal of the Anglican Communion.

10. We are committed to work together with one another in the Global South and with all orthodox groups in the United States of America and Canada: to listen together to what Lord Jesus says to his church today, to draw strength and insights from one another, and to take fresh initiatives in upholding and passing on the faith once delivered to the saints.

11. We send our warmest greetings in our Lord Jesus to our fellow primates and the faithful who are not with us at Lambeth Conference due to their principled reasons.

"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose" (Philippians 2:1-2).

The Most Revd Bernard Ntahoturi (Burundi)

The Most Revd Dr. Dirokpa Balufuga Fidèle (Congo)

The Most Revd Dr John Chew (Southeast Asia)

The Most Revd Stephen Than Myint Oo (Myanmar)

The Most Revd Valentino Mokiwa (Tanzania)

The Most Revd Daniel Deng Bul Yak (Sudan)

The Most Revd Dr Mouneer Hanna Anis (Jerusalem & The Middle East)

The Most Revd Justice Ofei Akrofi (West Africa)

The Most Revd John Wilson Gladstone (South India)

The Rt Revd Donald Mtetemela (Tanzania)

The Most Revd Gerald James (Ian) Ernest (Indian Ocean)