



TRANSCRIPT: DR PETER JENSEN, General Secretary of the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans

Your graces, my lords, ladies and gentlemen, actually brothers and sisters, it is a very wonderful thing to stand here and look around and see so many whose faces I know so well who I count as comrades, brothers and sisters in the long, arduous business of being Christian. As well as that, I see quite a number whose acquaintance I have just made.

My first duty today is to say particularly to the local committee who have arranged for GAFCON to take place here, how very, very grateful we are to you for the extraordinary amount of work you have done, for the skill with which you have done it, and for the endless hours of time you have put into this. I might say with the High Commissioner how much this has enhanced if I can say so and will enhance the reputation of Kenya and Nairobi.

You have been through two horrendous incidents with the fire at the airport and of course this last tragedy. You have continued on, faithfully and steadfastly. You have looked again at the security for example, I know that, but you have been so faithful in doing all this. We will not be adequately able to thank you but please accept these words as our deepest thanks to you for making this great convention possible.

Can I also say that I didn't think it would be possible until I walked into the Trinity Centre and then I knew, since we could never build that centre in Sydney, I knew I was in the presence of people who can run a convention and do it well. So I want to lead the rest of us in applause to the local committee. (Applause).

Your Grace the Primate of Kenya we want to thank you. It is not an easy thing to extend an invitation to hundreds and hundreds of people to come. My whole aim in Sydney I have to say was to avoid the General Synod occurring ever in Sydney, always have it somewhere else. I know what it's like, and that was nothing compared to having GAFCON here. So again and very publicly I want to say how very grateful we are to you. And today of course I want to thank you, on behalf of all your guests, for this magnificent meal that you and Mama Rhoda have been hosting for us and I want to say how grateful we are; but also I want to assure you publicly that you are loved, you are deeply loved, both here in Kenya but also around the world, and we love and honour you for all you have done for us – thank you. (Applause)

I have also been asked to say just a few words about GAFCON. One of the reasons why it is so appropriate to be here for GAFCON this week is that it was born in Nairobi, Room 1216 of the Hilton Hotel to be exact, well I have to check my records, but I think it was 1216. A number of people sitting here today were present at that meeting. And it was intentionally held here in Kenya. The leader of the meeting of course was Archbishop Akinola, and I can remember Archbishop Okoh at his right. And Archbishop Okoh's great contribution to the meeting, amongst others, was to tell us that the word GAFCON was the word we should have. So I think it was you sir, I can't see you, but it was you sir who gave us the word GAFCON and for that we are very grateful because it is the Global Anglican Future Conference which we decided on.



Now a number of the folk here today were present at that. How little we could have guessed that we would be here five years later and asking ourselves what has been accomplished. I heard earlier today - Archbishop Wabukala said - that in a sense the crisis has passed, and that's true because you can't live in a state of crisis. The crisis having been passed, the results have become permanent, or at least permanent for the time being if I can put it like that. Something has happened with grave consequences which now go on. And what indeed has happened and why?

Well, the genesis of GAFCON as you know was the authority of Scripture: Is the word of God the word of God?

Long ago, even before GAFCON, Bishop Nazir-Ali said to me that the debate we were having was about the clarity of Scripture. I'll never forget him saying that. And I thought yes, he's right of course: Is the Bible the Bible for everybody, that all can read, in a way in which it interprets itself? Is it the Bible for the lay people as much as it is the Bible for the clergy and anyone else? And this was Bishop Nazir-Ali's point: that we can read the Bible too; and we can understand what it is saying to us. And the clarity of the Scriptures - particularly in the area of human sexuality - which is so important for our identity, means that we believe that we know - always ready to look again - but when we look again, the same message appears:: that human sexual expression needs to occur within the bonds of marriage between a man and a woman, and anything else is unholy matrimony, if you like.

Now it's those great issues, aren't they: the Bible and our obedience to the Bible, which gave us the explosion if you like which occurred at GAFCON. Since then, I see GAFCON - it's interesting, you occasionally hear what people say about GAFCON and the FCA, not always very nice - it is often far from accurate.

I often hear it said that it is a 'schismatic movement', which is very funny considering how many Anglicans are involved in it - 'it's a schismatic movement'. And I've heard a view that 'it is homophobic' of course, and all the other terms of abuse that's it's so popular to throw.

I want to say to you that the GAFCON movement is a movement for Unity. I remember the Saturday night after GAFCON I, we had gathered in the room, the Primates gathered there, I gathered as the boy in the room, and the discussion was held. And I think it was I, but someone asked the question: 'Are we leaving the Anglican Communion?' And immediately all said: 'No we are not leaving the Anglican Communion; that is not the intention, we would never do that.' But our intention is to gather up the fragments of the Anglican Communion. And what GAFCON has done, particularly in North America, has been to gather up the fragments and to unite and to make sure that our beloved friends like Archbishop Bob Duncan here today, our beloved friends are kept and recognised as the authentic true Anglicans that they are, and that they don't have to pretend to be something else. (Acclaim and applause)

And of course it is not only the North Americans but others as well, and this is going to happen in other places around the Communion, indeed it has begun to happen in other places around the Communion, where to stand for Biblical truth is going to cost



you very, very dearly indeed, as it has cost our brothers here. And then you will have to ask yourself: who are our friends? Who will stand with us? And GAFCON is a way of delivering friendship, it is a way of delivering unity, it is a way of making sure that to quote the immortal words of a Nigerian bishop at our last meeting in London: 'Now we know we are not alone' [Approval]. I've never forgotten him saying that.

That's GAFCON: Now we know that we are not alone.

Now, as we heard this morning, the Anglican Communion 21st Century is going to look very, very different from the Anglican Communion that began the 21st Century – that's obvious. Indeed it is not only going to look different, it is different, it already is different. The events of 2008, little did we know it, was the birth of something new in the Anglican Communion. And in a sense GAFCON is called I believe to model what a Communion could be, a different Communion. I like to put it this way: that the British Empire is dead but the British Commonwealth of nations has followed.

There's a different partnership, a different equality between the partners now, a bringing together of bishops, laity and clergy, altogether in a great conference where all may play their part, and a way of modelling and being the Anglican Communion for the sake of the whole Gospel, of Christ and the Gospel, in a way which will bring our gifts to bear for the sake of one another. That's a great picture, and I believe in microcosm this is what the FCA movement is already and has begun to be.

Here is, when thirteen hundred and - now last night it was thirteen hundred and fifty-two, this morning it is thirteen hundred and forty-eight and one baby from Nigeria I believe – are gathering in Nairobi.

1,352 Anglican Christians are gathering here in Nairobi for a week in which we are going to seek, according to Archbishop Wabukala, we are going to seek the Glory of God.

Our prayer is that we may see the Glory of God in this week together and go home changed. We are going to hear about the East African Revival. We are going to be challenged by it. We from the West are going to be deeply challenged about the East African Revival. We are going to hear about the Persecuted Church. We are going to hear from each other. We are going to minister to each other. We are going to hear the Word of God together and sit underneath the teaching of the Word of God. It is I believe that we are going to sing the praises of God and worship together.

It is I believe going to be an extraordinary week, not just a sort of missions conference, something I know +Bob Duncan was worried about, but it is an ecclesial conference - it is more than that. [Oh you mean I've learned something from you?] Archbishop Duncan is always hoping I am going to learn something from him, and I have. (laughter). It is more than just a conference, it is more than that.

Now we are deeply in prayer, Archbishop Wabukala told us to be in prayer we will see the Glory of God. For my part I have asked that we will see that the Lord will maintain the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, because Unity is what we are about.



Now that's the genesis of FCA, GAFCON, and I have talked about it's meaning.

And just to conclude by saying it has two great Purposes:

- First of all to recognise and authenticate Anglicans, who for no fault of their own, in a stand for Biblical truth have become disaffiliated from their own denomination or original church – to gather up the fragments of Christ's church, and to maintain them in unity.

- And then Secondly, to bring together Anglicans from all around the world - [we're not the only Anglicans, of course, that would be nonsense] – but to bring together Anglicans from all around the world, to release the energy of the Anglican Communion for the sake of: the Mission of the Gospel; the Sovereignty of God's Word; the Glory of God's Name; and the Good of God's People.

Dear brothers and sisters as we are here today enjoying this wonderful occasion together, let's remember what's drawn us together, the Glory of God, and let us join in prayer that we will indeed see the Glory of God this week in Nairobi. (Applause)