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**A Communiqué from the Primates Council to  
GAFCON Members and Supporters**

*"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." ~ Isaiah 2:3*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As your Primates, we met in Lagos, Nigeria from 24<sup>th</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> April 2017 to pray and work for the continued renewal of the Anglican Communion. We give thanks for the extraordinary hospitality of the Diocesan Bishop of Lagos, the Archbishop of Lagos, and the Primate of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

We began our time together each day with prayer and the study of God's Word. Aware that we are approaching the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation, we gave thanks for the faithful witness of those leaders who challenged the Church to recover the authority of the Scriptures. They were men and women who were willing to take costly action, and sealed that testimony with their own blood.

**Jerusalem 2018 Global Anglican Future Conference**

Gafcon is a global family made up of 9 provinces and 5 branches representing the majority of the world's Anglicans. Jerusalem 2018 will be the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our movement. We are looking forward to acting as an instrument of unity in gathering our people together so that they can share the same joy in the Gospel that we experience when we are together.

Our theme will be “Proclaiming Christ Faithfully to the Nations” and we are anticipating having over 1,700 delegates join in worship, teaching and pilgrimage. In the next few months, each province or branch will be issuing invitations among their membership. Please pray for the planning team as they attend to the many details of this event.

### **If One Part of the Body Suffers, Every Part Suffers With It**

Our meeting has also been an opportunity to share with one another our burdens and the suffering of our people. In particular, we discussed the ongoing civil war in South Sudan, and the challenges faced by the church in that province. This conflict has displaced millions, many of whom have found a temporary home in northern Uganda. The Anglican church there is caring for these refugees as best it can, but the region’s resources are currently overwhelmed. We commissioned the Primates of Uganda and Kenya to visit the South Sudan to explore ways we can work with other ecumenical partners to offer mediation that might bring about an end to this conflict.

Many in our African provinces are confronted by the dual threats of insurgent Islamism and drought. The targeting of Christians and churches in northern Nigeria has been in the news, and the daily dangers there and elsewhere continue to be real. Combined with drought conditions, there is the potential for widespread famine in our Sub-Saharan provinces.

In our Global North provinces the challenges are different. With the increasing influence of materialism, secularism, and the loss of moral foundations, our people in these provinces face dangers that are subtle, but spiritually dangerous.

Please keep each of these concerns in your prayers, and consider what God might be calling you to do in response. Our provinces have borders, but our Church does not, and the sharing of material and spiritual resources has never been more needed.

## **A Missionary Bishop**

During our meeting, we considered how best to respond to the voice of faithful Anglicans in some parts of the Global North who are in need of biblically faithful episcopal leadership. Of immediate concern is the reality that on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2017 the Scottish Episcopal Church is likely to formalize their rejection of Jesus' teaching on marriage. If this were to happen, faithful Anglicans in Scotland will need appropriate pastoral care. In addition, within England there are churches that have, for reasons of conscience, been planted outside of the Church of England by the Anglican Mission in England (AMiE). These churches are growing, and are in need of episcopal leadership. Therefore, we have decided to consecrate a missionary bishop who will be tasked with providing episcopal leadership for those who are outside the structures of any Anglican province, especially in Europe.

## **A Word of Encouragement to Faithful Anglicans within European Provinces**

We wish to reassure all faithful Anglicans in European provinces that they also have our prayers and our support. We are aware that some Christians within these provinces who are contending for the faith may at first perceive the news of a missionary bishop as a threat to their hopes for reform from within.

We believe that the complexity of the current situation in Europe does not admit of a single solution. Faithful Christians may be called to different courses of action. We bless those whose context and conscience have led them to remain and contend for the faith within the current structures. If you are successful, you will not need a missionary bishop; if you are not successful, an alternative is at hand. The only true failure would be to waste time through inaction.

We also pray for those who are not yet clear about what faithfulness requires. May God give you the wisdom and courage of the Reformers to stand firm wherever the Lord calls you to stand.

### **Bishops Training Institute (BTI)**

The launch of the Bishops Training Institute has been successful, drawing bishops from around the world for training and teaching in the unique role of leading a diocese. The Institute is based in Kenya, and led by the Rt Rev. Samson Mwaluda, assisted by the Rev. Paul Sampson. The next course will take place in May this year, and BTI 3 in November.

### **Branch Updates**

We received updates from our established branches in Australia, New Zealand, Southern Africa, Brazil, and the United Kingdom. We also received encouraging reports about new Gafcon branches emerging in other parts of the Anglican world. We give thanks for the continued growth of this movement, and the opportunity we have to share in fellowship with those who are preaching the Gospel around the world both in season and out of season.

### **The Global South**

We give thanks for the fellowship that we had last October with the Anglican Global South at the 6<sup>th</sup> Global South Anglican Conference in Cairo, Egypt. We affirm our desire to continue to work in close partnership, walking together in the truth of the Gospel.

### **Conclusion**

We are grateful for the leadership of our Chairman, the Most Rev. Dr Nicholas Okoh. As we look towards Jerusalem 2018, we ask for your continued prayers and support. Specifically, we ask that you would pray for the continued renewal of the Anglican Communion, and the spread of this reform movement. In all these things may Christ be glorified and his name proclaimed faithfully to the nations.