



## ANGLICAN CHURCH OF BURUNDI

Archbishop's Office

B.P. 2098, Bujumbura, Burundi

Tél. + 257 22 22 43 89 – Fax + 257 22 22 91 29

Email. [peab@cbinf.com](mailto:peab@cbinf.com)

[ntahober@cbinf.com](mailto:ntahober@cbinf.com)

[ntahober@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ntahober@yahoo.co.uk)

Bujumbura 6th March 2009

### RESPONSE OF THE PROVINCE OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH OF BURUNDI TO THE PROPOSED ANGLICAN COVENANT

With regard to the request that all Provinces of the Anglican Communion respond by 9<sup>th</sup> March to the following three questions, the House of Bishops of the Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi submits the following responses to the questions posed:

**‘(1) Is the province able to give an “in principle” commitment to the Covenant process at this time (without committing itself to the details of any text?)**

The House of Bishops of the Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi is able “in principle” to make a commitment to the Covenant process.

It commends the work of the Covenant Design Group that has produced a draft that

- affirms the theological and doctrinal tenets of Anglicanism
- seeks to provide an Anglican identity based on Common Faith, Common Mission, and Common Life
- provides a framework and motivation for mission through the Five Marks of Mission
- is based on Anglican tradition and inheritance (e.g. the Book of Common Prayer, the Lambeth Quadrilateral, Lambeth resolutions and agreed statements of ecumenical dialogues, and Communion Commission Reports)
- has at its heart a desire to maintain unity among Anglicans, to strengthen the life of the Communion, and to deepen koinonia in Christ
- aims to strengthen a shared commitment to preserve both autonomy and communion
- seeks to promote mutual loyalty and responsibility, greater honesty and transparency, accountability and trust
- suggests a process for resolving differences and promotes reconciliation and accountability

As the Windsor Report says –

“Adoption of a Covenant is a practical need and a theological challenge...A Covenant incarnates communion as a visible foundation around which Anglicans can gather to shape



and protect their distinctive identity and mission, and in so doing also provides an accessible resource for our ecumenical partners in their understanding of Anglicanism.” (Windsor Report p. 49 para. 119)

The Introduction of the St Andrew’s Draft aptly states -

“To covenant together is not intended to change the character of this Anglican expression of Christian faith. Rather, we recognise the importance of renewing our commitment to one another, and our common understanding of the faith as we have received it in a solemn way, so that the “bonds of affection” which hold us together may be affirmed. We do this in order to reflect in our relations with one another God’s own faithfulness in his promises towards us in Christ.” (2 Cor 1.20-22)

This reflects the spirit of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Burundi that seeks to ensure good relationships at all levels of Church life and includes in that all Provinces of the Anglican Communion and ecumenical partners. (Article 23 i)

**(2) Is it possible to give some indication of any Synodical process which would have to be undertaken to adopt the Covenant in the fullness of time?**

The Covenant text would be discussed by the Synods (diocesan and Provincial) and finally adopted by the House of Bishops.

**(3) In considering the St Andrew’s draft for an Anglican Covenant, are there any elements which would need extensive change in order to make the process of Synodical adoption viable?’**

The House of Bishops is concerned that there remain some important issues that require further clarification and consideration:

- the status, roles, and powers of the Instruments of Communion, and their future definition and development
- the roles and powers of Commissions and Assessors initiated for the resolution of disagreements
- the use of language, phrase, and metaphor e.g. the phrase “episcopally led and synodically governed” (3.1.2); “autonomous in communion”; church; common; interdependence.
- the effective resolution of differences and addressing of conflict and division
- handling the consequences of indiscipline in the Church
- the implications of provinces not ratifying the Covenant
- the danger of an alliance of “non-ratifying” provinces
- the implications of a diocese being able to sign up to the Covenant apart from its Province
- the relationship of dioceses within ACNA to the Covenant
- the need to re-define and amend the Covenant to meet new and future challenges

**Conclusion:**



The Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi hopes and prays that the Covenant will enable the Anglican Communion to be a living fulfillment of covenantal relationships in its mission and witness.

The Covenant should be an expression of our self understanding. It should be perceived not as an oppressive or exclusive instrument, but as a facilitative tool designed to express the manner in which the life and mission of the Church is to be lived out.

The Covenant should bring the autonomous Provinces into relationships of mutual dependence and accountability. It should challenge our willingness to live an ordered life under the grace of God.

May the Anglican Covenant bring about that “unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” that the Anglican world needs and seeks.

House of Bishops  
Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi  
March 2009