



THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

An open letter to the President of Zimbabwe by the Primates of the Anglican Communion following their Primates' Meeting in Dublin, Ireland, between 24th and 30th January, 2011.

Open letter to:

His Excellency Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe.

Copies to:

The Heads of Government of Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, and Zambia.

The Secretary General of the United Nations

The Chair of the African Union

The Secretary General of SADC

The Secretary General of AACC

The General Secretary of CAPA

The General Secretaries of Councils of Churches of South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Swaziland, Botswana

Your Excellency,

The Primates of the Anglican Communion, meeting at the Emmaus Centre near Dublin in the Republic of Ireland, have been deeply distressed to hear of the continuing bullying, harassment, and persecution being suffered by their brothers and sisters in Christ in the Diocese of Harare and beyond.

We have heard claims that the police have been ordered to prevent clergy and worshippers from using their church buildings despite the Makarau judgement of January 2008, and the Mavhangira judgement of June 2010.

On Sunday 16 January 2011 the congregation of St Andrew's Church, Chipadze in Bindura, gathered for worship in the grounds of the rectory, was harassed by priests associated with Dr Nolbert Kunonga, supported by police and riot police allegedly acting on the authority of a 'new order' for which no documentary evidence has been produced or offered.

We believe that the appalling situation experienced by members of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe seriously infringes their right to justice, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and personal security under the law guaranteed by the constitution of Zimbabwe and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights. Therefore, we respectfully beseech you to use all the power and authority of your office to put an end to these abuses forthwith. We are convinced that the unmerited, unjust, and unlawful persecution of the members of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe damages further the good name and reputation of the Republic of Zimbabwe and results in untold and unnecessary additional suffering for many thousands of people.

We wish you to be aware that throughout the Anglican Communion Christians are holding their brothers and sisters in Zimbabwe in their prayers; and we, as Primates of the Communion, stand in solidarity with the bishops, clergy, and people of the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe.