

## Anglican Orthodox International Commission

### Communiqué



### International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue

September 2013 Communiqué  
Novi Sad, Serbia

In the name of the Triune God, and with the blessing and guidance of our Churches, the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue (ICAOTD) met in Novi Sad, Serbia during 4-11 September 2013 at the invitation of Patriarch Irinej of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Commission is grateful for the generous hospitality extended by Bishop Irinej and the Diocese of Backa of which Novi Sad is the see city.

Bishop Irinej and Bishop David of Krushevac, on behalf of Patriarch Irinej, warmly welcomed the members of the Commission to Novi Sad. The bishops offered engagement with the work of the Commission, noting in particular the spiritual dimensions of the study of theological anthropology, and sharing with members an understanding of the experience of Christians in Serbia.

Continuing its focus on Christian anthropology, specifically what it means to be a human person created in the image and likeness of God, the Commission devoted significant efforts to the review of the draft of its joint theological work on the subject. Reflection on the theology of the glory of creation and the uniqueness of humanity in the created order drew the Commission into deep discussion. Further, the Commission worked at length on the specific expression of image and likeness, considering the thematic components of the subject, with particular attention to its scriptural basis. As part of the discussion of human relationships, the Commission observed that it is the teaching of all the Orthodox and Anglican churches that marriage is between a man and a woman. The draft text, which was developed through the studies of previous meetings, was enhanced at this meeting by contributions on the subjects of the human

being in society; the human being as a social being; attaining personhood through community from a traditional African perspective; and repentance, transformation and holiness. The Commission agreed that a newly appointed drafting group would work with the existing draft for the next meeting, taking into account the many pertinent comments and theological considerations presented at this meeting.

As in previous meetings, daily prayer strengthened and grounded the work of the Commission. Anglican members of the Commission offered morning prayers. Vespers in the Serbian Orthodox tradition took place at the nearby parish of The Dormition of the Mother of God and at the Orthodox Cathedral. Members attended an Anglican Eucharist held at the Slovakian Evangelical Church. Members also attended the Divine Liturgy at the Kovilj Monastery. Throughout all of the opportunities for prayer, the ICAOTD held up the people of Syria, praying for peace and comfort and security in that land.

During the time of the meeting, the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church delivered a speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York entitled "The Culture of Peace and Our Responsibility." Commission members commended this presentation for its timely message and gratefully received the text of his speech.

It was noted during the meeting of the Commission that this year marks the 1700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan. The anniversary of such an edict offering assurance of security and religious freedom has poignancy for our time.

The work of the Commission was greatly enriched by opportunities for local engagement in our setting. During the course of the meeting, the ICAOTD was very generously welcomed at the Kovilj monastery by Bishop Andrej, head of the office of external relations of the Patriarchate of Serbia, and the Abbot Bishop Porfirije of Jegar and numerous monks, from whom the members learned about the activities of the monastery, including work with those suffering from drug and alcohol addictions. A visit to the city of Sremski Karlovci offered an opportunity to see the Orthodox Cathedral of St Nikolas and visit the Orthodox Theological Seminary of St Arsenije Sremac, where the Commission was welcomed by Bishop Vasilije of Srem, and learned about the formation of young seminarians to carry out God's mission in this contemporary context.

The Commission missed the presence of the Orthodox Co-Chairman, Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia who was unable to attend. The delegate of the Greek Patriarchate of Alexandria, Metropolitan Serafim of Zimbabwe assumed the responsibility of Acting Co-Chairman for this meeting.

The work of the Commission will continue at its next meeting in September 2014, to be hosted by the Anglican Communion.

Metropolitan Serafim of Zimbabwe    The Most Revd Roger Herft  
Acting Orthodox Co-Chairman    Anglican Co-Chairman

Representatives of the Orthodox Church

Metropolitan Serafim of Zimbabwe  
*Patriarchate of Alexandria*

The Revd Fr Alexander Haig  
*Patriarchate of Antioch*

The Revd Fr Valentin Vasechko  
*Patriarchate of Moscow*

Professor Dr Bogdan Lubardic  
*Patriarchate of Serbia*

Metropolitan Nifon of Târgoviste  
*Patriarchate of Romania*

Protopresbyter Giorgi Zviadadze  
*Patriarchate of Georgia*

Professor Dr Miltiadis Konstantinou  
*Church of Greece*

The Revd Fr. Andrzej Minko  
*Church of Poland*

Bishop Ilia of Philomelion  
*Church of Albania*

The Revd Dr Christos B Christakis  
*Co-Secretary*

Members unable to attend:

Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia  
*Ecumenical Patriarchate, Co-chairman*

The Revd Dr George Dragas  
*Patriarchate of Jerusalem*

Representatives of the Anglican Communion

The Most Revd Roger Herft of Perth  
*The Anglican Church of Australia, Co-Chairman*

The Revd Marc Billimoria  
*The Church of Ceylon*

The Revd Dr Timothy Bradshaw  
*The Church of England*

The Most Revd Dr Richard Clarke of Armagh  
*The Church of Ireland*

The Revd Canon Jonathan Goodall  
*Archbishop of Canterbury's Representative*

The Revd Deacon Dr Christine Hall  
*The Church of England*

The Revd Canon Philip Hobson OGS  
*The Anglican Church of Canada*

Ms Natasha Klukach  
*The Anglican Church of Canada*

The Rt Revd Michael Lewis of Cyprus & The Gulf  
*The Episcopal Church in Jerusalem & the Middle East*

The Revd Dr Gloria Mapangdol  
*The Episcopal Church in the Philippines*

The Revd Dr Duncan Reid  
*The Anglican Church of Australia*

The Revd Canon Professor John Riches  
*Scottish Episcopal Church*

The Rt Revd John Stroyan of Warwick  
*The Church of England*

The Revd Dr Joseph Wandera  
*The Anglican Church of Kenya*

The Revd Canon Dr Alyson Barnett-Cowan  
*Co-secretary*

Papers submitted to the meeting:  
*Repentance, Transformation and Holiness*  
The Rt Revd John Stroyan

*Attaining Personhood through Community: An African Traditional Perspective*  
The Revd Dr Joseph Wandera

*The Human Being in Society: An Anglican Perspective*  
The Revd Dr John Riches

*Human Person as Social Being*  
Prof. Dr Miltiadis Konstantinou