

The Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations

Kyoto, Japan, 3 December - 8 December 2008

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) held its last meeting in Kyoto, Japan, under the chairmanship of the Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Primate of the Church in the Province of the West Indies. The Commission is charged with reviewing current international ecumenical dialogues involving Anglicans, and provincial and regional initiatives towards unity with other Christians. IASCER consists of representatives from each international dialogue involving Anglicans, including the multilateral dialogue of Faith and Order, and of certain other commissions and networks, and consultants who bring particular regional or theological expertise.

Reports were received of all current bilateral and multilateral theological dialogues of the Anglican Communion, as well as of developments from particular regions of the globe. In the course of reflections on the current life of the Anglican Communion, the Commission also reflected further on aspects of the interface between ecumenical and Anglican Communion matters. This work is reflected in the documentation and resolutions produced at this meeting. These pieces of work will be published when available through the Anglican Communion website. IASCER also gave some considerable attention to reviewing the breadth of their work in the period since their formation and first meeting in 2000. It is the intention to produce a comprehensive report and review of their work (*The Vision Before Us*) which can be presented to the fourteenth meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, which will meet in Jamaica in May 2009.

The Commission is extremely grateful for the warm welcome given to them by Nippon Sei Ko Kai (NSKK), the Anglican Church in Japan, especially the logistical support from the Diocese of Kyoto in whose offices the meeting was held. On the first evening of the meeting, Archbishop Nathaniel of Japan welcomed IASCER to a dinner with the bishops of NSKK; members of the Church guided IASCER members on visits to local sites in Kyoto, and shared in worship with them at Nara Christ Church on Sunday, 7 December. IASCER also welcomed the opportunity to meet and worship with the students of Bishop Williams' Theological School. IASCER is grateful to the Revd Professor Renta Nishihara, one of its members, for his co-ordination and planning for this meeting.

Present at the meeting in Kyoto were: the Revd Dr Paul Avis, the Revd Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the Revd Canon Gregory K Cameron (Secretary), the Revd Dr William Crockett, the Rt Revd Christopher Epting, the Revd Dr John Gibaut, the Most Revd Dr John Gladstone, the Most Revd Drexel W Gomez (Chair), the Revd Canon Jonathan Goodall, the Rt Revd John Hind, the Revd Professor Renta Nishihara, the Revd Canon Luke Pato, the Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell (Vice-Chair), the Revd Sarah Rowland Jones, the Rt Revd Dr James Tengatenga and the Revd Professor J Robert Wright. The Venerable Jane Namugenyi was unable to be with us at this meeting. The Revd Terrie Robinson and Mrs Gill Harris-Hogarth of the Anglican Communion Office provided administrative and logistical assistance for the meeting.

In the course of the meeting, news was received of the death of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Alexy II. The Commission passed a resolution of condolence to the faithful of the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as marking the deaths of Bishop David Beetge, Anglican Co-Chair of IARCCUM, and the Revd Professor Henry Chadwick, former member of ARCIC. May God's servants rest in peace, and rise in Glory.

This meeting concluded the work of IASCER, and letters of greeting and thanks were received from the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion. The Joint Standing Committee of the Anglican Communion has already approved the mandate of a successor body, the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO), which is scheduled to hold its first meeting in late 2009.

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