



Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity Faith and Order (IASCUFO) Communiqué, 9 December 2015

The Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith and Order met at Elmina, Ghana, from 2 to 9 December 2015.

The Commission was generously hosted by the Church of the Province of West Africa and its Diocese of the Cape Coast. The Primate, the Most Revd Daniel Sarfo, and the Bishop of the Cape Coast, the Rt Revd Dr Victor Atta-Baffoe met with the Commission, and the Bishop subsequently welcomed the Members to a special ecumenical Evensong at Christ Church Cathedral, Cape Coast. Commission Members also participated in the Cathedral's Sunday morning celebration of the Holy Eucharist, at which Bishop Victoria Matthews was invited to preside and Bishop Howard Gregory to preach. The Commission was delighted to spend a morning engaging with students and faculty at the St Nicholas Seminary.

In the context of the contemporary crises of displacement and uprooting of people, of refugees and of human trafficking, the Commission paid a deeply moving visit to the Cape Coast Castle (see photograph). This was a major centre of the transatlantic slave trade, with the terrible incongruity of an Anglican church directly over the dungeons that held those who, through the 'Door of No Return', were to be shipped into chattel slavery.

For part of the meeting, the Commission was joined by Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon, Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, who offered a deep and wide-ranging reflection on the present challenges within and future hopes for the Communion. The Commission warmly welcomed the opportunity to engage with him on ways of strengthening its capacity to fulfil its mandate in the service of the Communion.

The Commission was also greatly heartened by the Archbishop of Canterbury's timely decision to invite his fellow Primates of the Anglican Communion to meet together in January, and held this gathering in its daily prayers. Recalling that all of the Primates gathered at the Enthronement Eucharist of the Archbishop in March 2013, IASCUFO believes that the forthcoming meeting could be an opportunity for a new, redeemed conversation within the Communion to begin, and stands ready to assist in any way consistent with its remit.

Much of the Commission's work was devoted to supporting the forthcoming meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council, in Lusaka in April 2016.

For this, the Ecumenical Working Group considered recent ecumenical developments, including such significant documents as:

- the *Agreed Statement on Christology*, of the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission;
- *In the Image and Likeness of God: A Hope-Filled Anthropology*, of the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue; and
- *Into All the World: Being and Becoming Apostolic Churches*, of the Anglican-Methodist International Commission for Unity in Mission.

ACC will also be invited to commend to the Communion:

- ways of deepening relationships between Anglicans and Lutherans, around the commemoration of the five-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation in 2017
- *Receiving One Another's Ordained Ministries*, a report intended to assist churches of the Anglican Communion on questions of receiving the ordained ministries of ecumenical partners.

In accordance with IASCUFO's mandate, the Working Group on Communion Life prepared for ACC:

- Reflection on the ways in which Communion life is deepened, including prayer, worship and Scripture
- A document entitled *A Mission Shaped Communion*
- A working paper on the Instruments of Communion, as a follow up to the document *Towards a Symphony of Instruments*, prepared for ACC-15
- Working papers on local expressions of communion life for the Anglican Communion website.

Work continued on a paper on Theological Anthropology, in which issues of slavery and human trafficking – so much present to those in Elmina – among other subjects, are addressed.

The Commission expressed thanks to all who assisted with the organisation and running of the meeting, and particularly to the Revd Canon Anthony Eiwuley, Provincial Secretary. Members warmly welcomed the Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Anglican Communion Affairs, the Revd Canon Precious Omuku to his first IASCUFO meeting, and appreciated the extensive contribution of the Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut in his first meeting as Director of Unity, Faith and Order, rather than as a consultant member.

The Commission's work was nourished by the daily rhythm of worship. In the spirit of the Advent hope, the Commission celebrated a daily Eucharist, and said Morning and Evening Prayer.

The next meeting will take place from 1 to 8 December 2016, at a venue to be confirmed.

Present at the Elmina meeting:

The Most Revd Bernard Ntahoturi, Province of the Anglican Church of Burundi, and Chair of the Commission

The Revd Professor Paul Avis, Church of England

The Revd Sonal Christian, Church of North India

The Rt Revd Dr Howard Gregory, The Church in the Province of the West Indies

The Revd Professor Katherine Grieb, The Episcopal Church (USA)

The Rt Revd Kumara Illangasinghe, Church of Ceylon, Sri Lanka
The Rt Revd Victoria Matthews, Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia
The Revd Canon Dr Charlotte Methuen, Scottish Episcopal Church/Church of England
The Revd Canon Precious Omuku, Archbishop of Canterbury's Adviser on Anglican
Communion Affairs
Professor Andrew Pierce, Church of Ireland
The Rt Revd Professor Stephen Pickard, Anglican Church of Australia
The Revd Canon Dr Sarah Rowland Jones, Church in Wales
The Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut, Director for Unity, Faith and Order

Apologies received

The Revd Canon Professor Simon Oliver
The Rt Revd William Mchombo
The Revd Dr Jeremiah Guen Seok Yang

Others absent from the meeting:

The Rt Revd Dr Georges Titre Ande
The Rt Revd Professor Dapo Asaju
The Revd Canon Clement Janda
The Revd Dr Edison Kalengyo
The Revd Canon Dr Michael Nai Chiu Poon
The Most Revd Hector Zavala