

# Guidelines for the Creation of New Provinces and Dioceses



Approved by the Standing Committee in May 2012.

## The Creation of New Provinces of the Anglican Communion

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC), the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Standing Committee are all involved in the creation of a new Province in the Anglican Communion. In general, these bodies are supportive of any proposal which strengthens and develops the missional life of the Communion, and the main concern is to ensure that any such initiative makes sense within the life of the local church and is sustainable in the long term.

The formal process is that a new Province is created when the Schedule to the Constitution of the ACC (which lists the Provinces of the Anglican Communion) is amended to include the name of the new Province (and related changes). This requires a resolution of the Standing Committee together with approval by 2/3rds of the Primates.

In this, the Standing Committee will seek advice from the Secretary General who should be consulted early on in the process.

The Standing Committee must satisfy itself as to the following:

- 1) That the proposed Province and the remaining area of the former Province are both coherent and sustainable entities;
- 2) That the proposed Province and the continuing Province should each be composed of at least four dioceses;
- 3) That a new Provincial Constitution has been drafted and approved by the Standing Committee;
- 4) That a statement as to how theological education, including the training and on-going education of clergy, will be delivered both in the proposed Province and the remaining area of the former Province is received.
- 5) That the proposed Province and the remaining area of the former Province are either free of debt or have clear and realistic plans for addressing any such debt. Normally audited accounts for the previous 3 years should be provided for this purpose.

Credible financial projections for the next 3 years should also be provided, including financial provision for attendance of the Primate at Primates' Meetings and bishops at the Lambeth Conference, and the proposed Province's contribution to the Inter-Anglican Budget.

The following extracts from previous resolutions and statements from various bodies within the Anglican Communion will be of assistance in developing a proposal to create a new Province, recognising that they reflect a variety of contexts and periods; for example they do not reflect the fact that some Provinces now ordain women as bishops, and the variety of practice with respect to metropolitan authority.

[1]

## ACC-1, 1971. LIMURU, KENYA

### 21. Creating and Dividing Provinces (p. 32)

Although there is no official definition of a province of the Anglican Communion, it can be described as the smallest complete unit of the Anglican Church because it exists under a College of Bishops – each of whom with his clergy and laity is autonomous within a diocese. A college requires to be more than a mere trio of bishops and is severely limited if it consists of less than four diocesan bishops. A province must have some common constitution, its geographical and political area must allow good communications, and, however much it transcends linguistic, national, or cultural boundaries, its peoples must have a community of concern which can unite them in a community of worship.

In the light of this outline, the Council makes the following recommendations:

- (a) It is expected that a new province should normally contain at least four dioceses.
- (b) It must be ensured that the remaining area of the former province is not unduly weakened in finance, personnel, or institutions.
- (c) The proposed province must have financial stability, adequate leadership, proper administration, and accessibility to and from each diocese.
- (d) There must be the good will of the existing province in order not to create difficulties of disunity after division.
- (e) Before the creation of a new province there should be consultation with the Anglican Consultative Council or its Standing Committee for guidance and advice, especially in regard to the form of constitution most appropriate.

### 22 Criteria for the Size of a Diocese (p. 32)

The people of God who make up a diocese may come from diverse communities but should come from a natural area in which they live individual and corporate lives. The bishop, under God, is in a special way responsible with them and his clergy for the faith, teaching, unity, mission, and worship of that area, commonly called a diocese. Thus he represents the whole Church in and to his diocese, and his diocese in and to the councils of the Churches. He should also foster close relationships with other Churches and as far as possible with other faiths. The Council therefore suggests that the following are the criteria for the size of a diocese in which the bishop may exercise his episcopate properly:

- (a) It should be of a size to enable those living in it to feel they belong to a witnessing fellowship.
- (b) It should be large enough for it to be seen as the Church uniting people of different activities, backgrounds, and cultures.
- (c) It should be large enough to engage the bishop fully and small enough for him to have a sufficiently intimate knowledge of his clergy and people.
- (d) It should have sufficient measure of financial and administrative independence and not be so small as to be unable to organize and plan its work effectively.
- (e) Its boundaries should coincide as far as possible with those of the community and therefore dioceses will vary in size.

Where a diocese or region is too large for one bishop, either in population or in geographical extent, the Council believes that consideration might be given to the possibility of sustaining a diocese by means of a college of bishops. When such a pattern is followed, this Council would

emphasize the importance of each area of a diocese having a bishop whom it could regard as its own.

[2]

#### ACC-4. 1979. ONTARIO. CANADA

##### A *Guidelines for the Drafting and Revising of Provincial Constitutions*

- (1) Only those matters should be included which affect:
  - (i) each and all of the dioceses of the Province
  - (ii) the criteria by which a Province may be validly accepted or remain as part of the Anglican Communion
  - (iii) relationships with other Provinces of the Anglican Communion
  - (iv) relationships between the Province and other Churches or Communions.
- (2) Technical terms should be clearly defined.
- (3) As far as possible the structure of Provincial Constitutions should follow the same broad outline and order as that suggested below.
- (4) Uniformity of structure does not imply uniformity of expression or content. Within such a common pattern each Province should be free to determine its own methods and terms of appointment of bishops, clergy and lay officers, synodical procedures, administration, liturgical patterns, disciplinary measures.
- (5) The requirements for the Constitution of a Province covering more than one country or nation are different from those where a Province is coterminous with a country or nation. In the former case it will be necessary for the diocese or dioceses within the jurisdiction of each separate national government to make special provision for their own local situation; e.g. selection and training of clergy, liturgical usage, finance and property, etc.
- (6) In general Provincial Constitutions should allow on the one hand for the operation of the Holy Spirit in continuous growth, development and adjustment to changing ecclesiastical and social environments, while on the other hand providing a basis of stability from which to make appropriate alterations from time to time. With this end in view Constitutions should be as short, clear and simple as is consistent with their being comprehensive.
- (7) We suggest that the following outline Constitution should be used in the drafting or revising of Provincial Constitutions, and that each Province should provide its own definitions and glossary of terms.

#### Outline for a Provincial Constitution

##### PART ONE

- A. PREAMBLE (including brief factual historical note on foundation and extent of Province)
- B. FUNDAMENTAL DECLARATIONS
  1. Doctrine
  2. Worship
  3. Ministry
  4. Relation of Province to its Dioceses, to other Provinces of the Anglican Communion and to other Churches and Communions
  5. Procedure for Amendment

Note: This Part is sometimes referred to in a more restrictive sense as 'the Constitution'. It establishes the Province of ..... as a constituent member of the Anglican Communion. It also establishes the legal and governmental basis of the Province of .....

It should be possible to change 'the Constitution' only with difficulty and by special procedures, and after consultation with the Anglican Consultative Council.

## PART TWO

- A. METROPOLITICAL AUTHORITY
  - 1. Functions of the Metropolitan or Presiding Bishop
  - 2. Procedure for Election
  - 3. Tenure of Office
  - 4. Procedure for absence, incapacity, resignation, retirement and on death of the Metropolitan or Presiding Bishop.
  
- B. BISHOPS
  - 5. Office and Functions of Diocesan, Coadjutor, Suffragan and Assistant Bishops
  - 6. Procedure for Election or Appointment and Confirmation
  - 7. Terms of Office
  - 8. Persons eligible
  - 9. Consecration and Installation
  - 10. Procedure for absence, incapacity, resignation, retirement and on death of a Diocesan Bishop.
  
- C. THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD OR ASSEMBLY
  - 11. Powers and frequency
  - 12. Composition
  - 13. Officers
  - 14. Quorum
  - 15. Procedures
  - 16. Administration and Finance of Synod
  
- D. LITURGICAL MATTERS
  - 17. Procedure for Ordering and revising of liturgical services.
  
- E. DECLARATIONS AND ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE
  - 18. Declarations on appointment by bishops, clergy and lay ministers
  - 19. Declarations by members of Provincial Synod
  - 20. Ecclesiastical offences and their treatment
  - 21. Ecclesiastical Courts and their procedures
  - 22. Tenure of Office
  
- F. FUNDS AND PROPERTY OF PROVINCE
  
- G. DEFINITION OF TERMS:  
Such as:  
Fundamental Declaration  
Article/Canon/Regulation/Law  
Province  
Diocese  
Resolution  
Rule/Standing Order  
Synod

Validity and irregularity

H. PROCEDURE FOR AMENDMENT:  
Articles/Canons/Regulations/ Laws

Note: Unlike the Fundamental Declarations of Part I, Part II (sometimes described as 'the Canons', or 'the Articles', or 'the Regulations', or 'Church Law') should be open to amendment by processes which while safeguarding stability, do not frustrate adaptive change; i.e. without too great difficulty and by agreed procedures.

In a Province which includes more than one nation a greater measure of autonomy needs to be given to the constituent dioceses (see 2(e) above).

### PART THREE

#### RULES OF ORDER AND PROCEDURE

Note: These are to do with the normal procedures by which business is conducted in meetings of the Province.

B *Guidelines on Metropolitan Authority*

- (1) Metropolitan Authority (however diverse its exercise may be in different parts of the Anglican Communion), is to be understood as the focus of ultimate decision-making in a Province, and the process by which it is exercised. By Province we understand to be 'a self-governing Church composed of several dioceses operating under a common Constitution and having one supreme legislative body' (ACC-3 p. 59). The concept of Metropolitan Authority affirms the conviction that no diocese can exist in isolation. The norm is that each diocese is one of several which have been formed together into a Province.
- (2) Dioceses receive pastoral support through their membership in a Province and grow within the general Anglican ethos which they in turn help to form. The concept of Metropolitan Authority relates to this general welfare and growth of the whole Church in which it is exercised.
- (3) Metropolitan Authority has been expressed primarily through the canonical responsibilities laid upon bishops. This authority is usually exercised by an Archbishop functioning as Metropolitan. However Provincial or General Synods are now almost universally recognized as the bodies through which the Bishops, together with the Metropolitan, exercise their authority synodically with the clergy and laity for the government and good ordering of the Church. Thus the decisions of a Provincial Synod are, and are seen to be, acts of the whole body, and represent, as far as it is discernible, the common mind of the Church. Metropolitan Authority is exercised today largely within synodical structures, but sometimes may still be exercised individually by the Metropolitan (Primate, Primus, Presiding Bishop, etc.).
- (4) The degree to which Metropolitan Authority is exercised individually or corporately in association with the House of Bishops or the Provincial Synod is determined by the Constitution and Canons of the particular Province. Metropolitan Authority includes the following:
  - a. The exercise of pastoral oversight including discipline over the jurisdiction concerned, ensuring that both the Provincial constitution and canonical

- development are in accordance with general Anglican tradition and practice, and that the provisions of the Provincial Constitution and Canons are adhered to.
- b. Authorising the amalgamation or division of dioceses and the creation of new dioceses.
  - c. Authorising and confirming the election, and/or translation, of Bishops.
  - d. Consecrating or issuing the mandate for the consecration of bishops.
  - e. The provision of adequate episcopal oversight in the case of vacancies.
  - f. Provision for effecting changes in the Constitution and Canons of dioceses in so far as they pertain to faith and order, or relations with other parts of the Anglican Communion.
  - g. Ensuring the calling of meetings of the Synods of the jurisdiction.
  - h. Receiving or hearing appeals for which provision is made in the appropriate Constitution and Canons.
- (5) The word 'authority' is used in English in two distinct senses which correspond to the Latin words *auctoritas* – the weight of opinion which must be respected, and *imperium* – the right to be obeyed. In a provincial structure the office of Metropolitan possesses considerable *auctoritas* but only such *imperium* as is given by the Constitution and Canons of the Province concerned. In extra-Provincial dioceses related to a particular Archbishop, Metropolitan Authority must include a greater measure of *imperium* than is customarily given within a Provincial structure, but this must lessen as synodical structures develop.

[3]

**ACC-5. 1981. NEWCASTLE–UPON–TYNE. ENGLAND**

9. New dioceses and Provinces

**Resolution 28: New dioceses and Provinces**

*The Council re-affirms the criteria set out in the Report of ACC-4 (pages 54-55) on the formation of new dioceses, and further urges that, when new dioceses or Provinces are being contemplated, the authorities in the diocese or Province as appropriate consult with the Secretary General of the ACC at an early stage.*

[4]

**JOINT MEETING OF THE PRIMATES OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION  
AND THE ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL**

**CAPE TOWN 1993**

**RESOLUTION 52: Guidelines for Provincial Constitutions**

Resolved, that this Joint Meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion and the Anglican Consultative Council, directs the addition of the following clause to the 'Guidelines for Provincial Constitutions and Metropolitan Authority' agreed to at ACC-4 (Resolution 16).

At the consecration of a Bishop, the Bishop should undertake canonical obedience in all things lawful to the Metropolitan and to the upholding of provincial and diocesan constitutions.

[5]

## ACC-10, 1996 PANAMA CITY

### On the process for creating New Provinces

#### Schedule (Additional Guidelines)

1. For the Primate, or any other Council or body having metropolitan authority for the relevant dioceses, to make contact with the ACC as soon as a proposal for formation of a new Province is under serious consideration.
2. This referral might (and ideally would normally) be accompanied by an invitation to the ACC for a visit by the Secretary General, or by someone nominated by the Secretary General, to the dioceses or region, if possible to co-incide with some other activity of the Anglican Communion requiring the Secretary General's presence in the area. The purpose of the visit would be to discuss the application of the ACC's guidelines to the specific situation in the local area.
3. Once initial consultation had taken place, and it was agreed in principle that it would be expedient to form a new Province in the region, the promoters would appoint a drafting committee, to consider the outline draft constitution set out by the ACC. They would address any issues arising from it that had not yet been considered by the promoters, and set up clear lines of communication and a timetable for consultation with the dioceses concerned, with their metropolitan authority, and with the ACC.
4. The drafting process in itself is likely to take some considerable time, but the ACC can provide significant assistance in advising both on the content of constitutions (by comparison with those used elsewhere in the Communion), and on the arrangements that may need to be made for that stage of the discussion.
5. On receipt of the first (and any subsequent) draft constitution by the ACC, the Secretary General may, in consultation with the Standing Committee as appropriate, appoint a committee, or call upon individual consultants, to make observations on its behalf for further consideration by the promoters and their advisors.
6. Having agreed on the form of the new constitution, the proposers are asked to submit their application for revision of the scheduled list to the ACC not less than 15 months ahead of the next meeting of the full Council.
7. The Secretary General in accordance with Article 3(a) will then consult with the Primates, either at their next scheduled meeting or individually, to seek the two-thirds majority approval required by its constitution.
8. The proposal of revision of the schedule (to add the new Province to the scheduled list) will be put on the agenda for approval at the next full meeting, subject to any outstanding consents of Primates.
9. The Secretary General will be charged with informing the Archbishop of Canterbury at every stage as to the ACC's view on the eligibility of the applicant body for recognition as an autonomous Province of the Anglican Communion.