



Press Release

Sudan Solidarity Visit - Secretary General of the Anglican Communion visits the Episcopal Church of Sudan

For Immediate Release: March 19, 2024

Bishop Anthony Poggo, the Secretary General of the Anglican Communion has made a solidarity visit to the Episcopal Church of Sudan, hosted by The Most Revd Ezekiel Kondo, Primate of Sudan. Bishop Anthony has been meeting with faith leaders, as well as visiting church and community groups. The visit has been made almost one year on from the outbreak of conflict in Sudan. It marks the first visit of a non-Sudanese senior-level Anglican clergy since war erupted.

The conflict in Sudan is causing a huge humanitarian crisis, with more than 10,000 killed. 5.6 million people have been displaced and are fleeing to areas in Chad, Ethiopia and South Sudan. Cholera is rife. The destruction of property, including churches and places of worship, continues through ongoing warfare. Many mediation efforts in the region are failing to make progress.

Throughout his solidarity visit, Bishop Anthony has reinforced calls to peace and solidarity statements that have been made by church alliances around the world.

On Sunday March 17, Bishop Anthony preached at a service at Christ Church Cathedral in Port Sudan, which was attended by The Most Revd Ezekiel Kondo, the Archbishop of Sudan, The Rt Revd Abdu Elnur Kodi (Bishop of Port Sudan) and the wider church community.

During his sermon, The Anglican Communion Secretary General said: *"I have come to encourage you and to tell that Sudan is not forgotten by the Anglican Communion."* He added: *"We pray for you often that peace comes to Sudan."*

Port Sudan is the only diocese that hasn't been directly affected by the conflict and is supporting many people in the region as a result. It was a lifeline for people first displaced in May and October last year, supplying water and support to those in need.

On the evening of March 18, Bishop Anthony was invited to speak at an Iftar, as part of an inter-faith meeting during Ramadan. It gathered government officials, ecumenical and inter-faith leaders. Those present included the Catholic Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Khartoum (Archbishop Michael Didi Adgum Mangoria), the Minister of Religious Affairs and Endorsements and a Representative of the Governor of the Red Sea State.

In words prepared for the meeting, The Secretary General said:

"I have come to Port Sudan to visit Archbishop Ezekiel and the Episcopal Church of Sudan, heads of Sudanese Churches to encourage you and show solidarity. I want to assure you that you have not been forgotten."



"It may be frustrating that the media has not been saying much of your situation, however many people across the globe continue to keep you in their thoughts and prayers, even if it does not appear to be the case.

"All Sudanese people have faced uncertainties, frustrations, hopelessness, and suffering for the last 11 months. I am aware of the terrible impact of the conflict on the people and communities here. The displacement of people internally as well the influx of refugees in the wider region causes huge suffering.

Bishop Anthony is South Sudanese and referenced his own experiences of war and conflict saying:
"I hope and pray that your leaders will think of the suffering of the Sudanese people. I know first-hand what it means to be a refugee or to be displaced. I have been displaced 3 times in the various conflicts in South Sudan.

"Many of us here today are leaders covering many different faith groups and ecumenical backgrounds. I want to encourage religious co-existence amongst you. Let us be bearers of peace in our communities, and call on the government and leaders to take responsibility. I appeal for respect of places of worship during this conflict, for all faiths. Whatever grievances that we all have, leaders and people, the best thing is to talk with each other and reconcile. The Anglican Communion will do what we can to support you and the peace process in this nation."

Commenting on the Secretary General's visit, the Primate of Sudan Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo said: *"As the Anglican Communion's Secretary General, Bishop Anthony Poggo is the first senior level Anglican clergy to visit the region since the war began. At a time where war is waging in many parts of Sudan, his visit to the Episcopal Church of Sudan has been a real encouragement and an act of solidarity. It shows us that Sudan is not forgotten by the Anglican Communion.*

"Other conflicts in the world can divert media attention from the situation in Sudan, but peace is urgently need, as well as humanitarian aid for displaced people within Sudan and for refugees in the neighbouring countries.

"May he continue to give voice to what he has witnessed. May it be heard around the Anglican Communion. We also have a representative in the United Nations, and we hope that they will raise a voice at that level."

The Anglican Communion – as a member of the World Council of Churches – supported a WCC statement calling for peace in June 2023. The Africa Anglican Primates through CAPA (Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa) also made a "Statement of Solidarity to the Primate and the Faithful Episcopal Church of Sudan" in December 2023.

An excerpt from the CAPA statement reads: *"We, the Africa Anglican Primates, meeting for fellowship and consultation, extend this message of solidarity to our Brother, Most Rev. Ezekiel Kondo, Primate of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, all the members of the Episcopal Church and the entire Sudanese community, both at home and abroad. We want to assure you of our ongoing prayers and steadfast support during these challenging times."*

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