

## A Personal Observation of the Statement at the Lambeth Conference 2008

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The Statement at the Lambeth Conference ([http://www.globalsouthanglican.org/index.php/comments/statement\\_on\\_lambeth\\_conference\\_2008/](http://www.globalsouthanglican.org/index.php/comments/statement_on_lambeth_conference_2008/)), issued by the Primates of Indian Ocean, Burundi, Congo, South East Asia, Myanmar, Tanzania, Sudan, Jerusalem and the Middle East, West Africa, and their episcopal colleagues, as the Lambeth Conference 2008 began its final day of deliberation, is significant for the following respects:

1. The opening paragraph harkens to two Global South documents: the Communiqué at the Third South-South Encounter in 2005, and *the Anglican Catechism in Outline*. The 2005 Communiqué has served as the common platform for partnership and unity in churches across the southern continents in the Anglican Communion. The agreements reached and vision shared in 2005 have been the cornerstone for cooperation across the Global South. This remains unchanged despite recent circumstances that may perhaps sow divisions among churches in the Global South. *Anglican Catechism in Outline: A Common Home Between Us* represents the most significant theological work from the Global South. The doctrine position on the supreme authority Holy Scripture is a direct quotation from that document.
2. The Statement takes a public and conciliatory stand on collegial fellowship and continuing partnership with all those for principled reasons could not be present at this Lambeth Conference, and with all the faithful Bishops, Clergy and Laity in the United States and Canada and elsewhere who are suffering recrimination and hostility perpetrated upon them by their dioceses and/or national churches which have not unequivocally complied with the specific Windsor proposals required of them in full. The Statement pleads for unity and cooperation among all “orthodox groups”.
3. The Statement supports the Covenant and Windsor Continuation Group processes as the best ways forward if Anglican Communion is to remain as a communion of ordered churches. At the same time it recognises that the ways forward cannot merely depend on centralised processes of formal Communion apparatus. Global South churches will take complementary and yet independent and fresh initiatives for upholding the faith, and for pastoring the faithful in the Communion. Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Statement spell out such initiatives.
4. Thus, the Statement points to the charismatic/missional/apostolic foundation of the churches in the global South and of the whole Communion. Historically, the spread of Anglican churches worldwide indeed has never dependent on centralised processes, as Gregory Cameron noted in his Hellins Lectures 2008. This is underlined by the opening and closing biblical references. “We greatly rejoice that the Word of God has unleashed its saving power and has breathed life in our churches and peoples. God has preserved for the Communion his saints and testimony of their faith and our forebears throughout the Anglican Communion not least in the southern continents for its common good. We thank our Lord, in the midst of our current crisis, for increasing in us the conviction and confirmation of the prophetic and priestly vocation of the Global South as a precious gift to the Anglican Communion.” It rejects the prevailing positions that (a) merely understand differences in the Communion in terms of cultural diversities, and (b) understand the trajectories of God's work in the global South solely in terms of Western thought-patterns.
5. It recognises the continuing task to hear what Lord Jesus speaks to the church today. Such includes long-term commitment to theological reflection and contribution within churches in the global South.

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