



ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

LP Ref: ABC/BM82001

The Most Reverend Henry Ndukuba,
Archbishop of Abuja and Primate of All Nigeria

27 May 2022

The Most Reverend Laurent Mbanda,
Archbishop of Rwanda and Bishop of Gasabo

The Most Reverend Stephen Samuel Kaziimba Mugalu,
Archbishop of Uganda and Bishop of Kampala

Your Graces,

We note the statement released by Your Graces on 6 May 2022 in response to the Communique of the Primate's Meeting of the Anglican Communion held in London in March 2022. We stand by the statements in that communique, not least that which laments the absence of Your Graces from that meeting and of your churches from other instruments of the Communion's life.

The Bible is at the heart of Christian life. Anglicans hold to Scripture as the ultimate authority in matters of faith, as the Church has down the centuries. There have always been disagreements on matters that affect the faith and life of the church and, from the Council of Jerusalem (see Acts 15) onwards the way that the Church has dealt with disagreement has been by prayerful discussion and listening to the views of those who differ. Questions of human identity and sexuality will undoubtedly be discussed at the Lambeth Conference but bishops from Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda have indicated that they will not be there. Therefore they will have neither voice nor the opportunity to listen.

We are obliged, in addition, to correct some of the claims in your statement. First, Resolution I.10 of the Lambeth Conference in 1998 remains the latest expression of Anglican Communion teaching on the subject. It has not been rescinded. This resolution holds in balance the traditional understanding of marriage which is held by the Anglican Communion and the necessity to resist any form of homophobia and discrimination against homosexual people. It is important to note, always, the two sides of this resolution. Second, I, Justin as Archbishop of Canterbury have not invited any same-sex spouses of bishops to the Lambeth Conference. This has caused a number of protests, including one from the University of Kent, which has offered accommodation to these spouses independent of the Lambeth Conference. Third, we are distressed to read that you consider matters of the environment, poverty and economic

disadvantage to be 'peripheral'. These are matters of life and death for large parts of the Communion. They are the result of human sin of despoiling and ruining God's creation and it is anticipated that the world will see devastating wars and the displacement of up to one billion people as a direct result of climate change. Not to care for God's creation and for the poor and destitute is in direct contravention of the teaching of scripture and the words of Jesus Christ.

Fourth, "Canterbury", or to be clear, the Church of England, has not in any way changed its teaching on marriage or the place of sexual relations. I would be grateful if this inaccurate statement could cease to be made (as I see it was in a letter to all Nigerian Bishops on 8th May) and it would be proper to correct it.

The invitation for bishops of the Anglican Communion provinces of Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda remains open. God calls us to unity and not to conflict (John 17:21) so that the world may know he came from the Father. That is the very purpose of the church globally. Boycotts do not proclaim Christ. Those who stay away cannot be heard, they will lose influence and the chance of shaping the future. All of us will be the poorer spiritually as a result of your absence.

Yours in the peace of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Welby". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

The Most Reverend and Right Honourable
Justin Welby

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josiah Idowu-Fearon". The signature is written in a cursive style.

The Most Reverend Dr Josiah Idowu-Fearon
Secretary General of the Anglican
Communion