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Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group

COMMUNIQUÉ

Meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group
Alexandria, Virginia, USA
12-16 February 2000

The dialogue between Anglicans and Lutherans on the worldwide level has been underway in varying formats since 1970. Prominent among the reports produced by this dialogue are *The Niagara Report* (1987), focusing on the mission of the church and the role of the ordained ministry, and *The Diaconate as an Ecumenical Opportunity* (1995), which concluded the work of the Anglican - Lutheran International Commission.

On the national and regional levels, Anglican and Lutheran churches have over several years moved toward different, binding forms of church fellowship, stemming from agreements such as the *Meissen Common Statement* (1988) between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church of Germany, the *Porvoo Common Statement* (1996) between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and most of the Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches, and the *Reuilly Common Statement* (1999) between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the French Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Awaiting final decision are the proposed agreements Called to Common Mission between the Episcopal Church in the USA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Waterloo Declaration between The Anglican Church of Canada and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Other significant developments in Anglican-Lutheran relations are taking place in Africa, Australia and Brazil.

The Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation in 1997 and the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops in 1998 both expressed their support of the developments toward agreements of church fellowship on regional and national level – those achieved and those in progress – between Anglican and Lutheran churches. They also affirmed the commitment of the two communions to continue and further their bilateral ecumenical relations.

In order to continue the formal contact between the two communions, it was decided in 1998 by the authorities of the Lutheran World Federation and the Anglican Communion, that a joint working group would be established.

This Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group met from 12 to 16 February 2000 at Virginia Theological Seminary, Virginia, USA. The following persons, appointed by the respective communions, took part:

Anglicans: Bishop David Tustin, England, (co-chair), Bishop Sebastian Bakare, Zimbabwe, the Revd. Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, Canada, The Revd. Professor William H. Petersen, USA, Bishop Orlando Santos de Oliveira, Brazil, and the Revd. Canon David Hamid, Anglican Communion Office (co-secretary).

Lutherans: Bishop Ambrose Moyo, Zimbabwe, (co-chair), Professor Kirsten Busch-Nielsen, Denmark, the Revd. Dr. Hartmut Hövelmann, Germany, Professor Michael Root, USA, Professor Ola Tjørhom, Norway / France, and the Revd. Sven Oppegaard, The Lutheran World Federation (co-secretary).

Mrs. Christine Codner, Anglican Communion Office, served as the administrative assistant to the meeting.

The mandate of the working group involves monitoring the development and progress in Anglican-Lutheran relations in the various regions of the world and assessing the significance of the regional developments for the furthering of relationships between Anglicans and Lutherans worldwide.

The initial meeting reviewed and discussed the ongoing processes related to the various developments in Anglican-Lutheran relations worldwide. It identified several issues of principle and practice in the life of the communions and their ecumenical relations calling for further examination. It began to clarify and assess such issues.

It is expected that the Working group will carry out its work over a three-year period, after which it will submit its final report to the respective parent bodies.

First meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group

February 12-16, 2000 - Alexandria, Virginia, USA

Participants discuss ecumenical developments

ALEXANDRIA, Virginia, U. S. A. /GENEVA, 7 March 2000 (lwi) - The first meeting of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group took place from 12 - 16 February 2000 at the Virginia Theological Seminary with a focus on the various developments in the relations between the two worldwide Christian communions.

Established in 1998 by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Anglican Communion, the working group, which comprises 13 members - seven Anglicans and six Lutherans - aims to continue the formal contact between the two communions, which dates back in varying forms to 1970.

The group's mandate involves monitoring the development and progress in Anglican-Lutheran relations in the various regions of the world and assessing the significance of the regional developments for the furthering of relationships between the two worldwide Christian communions.

At the February meeting, participants identified several key concerns and practices in the life of the communions and their ecumenical relations calling for further examination. They also began to clarify and assess such issues.

The working group, presently co-chaired by Anglican Bishop David Tustin (England) and Lutheran Bishop Ambrose Moyo (Zimbabwe), is expected to carry out its work over a three-year period, after which a final report will be submitted to the communions' respective governing bodies.

The 1997 LWF Assembly and the Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops in 1998 both expressed their support for the developments toward agreements of church fellowship on the regional and national level - those achieved and those in progress - between Anglican and Lutheran churches. They also affirmed the commitment of the two communions to continue and further their bilateral ecumenical relations.

On the national and regional levels, Anglican and Lutheran churches have for several years moved toward different, binding forms of church fellowship, stemming from agreements such as the *Meissen Common Statement* (1988) between the Church of England and the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), the *Porvoo Common Statement* (1996) between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and most Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches, and the *Reuilly Common Statement* (1999) between the British and Irish Anglican Churches and the French Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

Prominent among reports produced by the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue are *The Niagara Report* (1987), focusing on the mission of the church and the role of the ordained ministry, and *The Diaconate as an Ecumenical Opportunity* (1995). The working group will examine whether the full Anglican-Lutheran International Commission (ALIC) should be restarted.

The LWF presently has 128 member churches in 70 countries representing 59.5 million of the world's 63.1 million Lutherans. There are nearly 70 million members of the Anglican family in 37 self-governing Member Churches or Provinces in more than 160 countries.