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The Anglican Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council (AOCICC)

Königswinter, Germany 2017-Communiqué

8 July 2017

The Anglican-Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council (AOCICC) met in the Arbeitnehmerzentrum in Königswinter near Bonn, Germany, from 4 to 8 July 2017. The meeting was hosted by the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht. This was the fifth meeting of the Council under its current mandate.

The work of this meeting included:

- reflecting on the nature and meaning of our communion;
- updating each other about developments within each Communion;
- briefing each other about developments in the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical relationships in which both Communion are engaged;
- considering how to develop concrete proposals for the common mission of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches on the European continent.

A significant feature of the 2017 meeting of the Council was the receiving of the results of the survey *Belonging together in Europe* commissioned by the Council in 2015. The Council was encouraged by the 106 responses from five countries across mainland Europe. The survey reflected a high level of awareness of the relationship of full communion between Anglicans and Old Catholics. The survey illustrates the varied ways in which the churches are engaging with each other, especially in areas where congregations from both churches are present in the same place. Respondents requested more resources for joint worship services. The survey reflects concern with the issues of overlapping jurisdictions. There is a wish for a more strategic approach to mutual engagement in service, witness and mission. The Council agreed to send out the results of the survey to all respondents and participating churches and invites their comments for consideration at next year's meeting.

In the light of the many requests of survey respondents for more information about each other's churches, it was providential that the Council had planned the launch of the brochure *Anglicans and Old Catholics together in Europe* in the context of this year's meeting. The launch took place at the Hotel Königshof in Bonn overlooking the Rhine. It was in this historic location that the text of the Bonn Agreement between the Anglicans and Old Catholics was signed on 2 July 1931. The brochure seeks to provide an introduction, in a fresh and attractive way, to the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches in Europe. It is a distillation of issues raised in the Council's own 2011 statement *Belonging together in Europe - A joint statement on aspects of ecclesiology and mission*. The brochure is to be distributed by the various Anglican and Old Catholic dioceses to parishes and local communities.

Twenty-one young adults from nine countries joined the Co-Chairs of the Council and the national youth ministers of Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland for an AOCICC international pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Willibrord in Echternach, Luxembourg, over Ascension, from 25 to 28 May 2017. The Council records its gratitude to the Revd Antje Kirchhofer for her tireless efforts in organising the pilgrimage. The Council received with appreciation a common statement from the participants in German and English called the Willibrord Declaration/ Willibrord Erklärung. It commends this text (see appendix) to the churches. The Willibrord Declaration will inform and shape the Council's work and future mandate. Similarly, the Council recommends that the issues identified in the Declaration will be addressed by participants of the International Old Catholic Youth Congress in Austria, from 20 to 23 September 2018. The Council encourages participants of the pilgrimage 2017 to attend next year's congress.

At the request of the recent meeting of Anglican and Old Catholic Bishops on mainland Europe, the Council reflected on the issues of child abuse and safeguarding. The Council recognises the centrality and importance of safeguarding in both communions whilst noting the differences in the structure and procedures of each national church policy. The interchangeability of ministers is a significant area where the churches are obliged to exchange information and to take the utmost care in ensuring consistency in their policies and procedures.

The work of the Council began and closed with a Eucharist at which the Bishop of Haarlem, Dr Dirk Jan Schoon, and Bishop David Hamid, Suffragan in the Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe, presided and preached respectively. The Council also prayed the Daily Office together according to the Anglican and Old Catholic traditions. The Council especially appreciated the opportunity to join the celebration of Ecumenical Vespers in the Namen-Jesu-Kirche in the centre of Bonn. The Council appreciated the help and assistance provided by Ordinariatsrat Dr Ralph Kirscht at the Episcopal Office and AOCICC member Jennifer Knudsen for their invaluable support in planning this meeting and facilitating contact with the local Anglican and Old Catholic parishes. The Revd Richard Gardiner and the Revd John Clasper from the Anglican Chaplaincy of Bonn and Cologne attended part of the meeting. Reiner Knudsen, vice-chair of the Synod Standing Committee of the Catholic Diocese of the Old Catholics in Germany, joined the Council at its closing Eucharist and brought the greetings of its Bishop, Matthias Ring.

The Council will next meet in Winchester, England, 22–26 May 2018, hosted by the Anglican Communion and then in Prague, Czechia, 16–19 January 2019, hosted by the Old Catholic Churches Union of Utrecht.

For further information, please contact the Revd Lars Simpson (lars.simpson@christkatholisch.ch) or the Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut at the Anglican Communion Office (john.gibaut@anglicancommunion.org)
Websites: www.utrechterunion.org and www.anglicancommunion.org

Königswinter, 8 July 2017

Members of the Council:

ANGLICANS

The Right Revd Michael Burrows, Co-chair
The Revd Jennifer Adams-Massmann
The Right Revd David Hamid
Mrs Jennifer Knudsen
The Revd Tony Litwinski
The Revd Canon Dr John Gibaut, Co-secretary
The Revd Neil Vigers, Anglican Communion Office

OLD CATHOLICS

The Right Revd Dr Dirk Jan Schoon, Co-chair
The Revd Professor Dr Angela Berlis
The Revd ThDr. Petr Jan Vin.
The Revd Lars Simpson, Co-secretary

Willibrord Declaration 2017

Between 25th-28th May 2017, 21 Old Catholic and Anglican young people gathered in Echternach (Luxemburg) a place of symbolic unity. We took St Willibrord's example, and explored what unites our churches and the challenges we face. We have experienced and celebrated unity in practice during our pilgrimage, and have learnt, discussed, worshipped and prayed together despite our different languages, traditions and cultures.

We believe unity is best expressed through joint practical action. As a result of these experiences we challenge the Anglican Old Catholic International Co-ordinating Council (AOCICC) and the Churches it represents to take the following actions:

1. Further promote this unity with opportunities for many members of each Church to meet, discuss and pray together. Unity is so often built from personal relationships and listening with humility. These opportunities must be open and accessible to all.

2. Increase religious literacy and inter-faith/denominational dialogue, both inside Christian churches and our wider societies. This is crucial to countering ignorance, prejudice, and reduce misunderstanding and conflict.

3. Radically act to address injustices in our world. We believe this must be done through careful and prayerful reflection, followed by bold Christ-like action. Significant injustices in our minds are:

- All forms of **DISCRIMINATION** both within and outside the Church.
- Lack of stewardship and disregard for our **ENVIRONMENT**, climate change and irresponsible agriculture.
- Continuing **POVERTY** and the exploitation of the most vulnerable in society.
- Lack of sufficient meaningful action regarding the **REFUGEE CRISIS** and the language of hate.
- Ongoing **RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE** leading to terrorism and war. We must candidly discuss the interplay of religion and violence in our collective history.
- Misuse of and ignorance towards **TECHNOLOGY**. As Christians, we should engage with the ethical implications of new technologies and the data they gather.
- **UNETHICAL PRACTICES** leading to inequality such as in business, fashion, education, politics, and in our Churches (both locally and internationally).

We believe a productive way forward is to form groups of people, both clergy and laity, from all Churches who are truly passionate about each individual injustice.

4. All action taken must be informed by our common identity in Jesus Christ. We, as Christians, must stand for equality, justice, love and care, selflessness, honesty, and guard against judgmental attitudes.

5. We, as the Church, must take ownership of our past failures, as well as celebrating successes, and with the help of God address the pain caused in our history. We must do this to move forward as disciples of Christ.

In undertaking these challenges, we must do so in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, inspired by his example. Each challenge cannot be addressed by the Church leadership alone. All people, lay and ordained, young and old, must be integral to this process.

For what does the Lord require of us, "but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Echternach, Luxemburg, 27 May 2017

Willibrord - Erklärung 2017

Vom 25. bis 28. Mai 2017 versammelten sich 21 altkatholische und anglikanische Jugendliche in Echternach (Luxemburg) als symbolischem Ort der Einheit. Wir haben uns den Heiligen Willibrord als Beispiel genommen und sind der Frage nachgegangen, was unsere Kirchen vereint und welchen Herausforderungen wir entgegenblicken. Während der Pilgerreise haben wir Einheit konkret erlebt und gefeiert. Trotz unserer verschiedenen Sprachen, Traditionen und Kulturen haben wir voneinander und miteinander gelernt, diskutiert, Gottesdienste gefeiert und gebetet.

Wir glauben daran, dass Einheit am besten durch gemeinsames praktisches Handeln zum Ausdruck gebracht wird. Als Folge unserer Erfahrungen ermutigen wir den Internationalen Anglikanisch/Altkatholischen Koordinierungsrat (AOCICC) und die Kirchen, die er vertritt, zu folgendem Handeln:

1. Verstärkt diese Einheit weiterhin, indem vielen Mitgliedern von jeder Kirche eine Plattform geboten wird, sich zu treffen, sich auszutauschen und gemeinsam zu beten. Einheit stützt sich oftmals auf persönliche Beziehungen und die Fähigkeit, in Demut zuzuhören. Diese Möglichkeiten müssen für alle offen und zugänglich sein.

2. Fordert die religiöse Bildung und den Dialog zwischen den verschiedenen Glaubensrichtungen und Konfessionen innerhalb und außerhalb der christlichen Kirche und des gesellschaftlichen Umfelds. Dies ist zentral, um Ignoranz und Vorurteilen vorzubeugen und Unverständnis und Konflikte zu reduzieren.

3. Handelt entschieden und spricht Ungerechtigkeiten in unserer Welt an. Wir glauben, dass dies durch umsichtige Reflexion und im Gebet geschehen kann, gefolgt von mutigen Taten nach dem Vorbild Christi. Dabei meinen wir folgende Ungerechtigkeiten:

- a. Alle Formen von **DISKRIMINIERUNG** sowohl innerhalb als auch außerhalb der Kirche.
- b. Mangelnde Sorgsamkeit und Missachtung gegenüber unserer **UMWELT**, dem Klimawandel und verantwortungslose Landwirtschaft.
- c. Anhaltende **ARMUT** und Ausbeutung der Wehrlosen in der Gesellschaft.
- d. Mangel an notwendigen bedeutenden Taten als Reaktion auf die **FLÜCHTLINGSKRISE** und Hassreden.
- e. Andauernde **RELIGIÖSE GEWALT** führt zu Terrorismus und Krieg. Den Missbrauch von Religion zur Rechtfertigung von Gewalt in unserer vereinten Geschichte müssen wir aufrichtig und geradeheraus ansprechen.
- f. Missbrauch von und Ignoranz gegenüber **TECHNOLOGIE**. Als Christen sollten wir uns mit den ethischen Implikationen der neuen Technologien und der Daten, die sie generieren, auseinandersetzen.
- g. **UNETHISCHE PRAKTIKEN** führen zu Ungleichheit in der Wirtschaft, der Modebranche, Bildung, Politik und in unseren Kirchen (sowohl regional als auch international).

Wir glauben, dass es ein zielführender Weg ist, Gruppen aus Laien und dem Klerus aus allen Kirchen zu bilden, welche aufrichtig an Lösungsansätzen arbeiten wollen.

4. Unser ganzes Handeln muss geprägt sein durch unsere gemeinsame Verbundenheit in Jesus Christus. Wir, als Christinnen und Christen, müssen für Gleichberechtigung, Gerechtigkeit, Liebe, Fürsorge, Selbstlosigkeit und Ehrlichkeit einstehen sowie uns vor urteilenden Einstellungen hüten.

5. Wir, als Kirche, müssen Fehler in der Vergangenheit offen eingestehen, wie auch Erfolge schätzen und mit der Hilfe Gottes das in unserer Geschichte verursachte Leid ansprechen. Dies ist notwendig, um als Nachfolgerinnen und Nachfolger Jesu Christi zu wachsen.

Mit Jesus Christus als Vorbild müssen wir diese Herausforderungen in Angriff nehmen. Keine davon kann von der Kirchenleitung allein gelöst werden. Alle Mitglieder, Laien und Ordinierte, Junge und Alte, müssen einbezogen sein in diesen Prozess.

Denn was der Herr von uns verlangt ist: «Recht zu üben und Gute zu lieben und in Einsicht mit Gott zu gehen» (Micha 6:8)

Echternach, Luxemburg, 27. Mai 2017