



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REV. PETER J. AKINOLA, D.D, CON
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

September 26th, 2007

A STATEMENT ON THE RESPONSE OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH TO THE DAR ES SALAAM COMMUNIQUÉ

In accordance with our desire to walk *“in a manner worthy of the calling to which we have been called, ... eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* Ephesians (4:1,2) we have looked forward with hope to the response of The Episcopal Church as requested by the Primates when we met earlier in the year in Dar es Salaam. That request was the culmination of many conversations and years of painful negotiations. It was our expressed desire to provide one final opportunity for an unequivocal assurance from The Episcopal Church of their commitment to the mind and teaching of the Communion. We also made clear that it is a time for clarity and a rejection of what hitherto has been endless series of ambiguous and misleading statements. Sadly it seems that our hopes were not well founded and our pleas have once again been ignored.

While we await a meeting of all the Primates to receive and determine the adequacy of The Episcopal Church’s response it seems clear from first reading that what is offered is not a whole hearted embrace of traditional Christian teaching and in particular the teaching that is expressed in Lambeth Resolution 1.10. The unequivocal assurances that we sought have not been given; what we have is a carefully calculated attempt to win support to ensure attendance at the Lambeth Conference and continued involvement in the life of the Communion.

Instead of the change of heart (repentance) that we sought what we have been offered is merely a temporary adjustment in an unrelenting determination to “bring the rest of the Communion along” as stated by a bishop at one of the press conferences. We also note that while we have repeatedly asked for a moratorium on same-sex blessings – across the Episcopal Church the clergy have continued with these blessings with the full knowledge and support of the Diocesan bishops even if not technically authorized.

This attitude towards the Word of God and the requests of the Communion is at odds with the Spirit of the One we serve. The Unity that Christ commands can only be found in obedience to the Truth revealed in the Holy Scriptures and mutual submission to one another. The Gospel message of freedom, justice and dignity for all persons can only be found in heartfelt repentance and joyful obedience to the Truth.

Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.”
John 14:21

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter Akinola" followed by a small flourish or initials.

The Most Revd. Peter J Akinola, CON, DD