

January 29, 2009

**The Conference of the Anglican Churches in the Americas
on Mutual Responsibility and Mission**

**San José, Costa Rica
February 22-27, 2009**

Background:

In November of 2006 the Executive Council of The Episcopal Church passed a resolution (INC005) requesting the Presiding officers to appoint a working group to investigate the possibilities of an Anglican regional convocation of the Americas. A task force was assembled and letters sent to Primates and Provincial Secretaries in the western hemisphere inquiring of the interest to “initiate a regional conversation as to how our provinces can better support each other in our faithfulness to God’s mission in the Americas”. During the Episcopal Church’s Standing Commission on World Mission meeting in October of 2007, further discussion continued with partners from the Anglican Churches in Americas who were present.

In 2007 a task force was appointed and convened, contacts were made and provincial representatives identified. From those provincial contacts a conference design team was formed.

Throughout 2008 and into 2009 the design team has faithfully convened by phone conference with interpreters on an average of every 3 weeks. The continued enthusiastic and collaborative work on the planning and details of the conference has built solid relationships among the team and resulted in the readiness for this unprecedented gathering to be held next month in Costa Rica.

Attendance:

We have confirmed full conference participation from The Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil, The Anglican Church of Canada, The Anglican Church of the Central America Region, The Anglican Church of Mexico, The Episcopal Church, and the Episcopal Church of Cuba.

The design team obtained permission from Primates of The Church in the Province of the West Indies and The Anglican Church of the Southern Cone to contact dioceses within their provinces directly and maintain hope of possible conference participation from these provinces as well.

High-level Summary of work

- **Nov 2006:** EC passes resolution INC005 requesting the Presiding Bishop and the President of the House of Deputies to appoint a working group to investigate the possibilities of an Anglican regional convocation of the Americas
- **Feb-Apr 2007:** Task Force formed and initial planning commences
- **May 2007- Jan 2008:** Provinces and Primates contacted and representatives identified
- **Feb-Apr 2008:** Conference design team formed and met to discuss conference
- **May-Aug 2008:** Conference attendees and funding requirements identified
- **Sep-Dec 2008:** Conference planning continues, Funding requirement identified and money raised
- **Sep 2008-Jan 2009:** Conference planning continues with design team teleconferences every 2-3 weeks
- **Feb 22-27, 2009:** Conference to be held in Costa Rica

Conference Agenda and Schedule

A draft conference schedule is in place and will be updated only slightly as the design team continues to work through the details. The days will begin and end with devotions or Eucharist led by representatives from all provinces. Bible study will be a part of each day.

The Conference Keynote Presenter will be John Kafwanka, Research Project Officer for Mission and Evangelism at the Anglican Communion Office. Kafwanka will ground his remarks and a workshop in the 5 Marks of Mission as well as participate throughout the entire conference

There will be plenary sessions led by provincial participants on predetermined topics. Each province will provide a presentation to the conference based on the 5 marks of mission and guidelines created by the design team which include:

- What is the best method for giving other participants a true and clear picture of how your Province is managing when it comes to carrying out Mission?
- How many of the Marks of Mission does the church in your Province address?
- What would you say are some of the “success stories” in terms of your Province and the Marks of Mission?
- What do you see as being some of the challenges?
- Does your Province have a sense that there may be other Marks of Mission that have not been included in the Five we now have?

Additionally, there will be two moderated plenary sessions and the topics for presentation and discussion during these sessions will be selected from the following possibilities currently being finalized based on input from registered participants:

- Political/economic environment in our American continent
- Land, Food and Water
- Deforestation
- Justice (reconciliation and justice and the difference)

- Climate
- Millennium Development Goals
- Aboriginal peoples
- Looking at our realities and reflecting on God's word to us and coming to understand how we can share our mission concerns

One day will be spent visiting within the Diocese. Additionally, there are plans to worship and serve in the community on Ash Wednesday as well as dine at the homes of many Episcopalians in Costa Rica. And the two planned Eucharists will be concelebrated by all Primates in attendance.

Primates from all invited provinces have been contacted, and those participating at the conference include:

- The Most Rev. Mauricio J. Araujo de Andrade, The Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil
- The Most Rev. Carlos Touche-Porter, The Anglican Church of Mexico
- The Most Rev. Martin Barahona-Pascasio, The Anglican Church of the Central America Region
- The Rt. Rev. Miguel Tamayo, The Episcopal Church of Cuba
- The Most Rev. Fred James Hiltz, The Anglican Church of Canada
- The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, The Episcopal Church

Provincial Secretaries from all invited provinces have been contacted and those participating at the conference include:

- The Rev. Francisco De Assis Da Silva, The Episcopal Anglican Church of Brazil
- Rev. Canon Habacuc Ramos Huerta, The Anglican Church of Mexico
- The Rt. Rev. Hector Monterroso, The Anglican Church of the Central America Region
- The Ven. Dr. Michael Pollesel, The Anglican Church of Canada
- The Rev. Dr. Gregory Straub, The Episcopal Church, Secretary of the General Convention

Executive Council Resolution INC 005 asked for “the possibilities of an Anglican regional convocation of the Americas to equip better our churches for mutuality and interdependence in God’s mission.”

The Conference of the Anglican Churches in the Americas on Mutual Responsibility and Mission responds to this EC resolution by initiating and inviting deep engagement about mutual interdependence and mission throughout the Anglican Communion. Our hope is that this will result in the initiation of networks created and developed over time.

The intent to learn about and assist each other in regional mission has already commenced through the intentional planning process that has invited the voices and interests of leaders across geographic borders. The work of equipping our churches for mutuality and interdependence in God’s mission is a key component of the foundation that will be nurtured throughout this conference.