

THE CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE OF UGANDA

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2nd May 2009

The Most Reverend Rowan Williams
Archbishop of Canterbury and
Chair of the Primates Standing Committee
Lambeth Palace
London, England

Via e-mail

Your Grace,

I have received a letter from Reverend Canon Kenneth Kearon, dated 30th April, refusing to seat the Church of Uganda's clergy delegate to the ACC, Rev. Philip Ashley. I assume you have seen a copy of his letter, and that you may have been part of the discussion of this matter in the meetings of the Joint Standing Committee.

Canon Kearon's letter states that the Joint Standing Committee has determined that Rev. Philip Ashley is not 'qualified' under Section 4(e) of the ACC's Constitution because we received him into the Church of Uganda in 2005 as part of our pastoral care to Anglican clergy and congregations in America who were being persecuted for upholding Lambeth 1.10 in the context of a Province that willfully violated and continues to violate it.

As I wrote in my first letter to Canon Kearon, appointment of delegates to the ACC from a Province is purely an internal matter and is not subject to review by any body within the ACC, including the Joint Standing Committee. That the Joint Standing Committee would assume such authority is a gross violation of our constitutional relationships, not to mention a further tearing of our bonds of affection. Our reasons for appointing one of our American priests to represent us as our clergy delegate are our reasons, and are not for the Joint Standing Committee to question.

The appointment of Rev. Philip Ashley to fill a vacancy at the last minute provides the Church of Uganda with a strong voice of a priest in good standing in the Diocese of Ruwenzori. It is also a voice for the almost 100,000 orthodox Anglicans in North America who have been persecuted by TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada, who will not be represented by their delegations to ACC-14, and who will not otherwise have voice or seat at the table of the ACC. It is important for the Communion to be reminded that there is a serious tear in the fabric of our communion; all is not well and there continues to be an urgent need to address the ongoing crisis before us.

Section 4(e) does not give the Joint Standing Committee or the ACC the right to interfere in the appointing body's determination of the "qualification" of a delegate. For the Joint Standing Committee to assume this power is nothing short of an imperialistic and colonial decision that violates the integrity of the Church of Uganda.

I reiterate – Rev. Philip Ashley is a priest in good standing of Ruwenzori Diocese and has been appointed by me as clergy delegate from the Church of Uganda. This is sufficient and the Joint Standing Committee does not have a right to challenge it.

It is, furthermore, very dangerous for Canon Kearon's letter to quote the Windsor Report and Communiqués of the Primates as the basis for refusing to seat Rev. Philip Ashley as our clergy delegate. None of these documents has authority to override the Constitution of the ACC. Furthermore, none of these documents ever suggested a moral equivalence between the pastoral care offered to persecuted clergy and congregations in North America and the violation of Biblical and historic Anglican teaching by TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada on the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination as bishop of persons living in same-sex relationships.

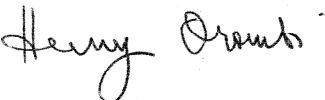
At our Primates meeting in Dromantine, Northern Ireland, we asked TEC and the Anglican Church of Canada to voluntarily withdraw from the Councils of the Church until the next Lambeth Conference. In Dar es Salaam, the Primates unanimously agreed that TEC should not be invited to Lambeth until they satisfactorily answered our questions, which most people know they did not do, your judgment notwithstanding. Yet, they have continued to be involved in all the Councils of the Church, and even with undue influence because of their wealth and command of English as their first language. There is a double standard at work here, and it favors the Western world and marginalizes Africa and others in the Global South.

We, therefore, appeal to you, in your capacity as Chair of the Primates Standing Committee and President of the ACC, to help the Joint Standing Committee understand the limits of their authority and to recognize the appointment of the Rev. Philip Ashley as clergy delegate to ACC-14 from the

Church of Uganda, and to accord to him every courtesy expected of any delegate from any Province of the Anglican Communion. This is a matter of urgency, and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

If the Church of Uganda's appointment of Rev. Philip Ashe is considered by you to be unacceptable, then we will be forced to take the steps necessary to bring this unbiblical, unjust and unconstitutional precedent to the attention of the rest of the Communion.

Yours in Christ,

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The Most Rev. Henry Luke Orombi

ARCHBISHOP OF THE CHURCH OF UGANDA.

xc: Rev. Canon Kenneth Kearon, Secretary General, ACC
Rev. Philip Ashe, Clergy Delegate to ACC-14
Mrs. Jolly Babirukamu, Lay Delegate to ACC-14
Rev. Canon Aaron Mwesigye, Provincial Secretary