



IAWN

International Anglican Women's Network

An Official Network of the Anglican Consultative Council

First Meeting of IAWN Provincial Links and Steering Group

Statement

*Happy are those who saw and were adorned with your love!
For we also shall surely live.*

Ecclesiasticus 48:11

This reading at Evening Prayer appropriately set the scene for the first meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council's International Anglican Women's Network (IAWN) held at the Desmond Tutu Center in New York, 22–27 February 2009. This is the first time Provincial Links and the Steering Group have been able to meet since its formation in 1996 to discuss the work of IAWN and its potential impact within the Church and beyond.

Thirty women, as either Provincial Link women or members of the Steering Group, came together to reflect on and plan the work of this significant Network which represents 40 million Anglican women across 165 countries. They also brought awareness of the challenges women face as women make up less than 6% of the membership of the Instruments of Communion of the Anglican Communion.

IAWN – way forward (2009 – 2012)

This inaugural meeting of IAWN has identified the following issues as key action plans for the next triennium:

- 1. Elimination of all forms of violence against women and children, including trafficking.**
- 2. Elimination of extreme poverty, including access to health care, safe water, and employment opportunities.**
- 3. Promotion of gender equality throughout the Anglican Communion.**
- 4. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.**
- 5. Promotion of gender budgeting, which is a key to all of the above.**

Elections of new Steering Group

A new Steering Group for the next triennium was elected at the meeting: Francisca Bawayan (Philippines), Ayra Inderyas (Pakistan), Priscilla Julie (Indian Ocean), Alice Medcof (Canada), Patricia Menendez (Southern Cone), Sandra McPhee (The Episcopal Church), and Ann Skamp (Australia). The eighth member is Margaret Jones (Mothers' Union [appointed]).

Provincial Links

The Provincial Links serve as the liaison between the Steering Group of IAWN and the Province. She maintains close contact with her Primate and builds networks with women's groups and individual women. Link women also build awareness and promote implementation of the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action, the UN Millennium Development Goals and Anglican Consultative Council

resolution ACC 13-31. Their reports to the Steering Group on women's activities and issues affecting women in their province provide the basis of the IAWN report to the ACC and the IAWN website.

They identified that challenges ahead revolve around communication, especially raising the profile of IAWN within each of their provinces and across the communion. A working group has been established to launch a newsletter for IAWN. They also identified financing of their advocacy work as a significant challenge in the future.

Participants reinforced their role and responsibilities as Provincial Links and began developing individual action plans to guide their work in their respective provinces. Their role of advocacy is expected to complement the Primate's office and strengthen the ministry of the Church as well as bringing the gospel to the wider society through their work.

Anglican Consultative Council resolution ACC 13-31

Promoting awareness and implementation of ACC 13-31 (2005) (*equal representation of women in decision making at all levels, establishment of a women's desk, and a study of the place and role of women in the structures of the Anglican Communion*) is an important part of the work of the Network and will continue to be so as it monitors its full implementation and reports to ACC 14 in May 2009 and subsequent meetings.

Partnerships

The participants particularly recognized the valuable partnership with and support from the Office of Women's Ministries & Leadership, Episcopal Church Center, and the support over the years of Anglican Women's Empowerment. IAWN looks forward to enhancing partnerships with the Anglican Observer's Office at the United Nations, the Anglican Peace and Justice Network and other networks, as well as working with The Rev. Terrie Robinson in her new role as the Anglican Communion Networks' Coordinator, offering its congratulations and prayers to her.

Achievements (2006 – 2009)

The participants expressed their appreciation for the direction and significant work of the outgoing Steering Group, especially the gracious leadership of the Coordinator, Priscilla Julie. Significant achievements of the Network since its reinvigoration in 2006 were celebrated, including.

- ♦ Formation of the Steering Group: Priscilla Julie, Coordinator (Indian Ocean), Lisbeth Barahona (Central America), Esperanza Beleo (Philippines), Joyce Kariuki (Kenya), Helena Mbele-Mbong (The Episcopal Church), Alice Medcof (Canada), Meagan Morrison, Secretary (Australia), and Margaret Jones (Mothers' Union [appointed]). Jolly Babirukamu (ACC Standing Committee Liaison) and Tai Tuatagaloa-Leota (Patron) were members *ex officio*. The Secretariat was provided by the Women's Ministries in the Episcopal Church Center: The Rev. Margaret Rose and then Kim Robey.
- ♦ Provincial Links appointed by their Primates from 34 provinces.
- ♦ Representation at the TEAM Conference in Boksburg, South Africa, March 2007.
- ♦ Consultation meeting for the Anglican women in the Great Lakes Region in conjunction with the joint meeting of the Anglican Peace and Justice Network and IAWN in Rwanda and Burundi, 25 September – 3 October 2007.
- ♦ Representation at Lambeth 2008 and provision of Fringe Events, as well as participation in the pre-Lambeth Conference "Transforming the Episcopate" in Oxford, July 2008.
- ♦ IAWN website <http://www.iawn.org> updated and now part of the Anglican Communion website.

- ♦ Many Provincial Links and Steering Group members have also been part of the Anglican Consultative Council Delegation to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women over this period of time.

Acknowledgements

The Provincial Links gave thanks to the many people who welcomed them and contributed to their discussions. They especially expressed their great appreciation to Kim Robey (Program Officer, Women's Ministries and Leadership, Episcopal Church Center) for her support in making this meeting possible.

The IAWN is particularly grateful for the vision, generous support and encouragement of Tai Tuatagaloa-Leota (as Patron, former Anglican Observer to the UN) and Phoebe Griswold who provided the initial impetus for the reinvigoration of IAWN.

They acknowledge with much gratitude the recognition and support of their Primates in appointing them as Provincial Links to IAWN.

The IAWN reaffirms its commitment to unity in Christ:

We remain resolute in our solidarity with one another and in our commitment, above all else, to pursue and fulfil God's mission in all we say and do.

Given the global tensions so evident in our church today, we do not accept that there is any one issue of difference or contention which can, or indeed would, ever cause us to break the unity as represented by our common baptism. Neither would we ever consider severing the deep and abiding bonds of affection which characterize our relationships as Anglican women.

From the Statement made by the Anglican Women gathered at the 51st Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, 3 March 2007

New York City, 26 February 2009