



# IAWN

## International Anglican Women's Network

A network of the Anglican Consultative Council

### REPORT TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE – March 2011

#### Primates' Statement on Gender-based violence

IAWN welcomes the Letter to the Churches of the Anglican Communion from the Primates concerning the issue of gender-based violence. For women and men around the Communion engaged in advocating for and working towards the elimination of gender-based violence such leadership from the Primates' Meeting has provided enormous encouragement. IAWN has asked Provincial Links to meet with their Primate and develop a strategic response to the Primates' Letter and to make sure the Letter is distributed widely to encourage us all to be involved in this work.

As this work of Gospel transformation continues IAWN looks forward to participating with the Primates and all of the Communion in clearly stating and ensuring that our relationships with each other should always be free of violence whether they be relationships between individuals, within families and communities or are part of our corporate life together. In particular we will continue to work towards joint participation in the annual **White Ribbon Day** (25 November) and the **16 Days of Activism to Eliminate Violence against Women and Children** (25 November-10 December) which has each year been a focus for IAWN.

#### IAWN attendance at the International Anglican Family Network (IAFN) Oceania Consultation in Wellington, New Zealand 27-31 October 2010

IAWN was represented by Ms Ann Skamp (Australia) at the Consultation on 'Violence and the Family'. Although the Consultation was addressed by invited specialist speakers, the primary focus was on participatory discussion and as delegates shared stories and insights, two significant areas of consideration were noted – cultural factors and the role of the church.

IAWN joins with IAFN in noting that the basic value systems of indigenous cultures which do not tolerate violence in family relationships have been broken down by many societal factors, such as colonisation, alcohol, poverty, low self-esteem and trauma. Also noted, was the importance of the role of the church in communities across Oceania where the church has a unique and significant status and so an essential role in addressing issues of violence in families. Churches must address their own compliance with and eliminate any code of silence surrounding incidences of family violence as well as being proactive in training of clergy and church workers.

The Consultation called for strong, clearly articulated leadership in this area across the whole Communion. As Archbishop Winston Halapua reminded us, violence is "not just a problem but an opportunity" as it indicates there is something wrong and gives us the chance to make it right.

#### IAWN Statement: A christian women sentenced to death over blasphemy

The following Statement was sent to IAWN across the Communion with the encouragement to send it on to Church, Government and community leaders:

#### **INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN WOMEN'S NETWORK STATEMENT**

*Anglican women around the world have been deeply saddened by the item below from Ayra Inderyas of the Anglican Church of Pakistan.*

*As we approach this year's 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (25 November - 10 December) we realise that intolerable human rights violations continue across the world. News from all continents show that these violations are borne*



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*particularly by women. Such violations are simply not acceptable and totally disregard all that God calls us to be.*

*We call on Church, community and political leaders everywhere to speak out about the injustice done to Assia Bibi and insist on laws and practice that bring respect, peace and justice to all people.*

*We assure Assia Bibi, her family and community of our prayers for peace and strength at this time and for a compassionate and just outcome.*

*Priscilla Julie  
Coordinator, IAWN Steering Group*

Reports indicated that at the request of IAWN members government representatives in several countries then took up this issue at inter-governmental level and expressed concern to the Government of Pakistan.

### **100<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day**

On 8 March 2011 the 100<sup>th</sup> International Women's Day will be celebrated across the world. As IAWN joins in this celebration we invite the whole Communion to join us and give thanks to God for what has been achieved over this time as well as take up the challenges ahead as we all seek to bring in the Reign of God. Already several members of IAWN have been invited to their national government's marking of this day in recognition of the role Anglican women have and are playing in the achievement of Millennium Development Goal #3 and the Beijing Platform for Action.

### **Areas of Concern**

#### **(i) Anglican Communion Office at the United Nations (ACOUN)**

IAWN has had a vial partnership with the ACOUN and attendance by Anglican women around the world as the Anglican Consultative Council delegation at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) has been basic for our being resourced in and witness to the congruency of the gospel with the focus of the United Nations and other non-government organisations. In the context now of the Anglican Alliance also taking shape, IAWN would ask the Standing Committee give consideration as to how it can better support and provide encouragement to the ACOUN and particularly our current Anglican Observer at the United Nations, Ms Hellen Wangusa and explore how other Networks can also benefit from this relationship.

#### **(ii) Funding and the ongoing work of IAWN**

The IAWN Steering continues to look at the possibility of a face-to-face meeting this year ahead of a full meeting of the Provincial Links and Steering Group in 2012. It is also recognised that regional meetings have a great potential to enable the local work of IAWN through the sharing of stories, resources and support with the ability to focus on specific issues for that region. Lack of financial resources and the recognition of the difficulty of sourcing funding for Networks still continues to be our greatest challenge across this vibrant and vital Network.

Again in the context of Anglican Alliance taking shape and the role of the Networks in that, we would ask the Standing Committee to give consideration to seeking ways to encourage the Networks being able to source financial resources.

### **Newsletter**



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Issue 3 of the IAWN Newsletter can be found at  
<http://iawn.anglicancommunion.org/newsletters/index.cfm>

Grace and Peace be with you all.

Your sister in Christ,

Priscilla Julie

Coordinator, IAWN Steering Group

February 2011