

Archbishops' meet Zimbabwean President

Posted on: October 10, 2011 8:01 PM

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Following their meeting with President Robert Mugabe, the Archbishops of Canterbury, Central Africa, Southern Africa and Tanzania issued the following statement at their press conference.

Statement by the Archbishops of Canterbury, Central Africa, and Southern Africa and the President of the All Africa Conference of Churches the Archbishop of Tanzania

In our capacities as leaders of the Anglican Church in Africa and worldwide, we have just met President Robert Mugabe.

We come here to be in solidarity with our Anglican sisters and brothers at the invitation of the local church – the Anglican Province of Central Africa, which includes the five dioceses of Zimbabwe.

As you know this has been a time of immense trial.

Since 2007 Anglican congregations in Zimbabwe have suffered serious persecution at the hands of the police. They have been intimidated. Their churches have been closed. Properties, including schools and clinics, have been seized.

As representatives of the Anglican Communion, and with the support of ecumenical friends worldwide, we strongly and unequivocally support the efforts of ordinary Anglicans to worship in peace and to minister to the spiritual and material needs of their communities.

Today we were able to present President Mugabe with a dossier compiled by the bishops in Zimbabwe which gives a full account of the abuses to which our people and our church has been subject. We have asked, in the clearest possible terms, that the President use his powers as Head of State to put an end to all unacceptable and illegal behaviour.

We are proud of our church and our people who have suffered so much, but who continue to serve with love and with hope.

For our part we pray, and invite you to join us in praying, that the Anglican Church in Zimbabwe be allowed to carry out its mission in peace, and serve its communities with love.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

The dossier referred to in the statement may be downloaded from the Archbishop of Canterbury's website:
<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2209/>

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2011/10/archbishops-meet-zimbabwean-president.aspx>