

## Valletta, Malta, 4 December – 10 December 2005



The Inter Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) met in Valletta, Malta, from Sunday, 4th to Saturday, 10th December 2005. The Right Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell, Bishop of the Church of England Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe welcomed members, together with a warm welcome from the Revd Canon Tom Mendel, Chancellor of Saint Paul's Pro-Cathedral. The Commission joined the Anglican community for worship at the Pro-Cathedral on the Sunday. The

Commission also had the opportunity to meet the Most Revd Joseph Mercieca, Archbishop of Malta, and were invited to be present at a celebration of the Eucharist in the Co-Cathedral of Saint John, Valletta.

The Most Revd Drexel Gomez, Primate of the West Indies, chaired the meeting of the Commission which is charged with reviewing the present international ecumenical dialogues involving Anglicans, and provincial and regional initiatives towards unity with other Christians. IASCER consists of representatives from each international dialogue involving Anglicans, including the multilateral dialogue of Faith and Order, and of certain other commissions and networks, and consultants who bring particular regional or theological expertise.

Reports were received from all current bilateral theological dialogues of the Anglican Communion, as well as of developments from particular regions of the globe. The Commission re-emphasised the importance of the Windsor Report, and urged the Communion to consult ecumenically, particularly as it responds to the proposal for an Anglican Covenant. It also devoted time to developing a response to the Lutheran document "*Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church*" as invited by the Council of the Lutheran World Federation. The Commission expressed concern over several developments within the Anglican Communion which appear to undermine the confidence that our ecumenical partners can place in the Anglican understanding of the episcopate. IASCER believes that Provinces and other ecclesiastical authorities should exercise extreme caution in taking any steps which appear to contradict the understanding of episcopal ministry expressed and developed over several decades of ecumenical dialogue.

Present at the meeting in Malta were: the Revd Prebendary Dr Paul Avis, the Revd Canon Dr Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the Revd Canon Gregory K Cameron (Secretary), the Revd Dr William Crockett, the Rt Revd Christopher Epting, the Revd Dr John Gibaut, the Rt Revd Dr John Gladstone, the Most Revd Drexel W Gomez (Chair), the Revd Canon Jonathan Goodall, the Rt Revd John Hind, the Revd Jane Namugenyi, the Revd Renta Nishihara, the Revd Canon Luke Pato, the Rt Revd Dr Geoffrey Rowell, the Revd Sarah Rowland Jones and the Revd Canon Professor J Robert Wright. The Rt Revd Dr Fritz-René Müller, Old Catholic Bishop of Switzerland, also attended the meeting as a representative of the Churches of the Union of Utrecht. The Revd Terrie Robinson and Mrs Christine Codner of the Anglican Communion Office provided administrative assistance for the meeting.

The next meeting of IASCER is scheduled for December 2006.

**For further information contact**

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