

NSKK NEWSLETTER

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The ACC-15 Auckland – My Impression on Participation in the Conference

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Bishop of Yokohama Diocese

The 15th Anglican Consultative Council – 26th October to 7th November 2012

I attended the 15th Anglican Consultative Council Conference, ACC-15. This is one of the four instruments of unity within the Anglican Communion, together with The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, and the Primates Meeting. This was the 15th conference, attended by one to three representatives from each province, five Primates from the Primates Meeting, representatives from other denominations, (the so called Ecumenical Partners), and about 80 people from each section of the ACC, called the Network.

The present ACC-15 is represented by The Most Revd. & Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams as President, and is chaired by the Rt. Revd. Dr. James Tengatenga from Malawi.

Auckland, a Multi-racial and Multi-cultural Country

ACC-15 took place in Auckland, New Zealand, which belongs to the Province of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand & Polynesia. The population of New Zealand consists of indigenous Maori, English-speaking people of European descent, and the sea-nations of Polynesians. They use a prayer-book and hymn book written in English and Maori languages. Although the inhabitants of New Zealand are multi-racial and multi-cultural people, they have realized and accepted their differences. I felt sure that Auckland is an appropriate place for the ACC15.

Unity in the Anglican Communion is Maintained

At the previous ACC-14 held in Jamaica, one of the major issues was the Anglican Covenant. Whether the Anglican unity could be maintained or not was of great concern. The matter is still under deliberation by each Province, and only a little time was given to this matter at the present ACC-15. It is apparent that England, Scotland, USA, New Zealand, and Korea have not participated in the Covenant. This means that the main-stream of the Covenant has been changed and there has been no disruption in the Anglican Communion, I feel sure that a tight link in Anglican Communion has been maintained.

Harsh Realities Shared during the Meeting

During the two-week ACC-15, it was revealed that the actual circumstances of the world are unexpect-

edly harsh. In the workshop of the Family Network, the major topic was the issue of Birth Certificates. Without a birth certificate, neither a family nor a resident registration can be obtained. No registration may facilitate traffic in human cargo, because people without family registration have no identification of birth, leading to being excluded from legal protection. Some family registers may have easily been lost during repeated wars. A baptismal registry in a church can be used for making a family register whenever it is required at a later date. Without a family register, a vicious circle can come about, with children without registration producing more children also without family registration.

We also learned that woman's rights should be considered under very different circumstances than in Japan. In Pakistan, Christians are a minority who are living under various political or other pressures. It is well known worldwide that a 14-year girl was shot by the Taliban, because the girl claimed the right to study. All Christian churches in Pakistan are active in mission work under such hard social situations.

A number of problems which should be shared with the whole Anglican Communion

In the Environment Network Workshop, serious problems were reported from a number of islands where the inhabitants are scared at rising sea-levels caused by global warming. The equal distribution of water, food or energy was also a matter of great concern.

Beyond our ability to imagine there are still so many children who are suffering from hunger. In spite of this situation, there are some countries, including Japan, where a large amounts of left overs and food is wasted. I realized that certain churches are directly helping those countries experiencing hunger and sending foods to support them. While we pursue "Unity" or "Links" in the Anglican Communion, we should share such hardships as our own problems.

Turning our mind to the real situation of our Sister-Churches

While discussing the fifth "Mark of Mission" (To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth I), it was proposed that a sixth "Mark of Mission" be added "To advance peace, stop violence and pursue reconciliation". This statement was almost agreed at the ACC-14. However, it was considered that this resolution had already been included in the fifth Mark of Mission: Thus the fourth Mark of Mission has been revised to read as follows: "To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation"

While we are claiming "Peace" and "Reconciliation", the present situation is far more difficult than I thought when in Japan. In Nigeria or in Pakistan, Christians are always encountering the fear of being attacked by terrorists while they are attending the services. Delegates said that when they go to church, they realize that they are not safe and do not know whether they will be able to return home safely or be shot by terrorists. The concept of peace and reconciliation is completely different from in Japan. In those countries where people call the "Promised Land" or the "Holy Land", children are being victimized every day.

When the huge earthquake occurred in Japan on 11th March 2011, the Anglican Communion worldwide helped the victims with prayers and other support. We too should be seriously face the difficult reality confronting our sister churches.

I am proud of being a member of the Anglican Communion

On the last day of the ACC-15, I expressed my hearty gratitude for the various prayers and support given

to the victims of the huge earthquake in the Tohoku Area. I took with me 50 DVDs showing the activities of the “Let’s Walk Together Project”, and I delivered them to many delegates. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the encouraging words given by the members of the Anglican family.

A number of issues were deliberated during the ACC-15, including ecumenical issues, theological education, and the Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage. Those reports and deliberations were approved in the 14 resolutions. I myself would like to particularly express my joy as a member of the Anglican Communion.

At the end of the Conference, all the participants expressed their gratitude to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Revd. and Rt. Hon Rowan Williams who will retire from the office at the end of 2012, for his faithful and truthful works. I personally felt a kind of sadness at his retirement. However, I am sure that the newly appointed Archbishop of Canterbury will establish a new and strong relationship within the Anglican Communion.

The Gradual Transfiguration of the Churches of East Asia —Attending the 2012 Bishop’s Meeting—

Bishop Andrew Yutaka Nakamura
Bishop of Kobe Diocese

The bishops meeting of Council of the Church of East Asia 2012 was held from October 3rd, Wednesday to 8th, Monday at Yilan City in the North East Taiwan on the theme “Arise, let us go hence” (John 14:31) with all the bishops from the provinces and parishes in the North East Asia except the Church of the Province of Myanmar.

The Living Faith

The Bishops stayed at a hotel named “Living Water Hotel.” (The name of the hotel is derived from the words in the Bible, John 7:38). The owner of the hotel is a member of Taiwan Episcopal Church who came back from the United States three years ago. Although she had engaged herself in the business in the States extensively, she lost her possessions due to Lehman Shock, and returned to Taiwan dejected. She says that just then she heard the voice of God saying “Build a hotel appropriate for Christians in this land”. Even though she had to start at the bottom of the ladder, she could get financial support from banks, aided by churches in the community. Then, finally the nine-storied hotel was finally number of growing congregations for the service.

Confucianism and Christianity

For the bishop’s meeting, Jesuit Father Mark Fang had been invited as a lecturer, but he could not attend due to illness. So three bishops from the Philippines, Australia and Malaysia gave each comment on the résumé Fr. Fang had provided and questions and answers for those comments were made.

I became interested in the relationship between Confucianism and the East Asia shown in Fr. Fang’s

résumé.

Zhong You (Zilu), the highest disciple of Confucius, asked his master Confucius how to serve the soul of the dead. Confucius replied, “How are we able to serve the soul of the dead well, while we have not been able to serve living people yet?” Then Zilu asked his master about death. Confucius answered, “How are we able to understand death when we do not fully understand life.”

The questions and answers exchanged between Confucius and his pupils are very familiar to us Japanese, but Confucius does not deal with death directly. In the case of Jesus Christ, he conquered death and showed us the way to the kingdom of God through his agony and the death on the Cross. To this point, Fr. Fang claimed that Christians have much to speak out about regarding the vision of the missions in each East Asian Country.

Problems of Youths in East Asia

In their talks, the bishops discussed the issues such as the objective of the Bishop’s Meeting of CCEA and how it should be when looking to its ten or twenty years into the future, which have been derived from the request of the Archbishop of the Church of the Province of Myanmar regarding the participation of six Assistant Bishops in the Bishop’s Meeting.

In the case of the Church of the Province of Myanmar, which is under severe financial pressure, it is obvious that the conference of CCEA will have to pay all the costs of bishops' attendance, and then the fund for it will fall short. As the result of the discussion, it was decided to request the attendance of the Archbishop and one bishop from the Church of the Province of Myanmar, and of the Primate and one bishop from Nippon Sei Ko Kai.

We cannot think about the future of Episcopal churches in East Asia without considering the future of young people and their activities. In Japan we have a territorial dispute over the Liancourt Rocks (Takeshima) with South Korea, and another over the Senkaku Islands with China. It is said that in China and South Korea, people are educated at school that those islands are their own territories. But in Japan, most of high school students are not provided with the opportunity of studying modern and contemporary history in their classes. When we hope for further mutual understandings and peace in East Asia, it is quite natural that more and more international communion among Christian youths who will carry the future is needed.

At the Bishop’s Meetings, we fully realized the necessity of the international communication of youths and decided to hold the “Youth Forum” in the end of September 2014 in Kobe, Japan, with youth staff members gathering from eight dioceses in East Asia. This forum will be the preparation for “Youth Conference of CCEA” which is scheduled to be held in 2017.

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It was also reported that Episcopal Diocese of the Southern Philippines in the Episcopal Church in the Philippines was to be divided into two dioceses with the Episcopal Diocese of Davao to be born. The Rev. Jonathan L. Casimina has been elected as the first bishop of the new Diocese and his inauguration will be held on November 23rd.

We rejoiced together in another diocese in East Asian Episcopal Church.

THE INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR ISSUES
-Participating as a representative of The Ad Hoc Project on Nuclear Power Plant
Issues at the provincial level-

Rev. Peter Satoshi Iwaki
Osaka Diocese

I was given the opportunity to participate as a representative of NSKK in the Inter-religious Conference on Nuclear Issues held in Aizu-Wakamatsu from December 4th-7th, 2012.

Several religious groups organized the conference with primary support from NCC. These groups have attended three conferences in Okinawa with the Asian Inter-religious Conference on Article 9. This most recent conference continued to build on these efforts and was held in Fukushima prefecture. The Fukushima area has been heavily impacted by the nuclear power plant incident subsequent to the March 11, 2011 earthquake. Prior to the conference, participants used the town of Koriyama as a local base of operations for fieldwork in the surrounding areas that experienced radiation contamination.

Eighty seven people from eleven countries participated in the conference. Participating countries included the United States, Korea, The Philippines, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Switzerland, Canada and Japan. Several different Christian denominations and groups were also represented including, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, YMCA, NCC and United Churches.

There was also representation from several Buddhist sects including the Nichiren, the Pure Land, the Nihonzan-myohoji, and Rissho-koseikai.

The presence of the Anglican Communion was comparatively weak. It was regrettable that the representative from the Philippines and me were the only two participants.

Copies of the declaration, “For a World Without Nuclear Power Plants”, which had been adapted at the 2012 General synod of NSKK, were provided in both English and Japanese for distribution to all conference participants along with statements from other groups. The declaration in particular was met with a big response from the participants.

The conference consisted of three lectures including a keynote address, as well four story sharings, followed by several group discussions.

At the conclusion of the conference a statement was prepared by the participants. This statement will be issued to the WCC Plenary Meeting will be held in Pusan, Korea in October and November of this year.

The keynote address was given by Mr. Hironori Shinohara, the representative of the society for the “Wind Against Nuclear Power” in Miyagi. His address was a review of the history of nuclear power development and a critique of its risks and fundamental defects. This provided an excellent overview of the problems this conference hoped to address.

Next, Dr. Andre Witthoft-Muhlman, Environmental Protection Commissioner of the Protestant Church of Barden, Germany, reported on the struggles against nuclear power among the churches in Germany. He highlighted the successful role German Churches played in carrying out the movement of Stop Nuclear Power Generation. Despite this success, he stressed the limitations of a purely theologically based solution to the issues of nuclear power and encouraged the need to broaden our efforts and seek a more holistic approach to finding solutions to the problem.

Finally, Professor Chang Yoon-Jae, Ehwa Women's University, Department of Christian Studies, Korea, presented his address titled, "Exodus to a Nuclear-Free World". In his remarks, he pointed out the inseparability of using nuclear energy for civilian power generation and that of nuclear military armaments. It is impossible to have the one without the other. They are two sides of the same coin.

He went on to say that Christian faith and use of nuclear power are incompatible based on the great potential for harm inherent in nuclear technology. He sounded the alarm that northeast Asia might become a minefield containing the danger of another nuclear war. It was a highly stimulating lecture, offering profound insights and motivation to act.

A local report themed, "Story Sharing", was compiled by Ms. Terumi Kataoka, the representative of Aizu Radiation Center and Mr. Michinori Sasaki, a priest from a local Buddhist temple. They shared personal stories gathered from individuals who have been affected by the Fukushima disaster. They reported on the great danger and suffering that many children have to face now and the agonies that their parents must endure. The conference participants were deeply touched by the reality of their report.

The following statement was adopted in both English and Japanese.

No to Nuclear Power! Faith Declaration from Fukushima 2012

1. The Inter-religious Conference on Nuclear Issues held in Aizu-Wakamatsu and Iwaki, Fukushima, from December 4 to 7, 2012, gathered 87 participants from Japan, Okinawa, South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Switzerland, Canada and the USA. We, as people of faith, saw and heard about the effects of the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and Fukushima Number 1 Nuclear Power Plant incident upon the people and environment in Fukushima and other areas. We witnessed the varied local and international responses to the situation in Fukushima. The people's stories of family and community separations, lost homes and jobs, the particular difficulties and struggles that face mothers and their children's health problems touched us deeply. We also witnessed the work of the Aizu Radiation Information Center and saw ministries of healing and solidarity with the suffering communities. We heard how faith communities are working in other countries to phase out nuclear power and transform their use of energy. These are encouraging signs of hope.

2. We heard for example of a three year old child who has learned to fear playing in the sand; we heard from a husband whose wife had to lie repeatedly to community members about their decision to move for the sake of their children to avoid pressure to remain in a contaminated area; we heard from a fisherman who does not know when or whether he will ever again be able to fish for his living; and we heard how residents of Fukushima are discouraged from seeking independent medical diagnoses. We saw the different readings of government and independent radiation monitors; we saw photographs of livestock abandoned to die; we saw the last words of a man who took his own life; and we saw slogans

promising a healthy prosperous life based on nuclear energy in a town abandoned because of high radiation levels. As one Buddhist priest observed “Fukushima has become a place where those suffering inflict pain on each other. Fukushima is crying out, the land and sky are weeping. Please listen to the voice of Fukushima, please listen to the cries of the lives of the children who are silent.” Moved to sober reflection by our experience of the effects of nuclear power and radiation contamination, we prayerfully reaffirm the sanctity of life and hereby issue this Declaration:

3. Those participants who also attended, in 2011, the 3rd Asia Inter-Religious Conference on Article 9 in Okinawa noted some common elements uniting the suffering of residents of Okinawa and Fukushima Prefecture, especially discrimination and the violation of human rights. These include the low priority placed by government and business organizations on the life of the communities, on the individual lives and livelihoods of residents, and on the integrity of creation; the inadequate compensation offered to individuals and families injured by government and corporate decisions; the disruption of communities; and the relationship of nuclear power to nuclear weapons. We also perceive the collusion of government, military, business and media to promote nuclear power and military bases as beneficial to human beings, which the experience of people in Okinawa and Fukushima contradicts. Our experiences in Okinawa and Fukushima further emphasized anew that all life is sacred.

4. Based on our research and experiences, we conclude that there is no safe use of nuclear power, no safe level of exposure to radiation, and no compatibility between nuclear power and life and peace. Nuclear weapons and nuclear power are two sides of the same coin, developed and promoted by a political, military and economic complex for its own benefit. Government, the military and business developed nuclear power for the purpose of war-making without regard to life and the integrity of all creation. Nations which have developed nuclear power but foresworn nuclear arms demonstrate the arrogance to believe they can dominate nature and natural forces. In country after country, the construction of nuclear power-generating facilities, let alone the creation and maintenance of stockpiles of nuclear weapons, has consumed vast amounts of money which could have been used to serve human needs; damaged for tens of thousands of years the environment; caused death and disease among human beings, animals and plants; caused changes in human, animal and plant DNA; placed populations at risk from nuclear attack by state and non-state actors; and arrogated to imperfect human beings decisions that determine the life and death of human and natural communities. We are newly reminded that all humans make mistakes but too often those who benefit ignore or fail to learn from those mistakes.

5. As people of faith, we commit to care for life unreservedly, to protect all life, and to speak the truth and break down misleading myths about nuclear power and nuclear issues to our own communities and with one voice to all people. We do so while attentively and respectfully listening to those who suffer most directly the consequences of nuclear accidents. Indeed, we commit to stand with those who suffer, wherever they may be, and act in unison with them to address the injustice done to them by denying their right to live in peace with justice. We further commit to monitor the movement of radioactive materials by governments and businesses and to sound the alarm against passing on the problem of nuclear waste disposal to marginalized communities, non-nuclear nations and future generations.

6. Therefore, we resolve:

- » to initiate serious discussion in our own faith communities about civilian and military uses of nuclear energy and to develop and enact plans of action as faith communities, including individual life style changes;
- » to inform the public about the true relationship between nuclear weapons and nuclear power technology and to expose and challenge the deliberate cover ups and disinformation regarding nuclear power;
- » to initiate direct nonviolent action to oppose misuse of nuclear power;
- » to create and work with already existing collaborative networks of faith communities and faith-based organizations that go beyond national and religious boundaries to effect the abolition of nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons and to work to that end with experts and organizations similarly committed

to truth and restorative justice;

- » to pray for and with the people of Fukushima and other communities suffering the harms caused by nuclear power while amplifying their voices as they tell the world of their experiences;
- » to send this statement to the World Council of Churches Assembly in 2013 along with a workshop on the impact of nuclear power; and
- » to work together to transition from a society based on nuclear power to a society based on renewable, sustainable, truly clean and safe energy.

In conclusion, holding the Inter-religious Conference on Nuclear Issues here in Fukushima awakened us, people of many faiths and nations, to the reality of suffering caused by nuclear power. We have pledged to work to abolish nuclear power, to heal the living communities affected by it, and to restore creation as fully as possible. From here, we journey to our own communities to begin fulfilling our pledge and commitments.

December 7, 2012

All the participants of the Inter-religious Conference on Nuclear Issues



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