The Anglican–Oriental Orthodox International Commission held its eighth meeting from 28 October to 01 November 2019 at the All Saints Anglican Cathedral, Cairo, Egypt.

The Commission greatly appreciated the generous hospitality of the Most Rev’d Mounir Anis, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese in Egypt, with North Africa and the Horn of Africa, and the Rt Rev’d Dr Samy Shehata, Assistant Bishop of the Diocese.

Following its agreed agenda for the official dialogue, the Commission resumed its work on “Authority in the Church”, which was begun in Dublin, Ireland in 2017 and continued at Atchaneh, Lebanon in 2018.

The draft agreed statement on “the Inheritance of Ecumenical Councils” was reviewed and amended. The meeting reviewed new procedures on reception of ecumenical texts by the Anglican Communion and offered comments on them. The Commission reviewed its work program for the year ahead, with the intention of bringing the agreed statement on “Ecumenical Councils” to fruition at the next meeting. Papers on “Bishops and Synods” were presented, representing the next stage in the agreed agenda, drawing on existing ecumenical agreements, while preserving the distinctive characteristics of this dialogue.

The Commission was received in audience and dinner by His Holiness, Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of the See of Saint Mark, in which he blessed and encouraged the ecumenical dialogue explaining the unity of the Churches as a symbolic cross with the four stages of love, study, dialogue and prayer. His Holiness depicted the unity of the Egyptian people using the geographical form of the River Nile and its Delta as a praying figure with outstretched arms.

The Commission was particularly mindful that its meeting took place in Cairo, itself home to thousands of refugees from war and conflict in the region. The diaconal work of the Coptic Orthodox and Anglican Churches in Egypt was experienced by members of the Commission who visited the transformational work of the Coptic Orthodox Church with the *Zabballeen* (rubbish collectors) in the community and church in the District of *Moqattam* Mountain. The Commission also attended a presentation by the General Manager of *Episcocare Egypt*, a non-profit organization that constitutes the foundation for the care of episcopal Social Services in Egypt. The members were made aware of the vision and mission of the work with some of the most marginalized communities and met workers and recipients of the program, including Refuge Egypt, which offers meaningful work to the thousands of refugees who find a new home in the Anglican Church in Cairo.

The work of the Coptic Orthodox Church in *Mokattam* represents an attempt to build holistically through the recycling of waste, and therefore fulfilling its calling to faithful stewardship over our environment. The work of the Anglican Church amongst refugees is similarly a local manifestation of the Churches’ response to the worldwide refugee crisis.

As we meet, we hold in our prayers our sisters and brothers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church who suffered violence in Oromia, Ethiopia, praying repose for the departed, comfort for the grieving and support for all those impacted.

The Commission is drawn from many different countries and cultures and represents Churches which are global in their expression and outreach. In this global context, the challenges that face all our Churches are similar, and so it was both challenging and encouraging to share and hear news of our churches and communities around the world, and to hold one another in prayers of thanksgiving and support for all that calls us to do for His world.

The Commission gave thanks for the opportunity of working and praying together in an ever-closer spirit of unity and love. The members of the Commission prayed for peace in the region, continuing to hold in their prayers the two bishops of Aleppo who were abducted in April 2013, Metropolitan Mor Gregorios Youhanna Ibrahim of the Syriac Orthodox Church, and Metropolitan Boulos Yazigi of the Greek (Rüm) Orthodox Church of Antioch. The members of the Commission renewed their pledge to facilitate a fraternal, pastoral and ecumenical visit to Syria as soon as possible.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Commission thanks the Triune God, Father, Son, and

Holy Spirit, for the mutual understanding and friendship that has been experienced and deepened, and looks forward to the future in hope.

**Present at the meeting in 2019 in Cairo**

**Anglican Communion**

The Rt Rev’d Gregory K Cameron Church in Wales (Co-Chair)

The Most Rev’d Dr Michael Jackson Church of Ireland

The Rt Rev’d Dr Samy Shehata Diocese of Egypt

The Ven Dr Edward Simonton OGS Anglican Church of Canada

The Rev’d Stephen Stavrou Church of England

The Rev’d Canon Dr William Taylor Church of England

The Rev’d Neil Vigers Anglican Communion Office (Co-Secretary)

The Rev’d Dr Will Adam Anglican Communion Office (Co-Secretary)

**Oriental Orthodox**

*Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria*

His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos of London, United Kingdom (Co-Chair)

Fr Dr Pishoy Wasfy, Diocese of Mississauga, Vancouver and Western Canada

*Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch*

The Very Rev’d Fr Dr Roger Akhrass, Syria (Co-Secretary)

*Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church*

Metropolitan Geevarghese Mor Coorilos, India

The Rev’d Fr Dr KM George, India