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COMUNICATO: NEW WORKING GROUP TO FURTHER ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS

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A new high-level working group has been announced by the Anglican Communion and the Catholic Church. Comprising prominent Church leaders from a variety of countries, assisted by specialists, the *Anglican-Roman Catholic Working Group* will have the task of reviewing the relationship between Catholics and Anglicans worldwide, consolidating the results of more than thirty years of ecumenical contact and dialogue, and charting a course for the future.

The Working Group has been set up as a direct result of a special international meeting of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops, held in Mississauga, Canada, in May 2000. That meeting, chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, and Cardinal Edward Cassidy, President of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, spent a week in prayer, worship and discussion, and surveying relationships in different parts of the world. In a concluding statement, *Communion in Mission*, the bishops spoke of their belief that Anglicans and Catholics share a degree of common faith "such that greater cooperation and mission is possible than is currently the case". They called for a new commission to be put in place to help bring this about, suggesting that the preparation of a joint affirmation of faith be top of the agenda.

The Working Group is expected to hold its first meeting later in the year, under the chairmanship of Bishop David Beetle, Anglican Bishop of the Highvale, South Africa, and Archbishop John Bathersby, Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, Australia.

The other Anglican members will be: Archbishop Peter Carnley of Perth, Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia; Bishop Edwin Gulik of Kentucky, U.S.A.; Archbishop Peter Kwong Primate of Hong Kong; Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali of Rochester, England; and Dr. Mary Tanner from England. The Anglican Co-Secretary will be Canon David Hamid from the Anglican Communion Office, London.

The other Roman Catholic members will be: Archbishop Alexander Brunett of Seattle, U.S.A.; Bishop Anthony Farquhar from Down and Connor Diocese, Ireland; Bishop Crispian Hollis of Portsmouth, England; Bishop Lucius Ugorji, from Umuahia, Nigeria; and Fr Peter Cross from Melbourne, Australia; with Mgr Timothy Galligan

of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity as Catholic Co-Secretary.

Since 1970, the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church have been engaged in theological dialogue through a special commission, ARCIC - the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission - which continues with this work.

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