

Press release

Date:

February 2015

Regarding:

Anglican position on Religious Education, radicalisation and terrorism.

‘Religious education transmits values opposed to radicalisation’

The Central Committee of the Anglican Church in Belgium (Centraal Comité van de Anglicaanse Eredienst in België, Comité central du Culte anglican en Belgique, CCACB) and the Committee for Anglican Religious Education (Comité Anglicaans Godsdienstonderwijs vzw, CAGO) express their unequivocal opposition to any and all acts of terror, and in particular to the recent atrocities which have taken place in Belgium, France, Nigeria, Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. Such acts of inhumane violence stand contrary to all the principles of our Christian faith.

We affirm the key role of religious education in the transmission of civilised values and in the struggle against religious radicalisation. The syllabus for Anglican Religious Education in Flanders has been explicitly developed with an open, scientific, faithful, ethical and non-fundamentalistic approach. While we firmly believe that it is essential for children and young people to learn about their faith, we absolutely expect that A.R.E. teachers and students do not engage in coercive conversion or proselytisation. We maintain that openness, understanding and respect for other faiths are key within religious education, and that Anglican religious education benefits from contact with other faiths.

The Church of England and the Anglican Communion have a consistent record of defending human rights, dignities and freedoms. In the 18th and 19th centuries Anglicans joined with Quakers in engineering the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery throughout what is now the Commonwealth. We are currently working together with Roman Catholics and Muslims in the Global Freedom Network to end global human-trafficking.

Here in Belgium, it is our privilege to work cooperatively with various faiths and non-confessional groups. It is our belief that a strong partnership between the recognised faiths and philosophies is necessary to enable the flourishing of the prosperous, peaceful and equal society for which we continue to work and pray.

President (CCACB)

The Reverend Canon Prof Jack McDonald

President (CAGO)

Lay Canon Mrs Ann Turner

Secretary (CAGO)

Mr Simon Robbins

Treasurer (CAGO)

Mr David Sayers

Members (CCACB, CAGO)

The Reverend Canon Andrew Wagstaff
The Reverend Stephen Murray

Inspector-Advisor of Anglican Religious Education

Ms Birte Henkelmann-Day

Information for the press:

The Central Committee of the Anglican Church in Belgium (CCACB) is the legal interface between the Belgian State and the Anglican church structures in Belgium.

The Comité Anglicaans Godsdienstonderwijs (CAGO) is the legal entity responsible for Anglican religious education in Dutch-speaking State schools in Belgium. (For historic reasons, there are no Cours de religion anglicane in French-speaking State schools in Belgium.)

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