

Speech by the Archbishop of Canterbury

Thank you all very much indeed for making the time to come here today. As you have gathered from the material that is already gone out the idea for this meeting came out of a number of events last year that it seemed to David and myself that the time was ripe for pooling some experience and talking about some principles. And all this has been focused very much for me in several visits abroad in the last year or so. About a week ago, in slightly more extravagant temperatures than this, I was in Juba and I was asked very simply what I thought were the needs of southern Sudan at the moment. I said that I could see in the light of the conversations I been having in the days leading up to that they were roads, schools and small businesses. Southern Sudan is not exactly a country it is a semi independent part of the new Sudanese state. And at the moment as most of you will know it has virtually nothing in the way of infrastructure and real economy.

Nothing much will happen without roads and nothing much will happen without education. But equally nothing much will happen without enterprise; without people laying hold of that basic way of getting some control over their circumstances and their future, which belongs with a proper and lively sense of human dignity. It was reinforced for me during many conversations during that week, as I have hinted, and I will come back in a moment to some of that.

Now a lot of work is being done in building roads by, among others, the United Nations in Southern Sudan and it is part of the remit of the Government of Southern Sudan. Quite a bit is going on and I hope more will go on in terms of building schools, and one of the projects I was discussing a week ago with the Roman Catholic and Anglican hierarchy in Juba was whether there was a possibility of a new secondary school jointly sponsored by the two Archbishops in Juba, perhaps with some help from the two Archbishops here in London. But the one area where there is a real challenge to do some slightly out of the box thinking, it seems, is in this area of small business; the building up of that sense of control and dignity to which I referred. And it was much in my mind this time last week because the day before I had the privilege of a longish informal conversation with the minister of finance in the new Southern Sudan Government, Anthony Makana. Who is a very committed Christian indeed with a very strong background in the Africa Inland Church and a quite clear commitment to allow his Christian commitment to impact on his conduct as minister of finance.

We talked extensively about how a subsistence economy struggling in post war conditions could be turned around and of course the agenda for today was very much the sort of agenda which dominated the discussion. And I should perhaps say that he is very eager to hear what we have said today and I promised to send him a digest of what we do and what we say.

So that is just a little snapshot of the sort of place where this sort of issue really matters, and I do not think I need to underline for any of you the significance that small business and micro enterprise can bring to a society that is gradually as I say finding its way it ways out of the subsistence economy in desperately deprived situations.

The last thing I would want to come out of today is a grand plan for the Anglican Communion or some parts thereof to centralised or homogenise what is being done. The strength of what is around this table is of course the great variety of backgrounds and resources that is represented. But it does seem to me that there is always a danger in the aid and development world generally of treading on people's toes duplicating failing to identify resources that are actually there failing to cooperate adequately, failing to give each other the right kind of space to operate. So I suppose my own vision for today is very much to do with how we equip ourselves better with networks of communication and sharing of experience and setting of priorities so that we avoid some of these traps.

These issues of course which come to roost in rather a big way on my desk, because I am president or patron or something of quite a lot of the organisations represented around this table and it does seem to me as I look at their accounts of what they are up to and their plans, it would be quite nice if the fact that I am patron of several of them could have some practical use as well in generating an occasion just like this where we can precisely share that experience and set those priorities.

But I have mentioned already the danger is of not making the best use of what is there. If I have had a theme to hammer away at in relation to development in the last year or so it is been pretty consistently that secular aid agencies in all sorts of contexts have frequently miss the point. In two ways they miss some of the points about the transformation of motivation, as I would call it, that Christian presence brings. And they miss the point about accessible and effective delivery that existing Christian communities on the ground offer.

One thing which I read in Sudan last week is a pamphlet precisely about the first question: '*What is the problem?*' Well there are any number of ways of identifying and mapping the problem of Africa's financial needs: corruption, colonialism, tribalism, whatever, but unless you grasp the nettle of transformation of motivation at some point, you are not going to get very far. A transformed sense of what a human being is and what a human being is capable of, is part of what the Gospel delivers. And I guess that around the table that is something we all take for granted one way and another. This is not to elide the task of mission and evangelism and the task of economic development. I think that is dangerous and illegitimate. It is though to say that the latter is frankly not going to get very far unless there is an awareness at least of the former, from those who deliver.

As for systems of delivery, as Reg Bailey will recall, when I came back from Burundi last year I wrote a piece for one of the newspapers in the UK which was published under the wonderful title of '*How the Mothers Union is Riding to the Rescue of Africa*'. A slightly highly coloured headline, but what I argued there, that the Mothers Union was quite simply the most effective deliverer of education for women, (and the raising of precisely that transformed motivation that I have been talking about), and it was therefore rather a pity that the major agency that was responsible for transforming motivation and delivering development goals was ignored by a lot of the secular development world, as frequently it is.

So that sets the scene a little. It was borne in on me again last week in Sudan, as it had been in Burundi, that the delivery systems of development goals depend very, very

heavily in practice throughout Africa (and in other areas as well) on local Christian communities. We are well placed to use those resources properly and responsibly. We are well placed to work with communities as they set their local priorities; because there is a good coverage of the ground; there is a volunteer spirit; there is a sense of personal responsibility for the needs of others. We have got all that and we have to use it and we have often to persuade others in government and in secular NGOs that it is worth working with us. So that has been one of my priorities in the last twelve months, in anything and everything that I have had to say on this subject. And I think that in our visit to Burundi and immediately afterwards the little coalition we have attempted to put together of people working in the Great Lakes region that has been the major theme. We listened quite hard to the frustration expressed by many Christian leaders in the Great Lakes region about NGOs bypassing the obvious channels that they ought to be using.

Now that applies quite clearly in things like post trauma counselling, women's issues, education, but it applies also in this area of micro enterprise. Once again we have delivery mechanisms; we have people there whose skills, enthusiasms and convictions can be put to work by those of us who are willing to work with their motivation and their priorities.

As David has hinted, at a time when our Communion is already very fragmented and likely to get even more fragmented, we do need at some points to meet each other and say, well there remains in many areas an agenda where its very important not to let that blow us of course, to become competitive or undermining of each other but to remember that the needs of Christ's poor remain absolutely imperative concrete and immediate. And, as David has said, part of the purpose of today is just to make sure that we are in touch with one another across some of those dangerous fragmentations. Its not a way of avoiding the issues that have to be confronted. It is thought to say there have to be areas where we are able to recognise in one another principles of Christian work, Christian service, which are common and which are serious and which are carefully worked through. And I think that too is what it is part of to be a communion.

So that is some of the context with which I'd want to approach this. I want to make one or two further observations, very briefly, before I invite some immediate comments or reactions, because I do not intended to speak for a whole half hour on this. I just need to set the ball rolling. You've got plenty to say to each other.

I have talked quite a bit about Africa and of course that is often at the top of our minds when we think about issues like this. But we must not suppose of course that that is the only area where our service is called for nor must we suppose that there is nothing to be learned from experience elsewhere. I had, just before coming in, a paper passed to me written by an academic who happens to have worked quite closely with another friend of mine whose done quite extensive development of micro enterprise of Eastern Europe. And she very helpfully sets out the different levels of micro enterprise, which exist, based mostly on what she has seen in Eastern Europe.

She speaks of the first level which she calls mini enterprise, low level income generation, which may be an entry point for more entrepreneurial exercise but may

not and may remain at the low level of selling fruit at the road side. It is of course extremely important in somewhere like Southern Sudan that mini enterprise begin and a great deal of what I saw at the side of the road in Southern Sudan was precisely mini enterprise and that is a low level general base for almost anything else, because it begins to activate that sense of self reliance and the trust that you can make a difference to your situation. Level 2 my colleague says is the small business level where you have actually employing other people. Instead of just concentrating on a single product or a single service you have diversifying a bit, you are building up networks, skills, practices that have to do with a strategy of marketing. And that is the point at which people need help in how to employ others, how to treat others, how to build up and manage stocks of material how to control costs, how to manage time where and how to market effectively. A little bit more complex and it needs a longer-term vision, you do not get results immediately you need to think carefully about how that is laid out. Repayment rates at this level of small business are very high and my colleague here notes an organisation based in Australia banking with the poor, which has some interesting research on repayment rates here.

Level 3 is small to medium scale enterprise, with accumulating assets, with rather longer-term commitments to staff and higher levels of storage and greater diversity of localities for marketing. And says the paper before me, the amount of working capital required by this scale is often beyond the limit of what is seen as micro credit requires systems for the micro lenders that make it possible to provide a consistent cost efficient context for customised lending of handling savings and so on. But of course many micro lender are moving further towards this level, simply because there is a discernable continuity between the levels we are talking about. And you can not simply cut off support at the point where a business may be turning into that sort of level where it is genuinely affective, in a wider social network. The risk is higher but he returns are also higher. And finally there is a level 4, which is about actual microfinance services. That is the beginnings of a proper local banking system that resources the whole development of business of an area. One of the things I noted in Sudan was of course that there are practically no banks in Southern Sudan and banking in the old Sudanese state was entirely done on an Islamic system controlled from Khartoum which meant very little indeed in the South. One of the challenges that the New Sudan faces, and the new semi-independent Southern Sudan faces, is building up institutions of credit.

So that too comes within the remit of all that we are looking at. And I mention these analyses simply because it seems to me a very useful set of pegs on which to hang some of the discussions we might have, identifying some of the levels at which we are working, which we ought to be working, or could be working. And they are just a reminder of some of the concrete effects; trajectories of the sort of work that is being done.

I would like to think that the Anglican Church worldwide was still capable of generating realistic and transforming economic practices in situations of grave deprivation. In the decades since the 1940's the Anglican Church has built up quite a formidable set of networks around the Anglican Communion. In recent years some have proved more affective and durable than others, but the strength has been not in the delivery of a centralised policy, but in the way in which they have made it possible for people in one part of the Church to listen to the needs and priorities of

another. And its because I see the Anglican Communion, with all its current impending crisis, as a huge resource for development, principled development, ethically structured development, precisely because of that that I think a meeting like this is worthwhile and the search to find some sort of policy that we can share is a worthwhile enterprise. We need opportunity to think through what that means in our setting.

The very last thing I want to say is I think a reminder of why we are in this business at all. It is a point that I have touched on already earlier. We are in this business because of a certain set of convictions about humanity. We believe, I take it, that because human beings are made in the image of God they are not made to be slaves. There are very different kinds of slavery. Next year we'll be celebrating the anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade in the UK. But as we all know slavery continues in subtle or not so subtle forms. Absolutely literally in some parts still, but of course in the form of the slavery which poverty, debt, and the general stasis of so many societies creates. Corruption is a form of slavery as well. War becomes a generator of slavery by driving people deeper and deeper into powerlessness. Displacement has one of the most regularly visible affects of war in the present world. It has that affect; it enslaves, its binds people. And that is something which Christians are committed to challenge and to change.

There has been quite a lot of talk about Christian theologies of wealth creation. And a lot of my own tribal welsh socialist background finds the language of wealth creation instinctively difficult. I have had to learn about wealth. What has helped me with coming to terms with this and assuaging my vocal if rather uninstructed conscience on this is the sense that in scripture wealth is both gift and opportunity. That is to say it is not something, which is there to be sat on. There to be regarded as pure acquisition. It is God giving to human beings a capacity to reflect something of his own creative freedom. But because it is God's created freedom we are talking about, not anybody's creative freedom, it is a freedom that has to be exercised in generosity; in the capacitating of others, in the setting of others free.

*'Conquering Kings their title take
from the lands they captive make,
Jesus thine was given the
for a world though madest free'.*

Christian freedom is always the freedom to make others free just as Christ's freedom and sovereignty is freedom to make others free. And I think its in that light that we ought to be thinking about wealth and enterprise in the specific localities that we are most engaged with. That for me, is the theological basis of what we are about. Not any kind of simplistic idea that wealth is good for you. Or that wealth is a sign of God's favour. But that wealth is God's gift and therefore like all God's gifts it contains a call. Its contains a set of possibilities for making free. And while it may quite a long time from the credit union and the micro business to this rather elevated language of the freedom, the liberty of the Christian person, I believe that is a question we have to keep in mind, that is what we are here for, that is why we do it. And we do it therefore in order to send a message about what God intends for humanity to the whole of the world. And that, to come back finally to where I began

that is where there is a connection between mission and evangelism and our economic work.

The danger is very often that we blur the boundaries in quite the wrong way here by any attempt to tie economic and developmental work to a set of conditions. Those who with the best will in the world handed out Bible's in Muslim villages in Pakistan after the earthquake last year were not necessarily serving the mission of God's Church as effectively as truthfully or as powerfully as they could have been. They were creating that unhappy suspicion which arises so easily, especially in South and South East Asia, that aid and development is a cover for proselytism and nothing more. In other words its instrumental in getting people to sign up. Whereas I think what we want to say is of course aid and development is instrumental to the uncovering of the image of God in human beings, to realising the purposes of God of the Bible. That is a bit different, getting that connection right is not straight forward, but its an important challenge to be aware of I think as we reflect. So I will not suggest any solutions to that but try and put a context for some of the discussion that we confront today.

So in sum we have in our Communion, in the agencies represented around this table, immense resources. We have the capacity to learn from one another, to give to one another and to work with one another, not in a centralised or homogenising way, but to creatively and respectfully worked together as is appropriate to a Communion. We have in the local churches with which we are partnered, local resources of, I make no apology for saying it strongly, of a quite unique kind. We are able as Church to deliver some of these large scale development goals in ways that no other agency is capable of doing and we need not apologise for that. It is there as a precious resource, we need to use it properly. And we do all this in order that God's image in human beings be honoured, that the right sort of freedom develops. That freedom, which is about creating freedom in others. Without that, and without the transformed motivation I spoke of earlier, any society trying to find its ways out of poverty and stagnation is very likely to fall back to where it started, and we have seen examples of that. With Southern Sudan fresh in my mind I find myself praying very, very earnestly that in the relatively short window of opportunity that there is, decisively to take forward development in a context like that, the Churches will know how to work effectively together, will know what sort of humanity they want to see flourish in a new society such as that. A society in which the church is of crucial importance.