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Anglicans Move Toward Schism — The Archbishop of Canterbury Speaks

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In a sign that the [Anglican Communion](#) would not accept the recent response of the [Episcopal Church USA](#) as sufficient, [Archbishop of Canterbury](#) Rowan Williams released a [statement](#) June 27 that proposes a distinction between national churches in full communion and those who fall short.

From the statement published at the Archbishop's official Web site:

Dr Williams says that the divisions run through as well as between the different Provinces of the Anglican Communion and this would make a solution difficult. He favours the exploration of a formal Covenant agreement between the Provinces of the Anglican Communion as providing a possible way forward. Under such a scheme, member provinces that chose to would make a formal but voluntary commitment to each other.

“Those churches that were prepared to take this on as an expression of their responsibility to each other would limit their local freedoms for the sake of a wider witness: some might not be willing to do this. We could arrive at a situation where there were ‘constituent’ Churches in the Anglican Communion and other ‘churches in association’, which were bound by historic and perhaps personal links, fed from many of the same sources but not bound in a single and unrestricted sacramental communion and not sharing the same constitutional structures”.

The New York Times reports:

The archbishop's proposal was greeted with satisfaction by conservative leaders in the United States, who had formed a powerful alliance with prelates in many of the provinces in Africa and in Asia, and in some parts of Latin America. The conservatives have insisted all along that it is the American church that destabilized the Anglican ship and should be pushed overboard if it will not relent.

The Archbishop of Canterbury's full [statement](#) can be read [here](#). An [audio recording](#) of Dr. Williams reading his statement can be heard [here](#).

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