



Archbishop Justin Welby was speaking in a debate on a background paper from the Environment Working Group, Combating Climate Change:

The Paris Summit and Mission of the Church, presented to the Synod by the Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam.

Read the Archbishop's remarks:

"First of all I think we would all want to thank Bishop Nick [Holtam] for the leadership he is showing in this area and the way that he's picked up what is a very crucial moment and is leading it very effectively. And it is a moment at which we sense the current of events running in a new way. There's already been comment on Laudato Si', on the Pope's stress in this area and the way that that has changed the approach and people's thinking.

"But the Ecumenical Patriarch, as we heard yesterday, has for many years been one of the world's leading experts in this area and continues to work extremely powerfully. So you have the leaders there, with Bishop Nick and Archbishop Thabo [Makgoba] in South Africa, of three great communions around the world, all deeply committed, and we are grateful to them.

"But actions have to change if words are to have effect. And as Nick said, the issue is one of the common good, and the common good is one of our quinquennial aims, so this is immensely relevant to us.

"I want to pick out four particular areas very quickly

"The first has already been mentioned by [Second Church Estates Commissioner] Caroline Spelman in her maiden speech, that of education and networking. We have unrivalled access to networks around the world. How are we going to use them and look beyond our own boundaries as the Church of England to draw in the resources of the whole Communion? This is a moment not for just looking inwards.

"It is still too big an issue for most people to get their minds round, including most of us here. And it is above all a classic issue for the whole people of God, not just for the clergy and the bishops and the ordinands. Part 5 of the Anglican Communion's marks of mission says that we are "to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth". That has been in our objectives as a Communion for many years; we have to come back to that and say what are we doing as part of our educational work and networking that will demonstrate that we take it seriously.

"Secondly, we have to come back to the basic social teaching principle of the dignity of the whole human person and the breaking down of the barriers between us achieved in Christ. In other words, as Duncan Dormor said, this has to be holistic. There are many questions that stop us facing climate change. We need to be deeply engaged in the development, as we are through the Anglican Alliance, of the new SDGs, the Sustainable Development Goals. If climate change is to have the place that it needs in international policy, conflict is one of those areas that

destroys any attempt to manage issues around climate change. Climate change is both a driver of conflict and a victim of conflict, and we must face that reality and use our networks to address that issue.

"Thirdly, co-creativity. We need an imaginative commitment to new ways of approaching the subject of climate change that does not accept a deterministic or selfish nationalistic policy. We cannot simply look at ourselves and say, 'we must do better', and kick the ladder away from the vast majority of humankind that is struggling to find the prosperity that we enjoy so richly. That requires a huge investment in new ideas. If you look up Leo Johnson's work in this area, it is quite fascinating.

"And lastly, it must be incarnational. Alexandra Podd and Caroline Spelman spoke of this. We are to be exemplary in what we do ourselves. That comes down to some very basic things about faculty legislation; about use of our buildings and imaginative work there; about how use our heritage; about how we use and invest our finances, of which more later today; and around how we heat and light things. Symbolic action such as use of paper at General Synod, the amount we travel, and disinvestment or the tackling and engagement with companies in certain areas, such as arctic drilling, are equally important.

"This is not a standalone issue. It cuts across all we do. Thank you."

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