

Witness Name: Frank Elms Robson

Statement No.: 1

Exhibits:

Dated: 15 August 2018

**THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

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**Witness Statement of Frank Elms Robson**

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I, **Frank Elms Robson**, will say as follows:

1. I held office as Provincial Registrar for the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1982 until my retirement in 2000. Since the autumn of last year, I have been in the care of a nursing home in North Oxford, and I am unable to travel.
2. I have been asked by the Independent Inquiry on Child Sexual Abuse to recount my recollection of a meeting which took place on 15 December 1992. I understand that letters I wrote and minutes of other meetings I attended in connection with the events surrounding the arrest and cautioning of Bishop Peter Ball are already in the possession of the Inquiry. According to the transcripts of the evidence given by others to the Inquiry last month, questions have been raised about my attendance at that meeting, and whether I kept any written record of what took place.
3. I have a clear recollection of having attended the meeting, or at least part of it. I had been asked to travel from my office in Oxford to Lambeth Palace. I believe that when I received the telephone call requesting my attendance, the meeting had already begun, but I do not know how long it had continued by the time I got there an hour or more later.
4. When I arrived, the Archbishop of Canterbury (George Carey) was there, as was the then Bishop at Lambeth (John Yates), the Bishop of Truro (Michael Ball) and the Bishop of Gloucester (Peter Ball). I had been told in the telephone conversation that the Bishop of Gloucester had been arrested, but I was given little or no other information about the allegations, other than that they involved indecency in one form or another.
5. I have no detailed recollection of the discussion that took place other than being told that the police were continuing their investigation and that there was consternation and a degree of bewilderment in the diocese (as well as at Lambeth Palace) as to what

should be done. I agreed that I would reflect on the situation as it had been described to me, and would write to the Archbishop with advice when I had done so.

6. I duly undertook some research and consulted one or two colleagues concerning both the criminal and ecclesiastical disciplinary implications of the situation, and wrote to the Archbishop in the period between Christmas and New Year 1992. I believe the Inquiry has a copy of my letter dated 29 December that year.
7. I did not make any written record of the part of the meeting I had attended, because I was not fully aware of all that had been discussed in the earlier part of the meeting before I arrived.

**Statement of Truth**

I believe that the facts stated **DPA**'s witness statement are true.

Signed:

**DPA**

Dated:

15.08.18