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## FAQS: LEADERSHIP TRANSITION – JUNE 12, 2007

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### ASIAN ACCESS PRESIDENT TO STEP DOWN TO DEVOTE FULL TIME TO LAUSANNE MOVEMENT; INTERIM PRESIDENT NAMED.

Q: When did the Board of Directors accept the resignation of President Doug Birdsall?

A: At the June 4-5 board meetings in southern California.

Q: When is the resignation effective?

A: September 30, 2007, which coincides with the end of the fiscal year at Asian Access.

Q: What is reason for Birdsall's resignation?

A: Rev. S. Douglas Birdsall has been leading both Asian Access (1991) and [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#) (2004). He found it increasingly difficult to lead both organizations effectively. Both deserve the full attention of its primary leader. So the Asian Access board of directors approved the resignation, thus releasing Rev. Birdsall to follow God's call to devote himself full-time to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. Though the board was thoroughly pleased with his leadership as president, they affirmed his new call to Lausanne.

Q: What are Doug's reflections of his decision to resign as president?

A: "When the Asian Access family gathered together in Malaysia to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, I shared with everyone that I have found it increasingly challenging to provide a quality of leadership that is adequate for Asian Access at a time of continued growth opportunities, as well as for the expanding work of the revitalized Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.

When our Leadership Team was together in Los Angeles in January, we once again gave serious discussion to this matter. As we were leaving those meetings, in Los Angeles in January, each person was specifying the minimum that they needed from me by way of my time and commitment over the course of the coming months. As I flew back to Boston, I thought this is not best for this mission that I love. Given the fact that we have expanding opportunities across Asia, I feel that we need a person who can give their undivided time and energy to this wonderful ministry.

The following month, as I was returning from Cape Town after having met with the committee that will host the Third Lausanne Congress in October 2010, I also had a sense that the Lausanne Movement needs everything that I can give to it in the years to come.

Obviously, it is not possible for me to give 100% of my time and energy to both Asian Access and to Lausanne."

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Q: How does the Asian Access board of directors feel about Doug and his resignation?

A: Ron McMahon, Chairman of the Board of Directors, expressed the board's unequivocal appreciation of Rev. Birdsall's tenure.

"The board absolutely loves Doug and Jeanie, and we wish them the very best as they follow God's call. We appreciate how they have led this mission with progressive vision and untarnished character. Doug's sixteen years at the helm sharpened our ministry by focusing all our work on developing leaders and multiplying churches."

McMahon confirmed that the board accepted Birdsall's resignation from the post, stating, "While we are sorry to lose Doug as our leader, we see this development as a kingdom advance, not a setback. Our mission is to 'identify, develop and release kingdom leaders.' In keeping with this objective, we feel we are releasing Doug to pursue his expanded call and passion for the world since we see Lausanne as global, extending well beyond Asia."

"As an organization, one of our core values is generosity, and we must let Doug pursue this larger vision." McMahon added. "God will bless His Kingdom through Doug's new call. And we embrace this new calling for him. Even so, the board has asked Doug to remain on as an Asian Access missionary and a board member for the foreseeable future. We're pleased Doug accepted our request."

Q: What is the board's perspective about the timing of Doug's departure and how it will affect Asian Access' vision and ministry?

A: Dr. David Bennett, a member of the Board of Directors' search committee said, "Doug is stepping down when the ministry is expanding and with a capable leadership team already in place. We don't see a major shift in direction. We know God's vision for us and are continuing to pursue it energetically and enthusiastically. Transitions can be challenging times, but they also help deepen our trust in God. As our recent 40th anniversary celebration in Malaysia demonstrated, the Lord has been faithful to Asian Access over the last four decades, and our mission's future is bright as we hope to identify our fourth permanent president by the spring of 2008."

Q: Will this leadership transition affect current Asian Access staff and their ministry roles?

A: The staff embrace the vision and mission of Asian Access, which continue to compel them in this work. Even though there will be a leadership transition over the coming year, Asian Access is poised for growth. The organization plans to continue expanding across Asia, and people who share this vision of "identifying, developing and releasing kingdom leaders" will continue have roles to play.

Q: Who has been named the Interim president?

A: Bruce Johnson, 56 of Charlotte, North Carolina, who is currently serves with Asian Access as Vice President for Leadership Development will become Interim President effective October 1, 2007. His present responsibility is to oversee the design and implementation of the Asian Access leader development model across twenty countries of Asia.

Mr. Johnson's profile can be found at:

<http://www.asianaccess.org/media>

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**Q:** What is the plan, process and timeline for finding a new permanent president?

**A:** The Board has appointed a Search Committee that will be chaired by Dr. David Bennett and will also establish an advisory council to get input from missionary staff, from Asian partners, leaders of other mission organizations, major foundations and donors that have generously supported the mission, as well as from alumni and pastors of churches that have been affiliated with Asian Access. The goal is to identify the organization's fourth president by spring 2008.

(Chairman) Ron McMahon said, "Finding the right person to be the president is one of the most important tasks of any board of directors. During our leadership transition, the Asian Access board will be looking for someone who can lead this organization in the course in which it is already heading. At least at this point, we don't foresee a major shift in ministry direction for Asian Access."

**Q:** What is Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization?

**A:** The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization seeks to encourage and stimulate the involvement of churches, denominations, ministries, networks and individuals in the cause of world evangelization. Lausanne provides a place for theological discussion and the development of practical strategies to address crucial issues facing the church in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization grew out of the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization held in Lausanne, Switzerland. The gathering was called by a committee headed by Rev. Billy Graham. Lausanne is planning the 2010 Congress on World Evangelization, perhaps the largest gathering of Christians in history.

More information can be found online at:

<http://www.lausanne.org>

**Q:** How can we contact Asian Access for more information?

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**Q:** Where can I find Asian Access online?

**A:** Web Site: <http://www.asianaccess.org>  
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