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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We are just completing an Asian Access Board meeting that has taken place here in Los Angeles.

When we were together in Malaysia, I shared with many 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, 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.

Thus, I have come to the decision that I should step down from my role as President of Asian Access. At our Board meetings this week I have submitted my resignation. It has been received and accepted by the Board of Directors. It is done so with the understanding that Jeanie and I will continue to serve as missionaries with Asian Access on special assignment to the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization. I have also been asked to serve on the Board of Directors.

Asian Access has been a very big part of our lives. Jeanie and I joined the Mission 28 years ago this month. It was 16 years ago that I was asked to serve as the President of our mission. I am thankful for the fact that all that we have experienced, at each step along the way, during these 28 years, has served to prepare us for what God had next.

This is a time when the mission is in a position of health and strength, our board is strong; we have momentum for growth; there is a clear sense of vision and mission. I believe that the best days for Asian Access are yet ahead. We will continue in our commitment to the fulfillment of the 20/20 Vision in Japan as well as our commitment to establishing leadership development programs in 20 countries of Asia.



I have shared with the Board and the leadership team that I had planned to step down from the leadership position by the time that I was 60 years old. I will be 54 next month; so in a sense I am simply accelerating something that had been on my heart and in my mind by a matter of 5 or 6 years.

The Board has appointed Bruce Johnson to serve as the Interim President. Bruce is a person who has my full confidence. He is a man of character and strength. He is a man of proven leadership ability. He has the full confidence of the Board of Directors.

The Board has also 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.

I will continue to serve through September 30th.

Thank you for your friendship and for your partnership. May God continue to wonderfully bless you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doug". The signature is stylized, with a large, looped "D" and a cursive "oug".

Yours in Christ,
Doug Birdsall

/tlw