

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

November 1976

To the Friends assembled at the International Teaching Conference in Hong Kong

Dearly loved Friends,

With grateful and joyous hearts we extend our warmest greetings and express our highest hopes to the followers of Bahá'u'lláh gathered, at this critical point of the Five Year Plan, in this Conference on Asia's eastern shore. This great continent has nourished mighty civilizations; above its horizons the suns of major Revelations of God have risen; on its soil many of the heroes of this New Age have shed their blood and offered their lives in token of their love for Him Who is the Beloved of the World and the Desire of the Nations.

What an imperishable glory has been bestowed upon the people of Asia, the first to be illumined by the rays of God's Faith, the first recipients of His Call and the first promoters of His Cause. Their spiritual capacity is extolled and the great role they are destined to play in the strengthening of the foundation of the New World Order of Bahá'u'lláh unhesitatingly affirmed by 'Abdu'l-Bahá in His Tablets of the Divine Plan.

This great continent contains within its boundaries the heart of the Faith and its Cradle, the lands wherein its Founders toiled and suffered, and not only the great majority of the human race but the great majority of the followers of Bahá'u'lláh. The potentiality of such a situation cannot be underestimated, nor must the great force latent within so large a proportion of the Army of Light be neglected. They must be mobilized to accelerate the expansion of the beloved Cause, to consolidate its victories, to enhance its prestige and to augment its influence. We appeal to every participant in this historic Conference to become conscious of these tremendous but hidden potentialities which, if properly tapped and directed, can hasten the process of the spiritualization of the nations of Asia, the influence of which will extend far beyond the confines of that continent—even to the entire planet.

We eagerly await news that from this Conference will surge throughout Asia a wave of vigorous activity devoted to the execution on the individual, local and national levels, of systematic plans designed to attract the great masses of that continent to the life-giving, all-embracing Message of Bahá'u'lláh. Such plans must provide opportunities for those thousands who in recent years have swelled the rank and file, as well as for those veterans who have, for so many years, striven in the path of service to the Cause. It is through active participation of more and more new believers in both teaching and administration that the consolidation of the Bahá'í community can best be achieved.

In a continent so richly endowed, so greatly blessed, new generations of Bahá'ís must continually be raised up, trained from childhood in the school of the love of God, and nurtured under the shadow of His Cause. Bahá'ís in every country must be constantly urged and, wherever necessary, assisted to pass on to their children as their most cherished legacy, the precious Faith they themselves have embraced. Those new generations of Bahá'ís will have a vital role in consolidating the Cause of God on a firm foundation.

The establishment of Local Assemblies as the basic administrative unit of the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh and as rallying points for the Bahá'ís of every community should, in accordance with the objectives of the Five Year Plan, be multiplied no matter at what cost of effort and endurance. The process of invigorating the Local Assemblies requires, during the Five Year Plan, the consultation of all the institutions of the Cause.

Publication of literature in many languages as part of a determined campaign to win thousands upon thousands of diverse peoples in all spheres of life must be vigorously pursued. Participation of all believers in supporting the Bahá'í Funds, the lifeblood of the Cause, must be given adequate attention, and the blessings which reward the act of voluntary giving for the promotion of the Faith, no matter how small the amount may be, must be lovingly and wisely explained.

May this Conference become a landmark in the process of attracting vast numbers of the great Chinese race scattered throughout the world. May it be a prelude to the unprecedented expansion of the Faith in all the countries of Asia. May it become a source of strength to the supporters of the Most Great Name so that despite the rising tide of trials and upheavals afflicting the world, and whatever forces of opposition may be mounted against the Cause of God itself, the believers will not waver or become diverted from their course, but be ever more confirmed in their determination to raise the edifice of the Faith of God as the last bastion of hope to a lost and wayward humanity.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]