

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

9 September 1979

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

PERSECUTION OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS, THE LARGEST RELIGIOUS MINORITY IN IRAN, HAS TAKEN A NEW TURN. EARLY YESTERDAY MORNING A CROWD OF OVER 100 PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE HEAD OF THE GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT FOR RELIGIOUS ENDOWMENTS IN SHIRAZ, AND ACCOMPANIED BY 25 REVOLUTIONARY GUARDSMEN AND 10 OTHER ARMED MEN, ATTACKED THE MOST HOLY HOUSE OF THE BÁB WHICH WAS ORDAINED BY BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, THE FOUNDER OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH, TO BE A PLACE OF PILGRIMAGE FOR HIS FOLLOWERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND IS REGARDED BY THEM AS THE MOST HALLOWED SPOT IN IRAN. THIS CROWD, WHICH HAD THE KEY TO THE HOUSE, SMASHED AND DISMANTLED DOORS AND WINDOWS, DESTROYED ORNAMENTAL PLASTERWORK, BREACHED THE WALLS AND HACKED TO PIECES A TREE IN THE COURTYARD. THIS MORNING THE WORK OF DEMOLITION IS BEING CONTINUED BY A GROUP OF WORKMEN AND IT IS CLEAR THAT THE PURPOSE IS TO RAZE TO THE GROUND THE HOUSE OF THE BÁB AND TWO ADJACENT HOUSES WHICH ALSO BELONG TO THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY.

A WAVE OF ANGUISHED INDIGNATION IS SWEEPING THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. WHEN ALL BAHÁ'Í HOLY PLACES IN IRAN WERE SEIZED BY THE AUTHORITIES IN RECENT MONTHS, THE PROTESTATIONS OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS WERE MET WITH BLAND ASSURANCES, CONFIRMED IN WRITING, THAT THE TAKEOVER WAS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THESE SACRED PROPERTIES.

BAHÁ'ÍS IN EAST AND WEST ARE REGISTERING VEHEMENT PROTESTS WITH THE IRANIAN AUTHORITIES.

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