

## THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

29 October 1986

To the meeting of the Senior Officers of the United Nations Office and the Office of Public Information

THE GATHERING IN NEW YORK ON 31 OCTOBER OF THE SENIOR STAFF OF THE OVERSEAS OFFICES OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MARKS A NEW, POTENT STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF THE WORLDWIDE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY. THIS STAGE BETOKENS THE PROMINENCE ATTAINED BY THE CAUSE OF GOD IN ITS EMERGENCE FROM OBSCURITY AND IS CHARACTERIZED BY THE NEW, INESCAPABLE CHALLENGES IMMEDIATELY TO BE MET AS A DIRECT RESULT OF THE OPERATION OF THE ONRUSHING PROCESSES THROUGH WHICH ARE EVOLVING THE RECONSTRUCTIVE INFLUENCES OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH'S WORLD ORDER. A STRIKING MANIFESTATION OF THE NEW SITUATION CAN BE SEEN IN THE ACCUMULATING EVIDENCE OF THE SALUTARY RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPING BETWEEN THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD AT LARGE. THIS RELATIONSHIP MUST BE EXPANDED. AS WINDOWS OF THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY TO THE WORLD, THESE OFFICES MUST DISPLAY EVER MORE CLEARLY THE UNIFYING PRINCIPLES, THE HOPE, THE PROMISE, THE MAJESTY OF THIS EMERGING ORDER.

A GLANCE BACKWARD TO THE EMBRYONIC EFFORTS 39 YEARS AGO TO ASSOCIATE THE INTERESTS OF THE FAITH WITH THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS CANNOT BUT AROUSE IN EVERY OBSERVANT BAHÁ'Í A DEEP SENSE OF PRIDE AND WONDERMENT AT THE MOMENTOUS PROGRESS ACHIEVED. THE FOUNDATION OF EIGHT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES ON WHICH THOSE EFFORTS WERE LAUNCHED HAS, BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 148 NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, BROADENED NEARLY NINETEENFOLD. FROM THAT SMALL BEGINNING TO THE HISTORIC MOMENT IN 1970 WHEN THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WAS ACCORDED CONSULTATIVE STATUS WITH THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, FOLLOWED BY A SIMILAR ACCREDITATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND IN 1976, TO THE REMARKABLE OCCASION IN DECEMBER 1985 WHEN THE NAME OF THE FAITH WAS RECORDED IN A RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ITSELF, THE WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH HAS SURELY JUSTIFIED ITS PROMISE TO COME FORTH AS A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH IN THE CLOSING YEARS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

YOU HAVE WITNESSED IN THE LAST THREE YEARS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION, THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND THE CREATION OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT IN THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE, AND THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE GENEVA BRANCH OF THAT OFFICE WITH THE TRANSFER FROM NEW YORK OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS UNIT... THESE ORGANIZATIONAL INITIATIVES AND REFINEMENTS BESPEAK AN ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE TO THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES POSED BY THE FAR-REACHING DIPLOMATIC AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROSPECTS OPENING BEFORE THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD COMMUNITY.

CLARITY AND UNITY OF VISION BETWEEN THE OFFICES OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MUST BE ACHIEVED. A HIGHER LEVEL OF COOPERATION WITHIN AND BETWEEN THESE OFFICES IS IMPERATIVE. EQUALLY ESSENTIAL IS A GREATER PARTICIPATION IN THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S PROGRAMS AND OBJECTIVES BY PERTINENT INSTRUMENTS OF THE BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, PARTICULARLY NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES, WHOSE GROWING GOOD RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS AND INCREASING CONTACTS WITH PROMINENT ELEMENTS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES OFFER A WIDE FIELD OF

ACTIVITY TO BE CHERISHED AND ENCOURAGED ON THE ONE HAND, AND EXPLORED AND EXPLOITED ON THE OTHER, BY THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION. FOSTERING A HARMONIOUSLY FUNCTIONING NETWORK COMPRISING THE VARIOUS ENTITIES OF A MATURING, FAR-FLUNG BAHÁ'Í SYSTEM—INDEED, THE WISE, SKILLFUL, STRATEGIC COLLABORATION OF THESE ENTITIES IN PROGRAMS BEING PURSUED BY THESE OFFICES CAN CONDUCE TO A DEPLOYMENT OF BAHÁ'Í INFLUENCE NOT YET EXPERIENCED.

YOUR AIM NOW IS TO VALIDATE SUCH PROSPECTS THROUGH LOVING, UNITED, EFFICIENT, SELFLESS, AND CEASELESS ENDEAVOR. DIFFICULTIES OF THE PAST MUST YIELD TO THE URGENT DEMANDS OF THE PRESENT; INCONGRUITIES OF PERSONALITY MUST DISSOLVE IN A WIDENING RANGE OF EFFECTIVE ACTIONS; ALL PARTICULARISMS MUST BE SUBORDINATED TO THE COMMON GOOD OF THE CAUSE. ONLY THUS CAN SUCCESS BE ASSURED.

IT IS WITH A COMMITMENT TO SUCH RESOLVES THAT YOU WILL NOT ONLY MEET AMONG YOURSELVES AS COWORKERS IN THE OFFICES OF THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, BUT ALSO INVITE THE PARTICIPATION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, WHICH WERE AMONG THE EIGHT NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WHICH CONFIGURED THE BAHÁ'Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS AN ENTITY IN THE EYES OF THE UNITED NATIONS, WITH THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL ASSEMBLY THE SPEARHEAD. THESE REPRESENTATIVES WILL COME FROM COMMUNITIES WHICH CONSTITUTE A BULWARK OF HARD-WON BAHÁ'Í EXPERIENCE, RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTION, AND WHICH, AS IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED, SHOULDER EXTRAORDINARY RESPONSIBILITIES BY VIRTUE OF THE UNIQUE BLESSINGS BESTOWED ON NORTH AMERICA THROUGH 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ'S DIVINE PLAN. SUCH BLESSINGS WILL IN GOD'S APPOINTED TIME MAKE EVIDENT THE PREPONDERATING INFLUENCE WHICH THAT CONTINENT MUST AND WILL EXERT ON THE REALIZATION OF PEACE ON EARTH. AS THE RISE IN THE STATUS OF THE AMERICAN AND CANADIAN COMMUNITIES ALSO SIGNIFIES TO A GREAT EXTENT A RISE IN THE STATUS OF THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD COMMUNITY, IT IS ONLY FITTING THAT THE COLLABORATION OF THEIR NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLIES WITH THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AND THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION SHOULD BE WELCOMED, REAPPRAISED AND REINFORCED. THEY WILL IN TURN, NO DOUBT, EXTEND TO THOSE OFFICES EAGER HANDS OF SUPPORT AND THE WHOLEHEARTED WILL TO COOPERATE, AS MUCH WITH THE OFFICES AS BETWEEN THEMSELVES.

WE LOOK TO THE FUTURE, CONFIDENT THAT BY WORKING UNITEDLY TOGETHER, AND WITH DUE APPRECIATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE ASSIGNED TO THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL, YOU WILL MAKE A NOTABLE CONTRIBUTION TO A PERIOD OF UNPRECEDENTED ADVANCEMENT FOR THE FAITH OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH. WITH THIS ASSURANCE WE OFFER OUR SUPPLICATIONS AT THE HOLY SHRINES THAT HE WHO WATCHES OVER THE DESTINY OF HIS WONDROUS CAUSE AND CONFIRMS THE HUMBLE EFFORTS OF HIS DEVOTED SERVANTS MAY GRANT YOU A FRESH MEASURE OF HIS GRACE AND BOUNTY.

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