

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

20 April 1990

To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Twenty-five years ago, when the International Deputization Fund was established in the Holy Land by the Universal House of Justice and the friends were invited to contribute to it in support of pioneering and traveling teaching projects throughout the world, these illuminating words of Bahá'u'lláh were quoted:

Center your energies in the propagation of the Faith of God. Whoso is worthy of so high a calling, let him arise and promote it. Whoso is unable, it is his duty to appoint him who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation, whose power hath caused the foundations of the mightiest structures to quake, every mountain to be crushed into dust, and every soul to be dumbfounded...

It is clear from this injunction of Bahá'u'lláh's that the primary responsibility to promote the propagation of the Faith of God rests on the individual believer. It is, likewise, his responsibility, if he is unable to discharge this duty, to appoint one who will, in his stead, proclaim this Revelation.

Many of the friends have, ever since these words were revealed by Bahá'u'lláh, succeeded in responding to the call. A great number have not found it easy to select suitable and qualified deputies willing to undertake such a task for them.

We feel that the time has come, as the Bahá'í world is rapidly moving towards the end of the Six Year Plan, for National Spiritual Assemblies to take an active part in facilitating the selection and appointment of suitable pioneers and traveling teachers, by providing a link between those wishing to deputize, and those qualified and ready to be deputized. The manner in which this objective can be achieved is left to the discretion of each National Spiritual Assembly, which should consider the conditions of its national community, and determine, preferably in consultation with the Counselors or their representatives, the wisest and most effective course of action to follow. It is hoped that whatever procedures are adopted, they will assist the friends to fulfill their responsibilities, to the extent possible, in the manner prescribed by Bahá'u'lláh.

The way is, of course, always open for the friends to use the International Deputization Fund as the vehicle of their compliance with Bahá'u'lláh's injunction. Thus, those who are unable, or find it difficult, to identify suitable candidates to be designated as their deputies are able to send their contributions to the International Deputization Fund on a regular basis in order to fulfill their sacred obligation for the promotion of the teaching work.

Responsibility for the administration of this Fund has been assigned to the International Teaching Centre and, in its turn, the Teaching Center makes specific allocations through the Continental Pioneer Committees, whose memberships have recently been renewed and made known to the friends. A few months ago short-term pioneer projects were announced and the concept of short-term pioneers has been received with great excitement by the friends everywhere. Whenever supplementary funds are needed to assist in the prosecution of these projects, or to finance long-term pioneering and traveling teaching projects, application could be made to the International Deputization Fund. National Spiritual Assemblies, therefore, could work out cost estimates of projects needing financial support, and submit their requests for budget assistance to the Continental Pioneer Committees.

The occasion demands that the followers of Bahá'u'lláh should wholeheartedly, with fresh enthusiasm and renewed dedication, step into this arena of service. It is our hope and prayer that through such universal participation in this mighty endeavor, those whose circumstances do not

enable them at this time to fulfill the Beloved's call, as clearly enunciated in His celebrated passage quoted above, will discharge their obligation by contributing to the International Deputization Fund, thus providing the means whereby others may propel the remaining stages of the Six Year Plan to a triumphant conclusion.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]