

The Universal House of Justice

Department of the Secretariat

16 September 1996

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Austria

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Universal House of Justice was very pleased to receive your letter of 30 July 1996 enclosing the announcement to all the friends in Austria of the goals you have adopted for the Four Year Plan. The clarity with which you have set them forth and your emphasis on the respective responsibilities of the institutions, the communities and the individual believers should greatly assist the friends in acquiring a vision of what is to be achieved, and their own part in the work.

You may still find that some believers have difficulty in accurately comprehending the concept of entry by troops. It may help you, when you encounter such problems, to stress the point made by the Universal House of Justice in its various messages, namely that arriving at the point of entry by troops, and then fostering it, is a *process*. It is the advancement of this process that is the goal of the Four Year Plan, and the exact steps to be taken in each area will depend upon how far the process has already developed by now. An essential element of the process is the preparation of the Bahá'í communities and individual believers and their training in the knowledge, not only of how to prayerfully attract receptive souls and to bring entry by troops about but, equally important, how to consolidate the gains so that it becomes an enduring development. No doubt you have this aspect of the Plan clearly in mind in the goal of establishing training institutes, which you have assigned to your own Assembly, and in which the Counselor and Auxiliary Board members will closely collaborate with you.

Certainly, characteristics of Bahá'í life such as a loving and understanding relationship between the individual believers and their Assemblies; a warm, welcoming and harmonious atmosphere in Bahá'í communities; and individuals who uphold Bahá'í standards in their everyday lives, are in themselves vital strengths in the advancement of the process. Such characteristics can help the friends, not only to attract others to the Cause, but also to manifest understanding, patience and encouragement in relation to the new believers.

The House of Justice was also very pleased to see that you have the aim of raising up National Spiritual Assemblies in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Bosnia. This is a major task, and the Universal House of Justice will pray for divine assistance to surround all who devote themselves to its achievement in such very difficult circumstances.

Indeed, the House of Justice will pray in the Holy Shrines that the friends throughout Austria will unitedly arise for the achievement of all the goals you have set before them in the Four Year Plan, and thus attract the confirmations of Bahá'u'lláh on their strenuous labors.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat