

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

6 April 1999

[To a Local Spiritual Assembly]

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Universal House of Justice has received your letter of 6 January 1999 and has asked us to respond as follows.

The House of Justice is deeply concerned about the condition and needs of the indigenous people . . . Although there is no doubt that increased material resources would be helpful in resolving some of the problems which exist there, they will not suffice to bring about a fundamental and enduring solution. This can only come about through a realization that, at a basic level, the issues which you face are essentially spiritual, dealing with values, attitudes, and behavior. Hence, a spiritual solution is required.

The message of the Bahá'í Faith is that Bahá'u'lláh has brought teachings which are infused with a dynamic spiritual power with which the most formidable barriers can be overcome and the most sweeping transformation effected. You, dear friends, who have been privileged to accept these divine teachings in this day can best meet your own needs and those of the wider society . . . by giving first priority to your endeavors to put the Bahá'í teachings into practice. Through your obedience to Bahá'í law, your striving to spiritualize your lives, and your continuing effort to deepen your understanding of the Holy Writings, you can most appropriately respond to the needs of the present time. It is most important that you strive to make your Local Spiritual Assembly strong and effective, through its holding regular meetings, its development of the skills of consultation, and through its attention to pressing needs such as the holding of the Nineteen Day Feast, the establishment of regular children's classes, and the provision of guidance to Bahá'í youth in their personal development and education.

As you persevere in such aims, you will find that your Bahá'í community will grow in unity and cohesion, and will attract the attention of those around you because of its shining qualities. On such a foundation you will be able to embark on a wide range of social and economic development projects which will improve the material life of the people, and solve the problems to which you have drawn attention in your letter. Your Spiritual Assembly should not hesitate to turn to your National Spiritual Assembly for guidance in carrying out your functions, and should make every possible effort to implement the directions it gives you. In addition, the Auxiliary Board members assigned to serve your area are a most valuable source of advice and counsel.

You are assured of the prayers of the House of Justice in the Holy Shrines on your behalf as you strive to carry out your duties.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat