

## THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

17 January 2002

To the Friends Gathered at the Youth Congress in Brazil

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

We have followed with keen interest the series of youth conferences conducted across the American continent since the beginning of 2000. The enthusiasm generated among the youth by those events, and the spirit of devotion evoked, were noteworthy. This latest gathering is being held at a time when the initial stages of the Five Year Plan have unfolded, giving rise to well conceived plans of action, formulated on the basis of the geographic clusters into which each of your countries has been divided. To move these clusters from one stage of development to the next is the challenge being addressed by your institutions.

As you deliberate in the coming days on your experiences and aspirations, you should keep in mind that the success of the Five Year Plan in your continent will depend, in no small measure, on the wholehearted and sacrificial participation of the youth. You know well that the driving force behind growth in every cluster is the training institute. An enormous task lies ahead of these centres of learning as they strive to help large contingents of people pass through the sequence of courses they offer. Participating in their programmes must rank high among the endeavours you undertake for the Faith. Your contribution to the efforts to multiply the number of study circles will be significant if you constantly seek out receptive souls in your schools, at your universities, and in the workplace and invite them to join you in your exploration of the Writings. But your concern should not end with your own place of residence. You should take advantage of every opportunity to meet the needs of clusters throughout the continent by offering periods of service as short-term pioneers or as travelling teachers. As you do so, you will be able to forge bonds of fellowship with people of diverse backgrounds and bring them together in unified action.

We pray ardently that Bahá'u'lláh will bless and confirm your every effort to serve His Cause.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]