

# BAHÁ'Í JOURNAL

27 Rutland Gate, London, S.W.7

Published by the National Spiritual Assembly  
of the Bahá'ís of the British Isles

No. 157

November, 1963

## MESSAGES FROM THE SUPREME LEGISLATIVE BODY OF THE BAHÁ'Í WORLD

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Centre,  
Haifa, Israel.  
25th August, 1963.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The whole Bahá'í World will be grief-stricken at the news of the sad fate which has overtaken the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár in 'Ishqábád, the first Temple raised to the glory of Bahá'u'lláh. Due to its unsafe condition, resulting from earthquakes, the building has been entirely demolished and the site cleared.

The building of this edifice, the only structure of its kind to be raised and completed in the lifetime of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, was described by the beloved Guardian as "a lasting witness to the fervour and the self-sacrifice of the Oriental believers." "This enterprise," the Guardian further wrote, "must rank not only as the first major undertaking launched through the concerted efforts of His followers in the Heroic Age of His Faith, but as one of the most brilliant and enduring achievements in the history of the first Bahá'í century."

The Bahá'í centre in 'Ishqábád was founded in the days of Bahá'u'lláh. Already during His lifetime preliminary steps had been adopted by the friends of that community to build, in accordance with the provisions of the Most Holy Book, a Mashriqu'l-Adhkár.

However, the project had to be postponed until 1902, at the end of the first decade of the Ministry of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, when He initiated its construction, called on the friends in the East to offer their contributions towards the fulfilment of this goal, and personally encouraged and directed its development at every stage. The Báb's cousin, the venerable Hájí Mírzá Muḥammad-Taqí, the Vakílu'd-Dawlih, offered his total wealth towards this meritorious enterprise, established his residence in that city, and personally supervised its construction.

The laying of the cornerstone of this edifice at a ceremony attended by the delegate of the Czar—the Governor-General

of Turkistan—and the initial steps taken to raise this first House of Worship of the Bahá'í World, inspired the friends in America, who, in 1903, eager to demonstrate the quality of their faith, petitioned 'Abdu'l-Bahá for permission to erect the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkár of the West.

In addition to the Temple itself, two schools, one for boys and one for girls, and a pilgrim house were built. The local community, and the activities of the friends throughout the provinces of Turkistan expanded and developed in stature until 1928, when the law expropriating religious edifices was applied to this Temple. However, under the terms of two five-year leases, the Bahá'í community was permitted to continue to use the building as a house of worship. In 1938 the Temple was completely expropriated and converted into an art gallery.

In 1948 violent earthquakes shook the whole town causing devastation and ruin. The building was seriously damaged. The only section which remained relatively secure was the central rotunda. Heavy yearly rains further weakened the structure to such a degree as to endanger the safety of houses in the vicinity. It was at this point that the authorities decided to demolish the remaining edifice and clear the site.

A reliable report, recently received, indicates that had the Temple been restored to us at this point, we should have had no option but to raze the building ourselves.

Please share this news with the friends but we do not wish National Assemblies, Local Assemblies or individual believers to take any action.

With loving greetings,

(Signed and Sealed) THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Centre,  
Haifa, Israel,  
6th October, 1963.

*To All National Spiritual Assemblies.*

Beloved Friends,

We wish to share with you the text of the following resolution :

“ After prayerful and careful study of the Holy Texts bearing upon the question of the appointment of the successor to Shoghi Effendi as Guardian of the Cause of God, and after prolonged consultation which included consideration of the views of the Hands of the Cause of God residing in the Holy Land, the Universal House of Justice finds that there is no way to appoint or to legislate to make it possible to appoint a second Guardian to succeed Shoghi Effendi.”

Please share this message with the friends in your jurisdiction.

With loving greetings,

*(Signed and Sealed)* THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.

---

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Centre,  
Haifa, Israel.  
October, 1963.

*To the Followers of Bahá'u'lláh throughout the World.*

Fellow believers in the Cause of God,

Six years ago when nearing the midway point of the Ten Year Crusade, the Bahá'í World found itself abruptly deprived of the guiding hand of its beloved Guardian. The anguish which then seized our hearts, far from paralyzing the progress of the Cause, stiffened our resolve and fired our zeal to complete the tasks which God, through His Chosen Branch, had laid upon us. The august institution of the Hands of the Cause of God which he had, but recently, in compliance with the instructions of the Master's Will, raised up, kept the people of this Cause faithfully to the path which had been shown to us by the pen of divine guidance, and brought us not only to the triumphal conclusion of that Crusade but to the culminating point of the construction of the framework of Bahá'u'lláh's World Order.

In March 1930, Shoghi Effendi wrote that Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá had “in unequivocal and emphatic language, appointed those twin institutions of the House of Justice and of the Guardianship as Their chosen Successors, destined to apply the principles, promulgate the laws, protect the institutions, adapt loyally and intelligently the Faith to the requirements of progressive society, and consummate the incorruptible inheritance which the Founders of the Faith have bequeathed to the world.” After long and prayerful consultation, the House of Justice, as the friends have already been informed, found that there is no way in which it can legislate for a second Guardian to succeed Shoghi Effendi. The Universal House of Justice has therefore begun, in humble obedience to the Will of God, and strengthened by daily prayer in the Holy



Shrines, to undertake the heavy tasks laid upon it. In the words of our beloved Guardian it “will guide, organize and unify the affairs of the Movement throughout the world” and “will have to consider afresh the whole situation, and lay down the principle which shall direct, so long as it deems advisable, the affairs of the Cause.”

The Covenant of Bahá'u'lláh is unbroken, its all-encompassing power inviolate. The two unique features, which distinguish it from all religious covenants of the past are unchanged and operative. The revealed Word, in its original purity, amplified by the divinely guided interpretations of 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, remains immutable, unadulterated by any man-made creeds or dogmas, unwarrantable inferences or unauthorized interpretations. The channel of divine guidance, providing flexibility in all the affairs of mankind, remains open through that Institution which was founded by Bahá'u'lláh and endowed by Him with supreme authority and unfailing guidance, and of which the Master wrote: “Unto this body all things must be referred.” How clearly we can see the truth of Bahá'u'lláh's assertion: “The Hand of Omnipotence hath established His Revelation upon an unassailable, an enduring foundation. Storms of human strife are powerless to undermine its basis nor will men's fanciful theories succeed in damaging its structure.”

As the significance of the Cause of God continues in the years ahead to become more clearly apparent to the eyes of men, a great responsibility to watch over its security rests upon all of its institutions. The Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God, charged in the sacred Texts with the specific duties of protecting and propagating the Faith, has a particularly vital responsibility to discharge. In their capacity as protectors of the Faith, the Hands will continue to take action to expel Covenant-breakers and to reinstate those who sincerely repent, subject in each instance to the approval of the Universal House of Justice. Exercising their function of propagating the Faith, the Hands of the Cause will inspire, advise and assist the National Spiritual Assemblies in the work as they did in the time of our beloved Shoghi Effendi, assisted by the members of their Auxiliary Boards who will continue to fulfil those functions outlined for them by him.

We stand now upon the threshold of the second epoch of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan, with the outposts of the Cause established in the remotest corners of the earth, and having already witnessed the beginnings of that entry into the Faith by troops promised by the Master Himself. The foundation of the Kingdom has been securely laid, the framework has been raised. The friends must now consolidate these achievements, safeguard their institutions and gather the peoples and kindreds of the world into the Ark which the Hand of God has built.

Next Ridván will be launched the second of those world-encircling enterprises destined in the course of time to carry the Word of God to every human soul. The Standard

Bearers of this Nine-Year Plan are the Hands of the Cause of God. The responsibility for directing the work will rest upon the shoulders of the National Spiritual Assemblies, the generals of the Army of Light, under the guidance of the Universal House of Justice.

As the first step inaugurating this great undertaking we rejoice to announce the formation next Ridván of nineteen National Spiritual Assemblies, resulting in the dissolution of six of the existing Regional National Spiritual Assemblies, and bringing the total number of these pillars of the Universal House of Justice to sixty-nine. The National and Regional National Assemblies now to be formed are:—

1. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of North West Africa, with its seat in Tunis, comprising Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Spanish Sahara, Rio de Oro, Mauritania, the Canary Islands and Madeira.
2. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of West Africa, with its seat in Monrovia, comprising Liberia, Sénégal, Gambia, Portuguese Guinea, Guinée, Sierra Leone, Mali, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast and Cape Verde Islands.
3. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of West Central Africa, with its seat in Victoria, comprising Cameroon, Spanish Guinea, St. Thomas Island, Fernando Po Island, Corisco Island, Nigeria, Niger, Dahomey, Togo and Ghana.
4. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Uganda and Central Africa, with its seat in Kampala, comprising Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Republic of the Congo (Ex-Belgian), the Congo Republic (Ex-French), Central African Republic, Gabon and Chad.
5. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Kenya, with its seat in Nairobi.
6. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Tanganyika and Zanzibar, with its seat in Dar-es-Salaam, comprising Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Mafia Island and Pemba Island.
7. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of South Central Africa, with its seat in Salisbury, comprising Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia and Bechuanaland.
8. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of South and West Africa, with its seat in Johannesburg, comprising Angola, South-West Africa, South Africa, Zululand, Swaziland, Basutoland, Mozambique and St. Helena.
9. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of the Indian Ocean, with its seat in Port Louis, comprising Mauritius, the Malagasy Republic, Réunion Island, Seychelles Islands, Comoro Islands, and the Chagos Archipelago.



10. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Hawaiian Islands, with its seat in Honolulu.
11. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the South Pacific Ocean, with its seat in Suva, comprising the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, Nauru Island, Fiji, Samoa Islands, Tonga Islands and Cook Islands.
12. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the South West Pacific Ocean, with its seat in Honiara, comprising the Solomon Islands, New Hebrides Islands, New Caledonia and Loyalty Islands.
13. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of North East Asia, with its seat in Tokyo, comprising Japan, Formosa, Hong Kong and Macau.
14. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Korea, with its seat in Seoul.
15. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Malaysia, with its seat in Kuala Lumpur, comprising Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak.
16. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Indonesia, with its seat in Djakarta, comprising Indonesia, the Mentawai Islands, Portugese Timor and West Irian.
17. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Viet Nam, with its seat in Saigon, and having jurisdiction over the Bahá'ís of Cambodia.
18. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Thailand, with its seat in Bangkok, and having jurisdiction over the Bahá'ís of Laos.
19. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Philippines, with its seat in Manila.

The detailed goals of the Plan, which will include sixty-nine national plans, have yet to be announced, but they must be such as to develop still further the World Centre of the Faith and the work of its institutions; to consolidate those territories which have already been opened to the Faith ; to bring God's healing Message to many more of the peoples and territories of the world including all the unopened territories of the Ten Year Crusade and all the remaining independent states of the planet ; and to achieve world-wide proclamation of the Faith to mark the Centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Proclamation to the kings and rulers in 1867-68.

In the spring of 1968 the next election for the Universal House of Justice will take place.

Beloved friends, the Cause of God, guarded and nurtured since its inception by God's Messengers, by the Centre of His Covenant and by His Sign on earth, now enters a new epoch, the third of the Formative Age. It must now grow rapidly in size, increase its spiritual cohesion and executive ability, develop its institutions and extend its influence into all strata of society. We, its members, must, by constant study of the life-giving Word, and by dedicated service, deepen in spiritual understanding and show to the world a mature, responsible, fundamentally assured and happy way of life, far removed from the passions, prejudices and distractions of present day society. Relying upon God alone, we can promote His Cause and establish His Kingdom on earth. Only thus can we prove our love for Those Who brought this new day into being. Only thus can we prove the truth of Their Divine Mission and demonstrate how valid was Their Sacrifice.

*(Signed and Sealed)* THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

---

#### THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Bahá'í World Centre,  
Haifa, Israel,  
17th October, 1963.

*To All National Spiritual Assemblies.*

Dear Friends,

Our Bahá'í friends who were tried at Nador, Morocco, last year, and who received sentences of death or life imprisonment, are still being held in prison. Their appeal which has been pending for nearly a year still has not been heard. However, we are pleased to report that another Bahá'í prisoner, Mohammad Mana'an, of Tangier was recently provisionally released.

We are calling for believers throughout the world to pray at the Feast of Qawl (November 23rd) that early favourable action may be taken in the cases of these devoted and steadfast friends whose long suffering on behalf of our Faith has been an inspiration to Bahá'ís everywhere.

The friends at the World Centre will join you on that day by saying prayers at the Holy Shrines for our Moroccan friends.

With loving greetings,

*(Signed and Sealed)* THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE.