

ONE COUNTRY

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"The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens"—Bahá'u'lláh

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More than 3,000 people from 165 countries visited the Holy Land in May to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passing of Bahá'u'lláh. At 2:00 a.m. on 29 May, the exact time of His death, participants visited the Shrine of Bahá'u'lláh in a two-hour long candlelit ceremony near Acre, Israel.

The Legacy of Rio: A New Global Vision

The Earth Summit and the Global Forum chart a new course for humanity; themes of oneness, grassroots action and spirituality emerge

RIO DE JANEIRO — By any account, the Earth Summit and its companion conference, the '92 Global Forum, were history-making events.

The mere fact that over 100 heads of state, more than ever before, gathered to discuss global concerns with the depth and complexity of environment and development issues is a milestone for humanity. The parallel gathering of some 20,000 representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was likewise unprecedented, not only for its numbers but for its diversity.

There were concrete accomplishments. Government delegations to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), as the Earth Summit was formally known, agreed on two major treaties aimed at slowing global warming and preserving the earth's biological diversity.

Governments also adopted the principles of "Agenda 21," an 800-page, 121-chapter, action-plan to guide the world community into the 21st century, and agreed to create a United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.

Non-governmental organizations at the Global Forum, too, can point to
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The Most Vital Challenge

The following statement was read at the plenary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro on 4 June 1992 by Ms. Han Ju Kim-Farley, a Bahá'í International Community representative. It was one of just thirteen statements read by representatives of non-governmental organizations at UNCED.

Beyond such technical and political questions as what limits should be placed on greenhouse gases, how can sustainable development be promoted, and who will pay for it all, the fundamental question facing the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)

is this: Can humanity, with its entrenched patterns of conflict, self-interest, and short-sighted behavior, commit itself to enlightened cooperation and long-range planning on a global scale?

The UNCED process has highlighted both the complexity and the interdependence of the problems facing humanity. None of these problems — the debilitating inequities of development, the apocalyptic threats of atmospheric warming and ozone depletion, the oppression of women, the neglect of children and marginalized peoples, to name but a few — can be realistically addressed without considering all the others. None can be fully addressed without a magnitude of cooperation and coordination at all levels that far surpasses anything in humanity's collective experience.

The potential for such cooperation is, however, undermined by the general debasement of human character. Although not commonly discussed in relation to the challenges of environment and development, there are current in the world certain trends — including the widespread lack of moral discipline, the glorification of greed and material accumulation, the increasing breakdown of family and community, the rise of lawlessness and disorder, the ascendancy of racism and bigotry, and the priority given

to national interests over the welfare of humanity — all of which destroy confidence and trust, the foundations of collaboration.

The reversal of these destructive trends is essential to the establishment of unity and cooperation. This reversal will require a deeper understanding of human nature. For, although economics, politics, sociology and science offer important tools for addressing the interdependent crises facing humanity, a true resolution of the dangerous state of affairs in the world can only be realized when the spiritual dimension of human nature is taken into account and the human heart is transformed.

Although there are mystical aspects that are not easily explained, the spiritual dimension of human nature can be understood, in practical terms, as the source of qualities that transcend narrow self-interest. Such qualities include love, compassion, forbearance, trustworthiness, courage, humility, co-operation and willingness to sacrifice for the common good — qualities of an enlightened citizenry, able to construct a unified world civilization.

The profound and far-reaching changes, the unity and unprecedented cooperation required to re-orient the world toward an envi-

The spiritual dimension of human nature can be understood as the source of qualities that transcend narrow self-interest. Such qualities include love, compassion, forbearance, trustworthiness, courage, humility, cooperation and willingness to sacrifice for the common good.

ronmentally sustainable and just future, will only be possible by touching the human spirit, by appealing to those universal values which alone can empower individuals and peoples to act in accordance with the long-term interests of the planet and humanity as a whole. Once tapped, this powerful and dynamic source of individual and collective motivation will release such a profound and salutary spirit among

the peoples of the earth that no power will be able to resist its unifying force.

The fundamental spiritual truth of our age is the oneness of humanity. Universal acceptance of this principle — with its implications for social and economic justice,

universal participation in non-adversarial decision-making, peace and collective security, equality of the sexes, and universal education — will make possible the reorganization and administration of the world as one country, the home of humankind.☉

Bahá'í Institute for Rural Women in India receives UNEP Global 500 Award

RIO DE JANEIRO — The Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women, a non-profit educational project in Indore, India, was among 74 individuals and institutions honored with a "Global 500" Award by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in ceremonies here on 5 June.

"Since 1987, the Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women has conducted three environmental programs to educate villagers on the prevention and eradication of Guinea worms caused by contaminated water in 302 villages in central India," said the citation on UNEP's *Roll of Honor for Environmental Achievement*.

"The Programs: Education and Training, Awareness, and Mobilizing and Motivating Health Functionaries, were designed around the Indian Government's work related to drinking-water management and other issues to ensure adequate drinking water to 51 problem districts in India," the citation continued. "When the program began 752 people were infected and 211,813 were at risk. Today, the district is com-

pletely free of Guinea worms."

Since 1987, the Global 500 Award has been presented each year by UNEP to "pay tribute to individuals and organizations whose everyday actions and leadership in the front lines of the environmental agenda push forward the urgent goal of safeguarding the planet and building sustainable development," according to a UNEP news release on the Award.

Other Global 500 laureates include Chico Mendes of Brazil; former U.S. President Jimmy Carter; and distinguished marine explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau.

The Bahá'í Vocational Institute for Rural Women is sponsored and operated by the Bahá'í Community of India, which has more than 2 million members. The Institute works to provide a wide range of educational services to rural women in remote parts of Madhya Pradesh State.

In addition to basic environmental education, the Institute offers young village women basic vocational, literacy, hygiene and moral training.☉

Photo below: Dignitaries at a banquet in Georgetown, Guyana, held on 19 June in commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Ascension of Bahá'u'lláh, included the President and Prime Minister of Guyana. Pictured, left to right are: Mr. Francis Nnebe, resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme; His Excellency Hugh Desmond Hoyte, President of Guyana; Techeste Aherdom, representative of the Bahá'í International Community; and the Honorable Hamilton Green, Prime Minister.



Against the tide, Bahá'ís in the United States promote a new vision of race unity

Weekly inter-cultural meetings have been a regular part of the activities at the Los Angeles Bahá'í Center long before the April riots in that city.



"We have as a nation of both whites and blacks become so fixated on racial conflict that we have completely overlooked the examination of how unity is achieved."

— Robert Henderson

At the national and local levels in the United States, Bahá'í communities have embarked on a series of projects to offer a model for racial integration

WILMETTE, Illinois, USA — Increasingly concerned about the resurgent polarization of American society along racial lines, the Bahá'í community of the United States has embarked on a widespread effort to promote a new vision of racial harmony.

The effort, which builds on years of quiet activity, is distinguished by its emphasis on genuine integration, as opposed to the often superficial mixing of whites and blacks that is now the norm in American public life.

The goal is to offer a model of interracial unity where blacks and whites freely and willingly associate at all levels, not only at work and in schools, but also in their worship, their recreation and their personal relationships.

"We have as a nation of both whites and blacks become so fixated on racial conflict that we have completely overlooked the

examination of how unity is achieved," said Robert Henderson, Secretary-General of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, which is the national governing body for the Bahá'ís of the U.S. "How is unity started? How is it maintained? What is the language of unity? It is on this point that the Bahá'ís are making a significant contribution."

To promote this vision at the national level, the National Spiritual Assembly, which has its headquarters in this Chicago suburb, has undertaken a series of projects, including:

- The writing and distribution of a 12-page statement, entitled "The Vision of Race Unity: America's Most Challenging Issue."
- The co-sponsorship of a project to identify successful models of unity among various racial, ethnic, and religious groups in the greater Chicago area.
- The sponsorship of a series of conferences and meetings on race relations, including a "Vision of Race Unity" conference at the Carter Center in Atlanta in April.

Most recently, the National Spiritual Assembly wrote and published an open letter to U.S. President George Bush. The

letter, which was published in major newspapers, called for a "supreme effort" on the part of public and private institutions, schools, the media, businesses, and individuals to strive for the "eradication of all forms of prejudice, hatred, and injustice" and to work towards the "peace and unity of all peoples, races and creeds."

Equally significant have been the efforts of local Bahá'í communities, which have undertaken a wide range of activities aimed at promoting race unity.

These activities include everything from sponsoring talks and panel discussions to local theatrical productions that promote inter-cultural fellowship; from the holding of simple "race unity" picnics, which aim at creating a pleasant and non-threatening atmosphere for racial mixing, to the sponsorship of intensive "dialogue" sessions where individuals can share their deepest feelings about racism. (See page 7.)

"There are literally hundreds of examples of local initiatives by Bahá'ís," said Dr. Henderson. "And what is perhaps more important, in virtually all of these projects, Bahá'ís have been reaching out to others, to social action groups, to churches, to schools and city governments. It is a movement, without any doubt, to mobilize American society at large to move towards race unity."

Most of these activities started well before the Los Angeles riots in April, which

stirred a major re-examination of race relations by the U.S. news media. Indeed, the promotion of unity and harmony between the races has been a special concern of the Bahá'í community of the U.S. since the 1920s, when it sponsored a series of "Race Amity" conferences around the country.

The level of activity has surged in recent years, however, as the U.S. Bahá'í community has matured and become increasingly concerned about negative trends in society.

"In society at large, circumstances have deteriorated to a critical point," said Dr. Henderson. "There is no leadership. The Bahá'ís have felt the need to assert in a loud, clear voice the idea of the oneness of humanity and to promote our cherished principle of race unity."

There are about 110,000 Bahá'ís in the United States, and they reside in more than 5,000 localities. About 30 percent of the U.S. Bahá'í community are African-Americans. The community also includes a substantial number of Native Americans, Asians, and Hispanic-Americans, as well as more than 10,000 Iranians who fled religious persecution in Iran during the 1980s.

There is a high degree of genuine racial integration within the community, both at the highest levels of leadership and at the grassroots. Since 1969, at least one-third of the individuals elected each year to the U.S.

Activities include everything from talks and panel discussions to local theatrical productions that promote inter-cultural fellowship; from the holding of simple "race unity" picnics to the sponsorship of intensive "dialogue" sessions where individuals can share their deepest feelings about racism.



At a Bahá'í-sponsored "Race Unity Day" march in Mango, Florida, members of both the Ku Klux Klan (shown right) and the Pan-African Inter-National Movement came to protest the Bahá'í vision of racial unity. Nevertheless, more than 1,000 people of many races and ethnic backgrounds participated in the June 14 event.





Robert Henderson, Secretary-General of the Bahá'í Community of the United States of America.

The Bahá'í Community of the United States has a long history of racial integration and unity. In the 1920s, Bahá'ís sponsored a series of "Race Amity" conferences around the country. About 1,200 people attended one such conference held in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1921.



National Spiritual Assembly have been from racial or ethnic minority groups.

The composition of local-level Bahá'í governing bodies, known as Local Spiritual Assemblies, also reflects the diversity of the Bahá'í population at large. These bodies are also elected each year.

This level of integration has not gone unnoticed by outsiders. Following the Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in Atlanta in 1991, where Bahá'ís were highly visible participants, Dr. King's widow, Coretta Scott King observed: "I noticed today in the parade that the Bahá'í community was represented very well, both nationally and internationally. They're always a multi-racial group and I think that is the way Dr. King would want us to live — as brothers and sisters."

By example, Bahá'ís hope to show that unity among such diverse racial and ethnic groups in America is achievable.

"The Bahá'í community has accumulated more than a century of experience at creating models of unity that transcend race, culture, nationality, class, and the differences of sex and religion, providing empirical evidence that humanity in all its diversity can live as a unified global society," according to the "Vision of Race Unity" statement, which was issued by the National Spiritual Assembly in June 1991. "Bahá'ís see unity as the law of life; consequently all prejudices are perceived as diseases that threaten life."

To further identify successful models

of unity, the National Spiritual Assembly and the Human Relations Foundation of Chicago recently surveyed more than 60 institutions and organizations in the greater Chicago area in an effort to find examples of interracial harmony.

The results of the project were presented in April at a conference at the Carter Center in Atlanta. A similar search for models of unity is being undertaken in that city.

"In doing the survey, we found that there are a large number of successfully integrated communities," said Robert Stockman, director of research at the Bahá'í National Center. "In terms of the qualities that these communities have, there is much that we can learn."

At the local level, Bahá'ís have shown creativity in attempting to promote this vision of racial unity.

Last year in New York City, for example, a group of Bahá'í youth produced a play, entitled "Don't Look the Other Way," which featured themes promoting race unity, environmental conservation, and peace. In Conway, South Carolina, 9-year-old Anisa Kintz helped to organize "Calling All Colors," a conference on racial harmony for children. She was commended by the South Carolina state legislature for her effort.

Bahá'í communities around the country have also won increasing recognition for "Race Unity Day," which was established by the Bahá'ís of the United States in 1957. Observed each year in June, Race Unity Day this year was marked by hundreds of marches, conferences and picnics.

These efforts have drawn notice, not only from those who applaud them, but from factions opposed to the deep integration and unity proposed by Bahá'ís. Several times in recent years, Bahá'í-sponsored Race Unity Day gatherings have drawn protests from the Ku Klux Klan, the infamous white supremacist organization known by its white hooded robes and burning crosses.

The emphasis of Bahá'í communities on race unity stems from the Faith's most basic teachings, which proclaim the oneness of humanity, and which outline specific actions to promote race unity. In Bahá'í elections, for example, minorities are to be preferred in the event of a tie vote. And interracial marriage is not only permissible, it is encouraged. ☉



The process of personal dialogue at the Institute for the Healing of Racism in Houston has lead to close friendships among participants. Left to right are Candy Clements, Cherry Steinwender, and Lisa Brehm.

Institutes for the Healing of Racism break new ground

HOUSTON, Texas, USA — Some of the best examples of how Bahá'ís in the United States are striving to promote race unity at the grassroots can be found in a relatively new and fast-growing effort to establish intensive local anti-racism workshops.

These workshops, such as the one established here three years ago, combine techniques from group therapy and from Bahá'í consultation to establish a sincere dialogue between individuals from all races in a frank but loving atmosphere where racist barriers can be overcome and dismantled.

Known as "Institutes for the Healing of Racism," the workshops are beginning to win high praise from participants for their effectiveness at helping individuals on both sides of the color line overcome the effects of life in a society that is marked by much racial tension.

"After my first session, I went up to the convenor, and I said, 'This program ought to be on national television, so that people can sit in their homes and find healing,'" said Carolyn Forché, a specialist on multicultural education and African-American heritage who recently attended a workshop series in Houston. "That is how powerful the Institute is."

More than 100 such Institutes have been established in cities throughout the country, said Nathan Rutstein, who is one of the origi-

nators of the effort. He said the concept arose, somewhat spontaneously, about three years ago in several cities, including Houston, and has since spread rapidly through the network of local Bahá'í communities.

"It's a grassroots movement that was created by Bahá'ís," said Mr. Rutstein, who has written more than 10 books, including *To Be One*, a powerful account of his personal struggle with racism. "As Bahá'ís, we realized that we are all members of the same human family, and that racism is a disease and a wound, an aberration of nature."

Although founded by Bahá'ís, the Institutes are not religious organizations, said Mr. Rutstein and others.

"We are entirely separate from the Bahá'í Faith itself, and we are not here to promote the Bahá'í Faith," said Linda Assaf, one of the founders of the Houston Institute. "We are here to deal with the issue of racism."

The Institutes do, however, use Bahá'í principles in their approach. The principles of Bahá'í consultation, a method of non-adversarial decision-making that is both open and unifying, for example, plays an important role in the guidelines for discussion at an Institute.

"We also stress the importance of understanding and internalizing the reality of the oneness of humankind," said Mr. Rutstein. "And this is a central teaching of

Combining techniques of group therapy and principles of Bahá'í consultation, local anti-racism workshops are effective at overcoming barriers.

"The part that works is that it provides a safe atmosphere, where people can respect each other and form bonds."

— Pamela Williams

the Bahá'í Faith."

Although the Institutes vary somewhat, depending on local situations and needs, the essential goal is to establish a genuine and heartfelt dialogue between individuals of all racial backgrounds.

"We start with information giving," said Ms. Assaf of Houston, where each workshop series is held weekly for nine consecutive weeks. "We talk about race relations in U.S. history, focusing on how racism has basically permeated our society."

"The idea is not only to educate, but to build a framework of trust and a sense of community among the participants," Ms. Assaf said.

In the next phase, participants are encouraged to share their own experiences. At this point, said Ms. Assaf, principles of Bahá'í consultation are introduced. They emphasize the frank and open expression of opinions and ideas without making accusations or laying blame; they underscore the importance of diversity in creating a genuine understanding.

"The part that works is that it provides a safe atmosphere, where people can respect each other and form bonds," said Pamela Williams, a human resources specialist at a major utility company in Houston who has been involved in the Institute for

about three years.

"Minorities find out that they do have friends in the dominant culture," Ms. Williams said. "And they find out that there are people, who once they have the correct information, can learn to think before they act and speak."

Ms. Williams, who is not a Bahá'í, has studied similar kinds of race relations and sensitivity training workshops in her profession.

"I think the Institute for the Healing of Racism has one of the best approaches that I have seen," she said. "It allows people to say whatever they really think."

Arun Gandhi, who has participated in an Institute in Memphis, Tennessee, likewise believes that the openness of the method is an important strength.

"The approach is one that I find very interesting and encouraging," said Mr. Gandhi, who is the grandson of Mohandas K. Gandhi and the founder of the M. K. Gandhi Institute for the Study of Non-Violence in Memphis. "I have always felt that a dialogue between people is the best way to resolve many of the conflicts that exist, and the Institute is a very good forum for dialogue. I think it has great potential for bringing people together and opening hearts." ☉



Participants at a recent meeting of the Memphis Institute for the Healing of Racism. The Institute, like others around the United States, was established by Bahá'ís but is not a Bahá'í institution.



The Jacob Javits Convention Center in Manhattan will be the site for the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress.

More than 25,000 registered for World Congress in New York

Bahá'ís from 170 countries will come in November; a world community will have its largest and most diverse gathering ever

NEW YORK — More than 25,000 Bahá'ís from 170 countries have registered to attend the 1992 Bahá'í World Congress, ensuring that the November celebration in New York will be the largest and most diverse gathering of Bahá'ís ever.

The size and diversity of the Congress pose many special logistical challenges, said Carol Yetkin, who has been involved in planning the Congress since January 1986.

"I expect the number to rise to 28,000, 29,000 or 30,000 before registration closes," said Ms. Yetkin, the logistics coordinator for the Congress, which will be held at the Jacob Javits Convention Center. "But perhaps more impressive is the number of countries. We have Bahá'ís coming from virtually every corner of the world.

"We have people coming who have never been outside of their own countries, or who have never experienced a major urban center like New York," she said. "So

we have had to plan very carefully, to ensure that the Congress is a special experience for everyone."

Ms. Yetkin said, for example, that Congress planners have already reserved more than 4,200 hotel rooms at over 40 hotels in New York and New Jersey. Because of the diversity of the gathering, many special arrangements have been made with the hotels. At many hotels, for example, rooms have been set aside for prayer and meditation. "Bahá'ís pray every day, and need to have an opportunity to do so," said Yetkin.

More than 200 buses have also been reserved to meet travellers at the airport and to shuttle them back and forth between the hotels and the Jacob Javits Convention Center, where the Congress will be held.

More than 2,000 volunteers will be enlisted to help run the Congress; an estimated 450 guides will be needed just to help seat Congress attendees each day in the 410,000 square foot auditorium at the Javits Center during the four-day meeting.

Scheduled from 23-26 November, the Congress program will focus on the life and person of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, who passed away 100 years ago. It will be one of the main events of the 1992 Bahá'í Holy Year. ☉

Arrangements have been made to set aside special rooms for prayer and meditation at many of the more than 40 hotels being utilized for the Congress.

“Now that the East-West conflict is over, all efforts must be directed even more vigorously to the relationship between North and South and to the cooperation of the world as a whole.”

— H.E. Ruud F.M. Lubbers, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands

(Continued from page 1)

many achievements. They succeeded in negotiating several alternative treaties and adopted an Earth Charter—a declaration of principles on environment and development. The cross-sector and cross-border networking among various groups was extensive, laying the groundwork for future collaboration.

There is disagreement, of course, over the scope of these achievements. Many observers felt that governments could have done more.

There are accomplishments, however, which have not received widespread attention. Although largely overlooked by the media, there were several important sub-themes that emerged in Rio—sub-themes which reflect some of the most powerful undercurrents at the two conferences. Much was said, for example, about humanity's common destiny and essential oneness.

Warren Lindner, co-coordinator of the '92 Global Forum, put it succinctly when he referred to a quote from Bahá'u'lláh inscribed on a “peace monument,” which was dedicated in Rio on the last day of the Summit. *[See story page 12]*

“The '92 Global Forum and the Earth Summit were not really about environment and development,” said Mr. Lindner. “What they were really about was proving the point made on the monument. The fact that ‘the earth is but one country and mankind its citizens.’”

Many saw this theme as essential to the promotion of sustainable development. “Rio

and Brazil have become milestones on the path of men to one world,” said H.E. Ruud F.M. Lubbers, the Prime Minister of the Netherlands in his speech to world leaders at the Earth Summit. “Now that the East-West conflict is over, all efforts must be directed even more vigorously to the relationship between North and South and to the cooperation of the world as a whole.”

“Let it be a sacred duty, in the knowledge that we all belong to one mankind and that no person and no nation can enjoy lasting peace and well-being unless they act as members of the human family with respect for the integrity of Creation and in harmony amongst ourselves,” Mr. Lubbers added. “This requires new forms of cooperation and global partnership.”

This theme of interdependence also emerged in interviews. “Before UNCED, there were different sectors—wildlife, forests, trade,” said Mr. Raymond Kwerepe, delegate from Botswana. “Now we are trying to integrate them. We are dealing with the global village—South, North, East and West. That is the real theme of this conference.”

A Greater Role for NGOs

It also became clear during the Earth Summit that governments have developed a new respect for the expertise and capacities of non-governmental organizations. Many government delegations to UNCED included representatives of NGOs. As well, more than 3,000 NGO representatives were accredited to UNCED itself—not to mention the more than 20,000 who came to the Global Forum.

“This is really one of the first ideas to

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was held about 20 kilometers outside of Rio de Janeiro itself, in a modern conference center known as RioCentro. Representatives of more than 1,400 NGOs were accredited to attend.





Many members of government delegations to UNCED — including some heads of state — also visited the '92 Global Forum, a parallel conference for NGOs. Shown at left is Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom during a visit to the Global Forum. He received a folder of information on Bahá'í development projects.

have come out of this conference, that we need to cooperate more with NGOs," said Mme. Lansiri Nana Haidara, a member of the Mali delegation to UNCED. "NGOs are really the ones that work with the people at the basic level. And the governments recognize that they have to work with NGOs."

Representatives from NGOs agreed. "That is one of the areas of achievement of this conference," said Sir Shridath Ramphal, president of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). "UNCED was different from other UN conferences. The diplomatic closed-door style was opened up. The entire process was opened up."

"This could be the beginning of a global dialogue at the level of the social partners, rather than at the level of the international bureaucrats," Sir Shridath continued. "This world needs this."

A Spiritual Gathering

From the beginning, the UNCED process drew intense interest from the world's religious communities, and the twin conferences in Rio reflected in many ways the recognition that the spiritual dimension of life cannot be overlooked in any approach to environment and development issues.

In numerous workshops and symposia at the Global Forum, this point of view was emphasized. An all-night prayer vigil, held on 6 June to coincide with World Environment Day, was among the best-attended events of the Forum, drawing more than 16,000 participants.

"People who stayed all night were really touched by the wonderful sense of cooperation and the intermingling of differ-

ent faiths," said Nancy Moshe, coordinator of the International Coordinating Committee on Religion and the Earth.

The role of spirituality in changing human attitudes, then, clearly emerged as another important sub-theme.

"What happened outside the Earth Summit, at events like the Global Forum, was in some ways even more significant than the Summit itself, in that the spiritual viewpoint has been brought out in many discussions," said Dr. Narendra Jain, former Ambassador from India to the United Nations and a representative of the International Mahavir Jain Mission.

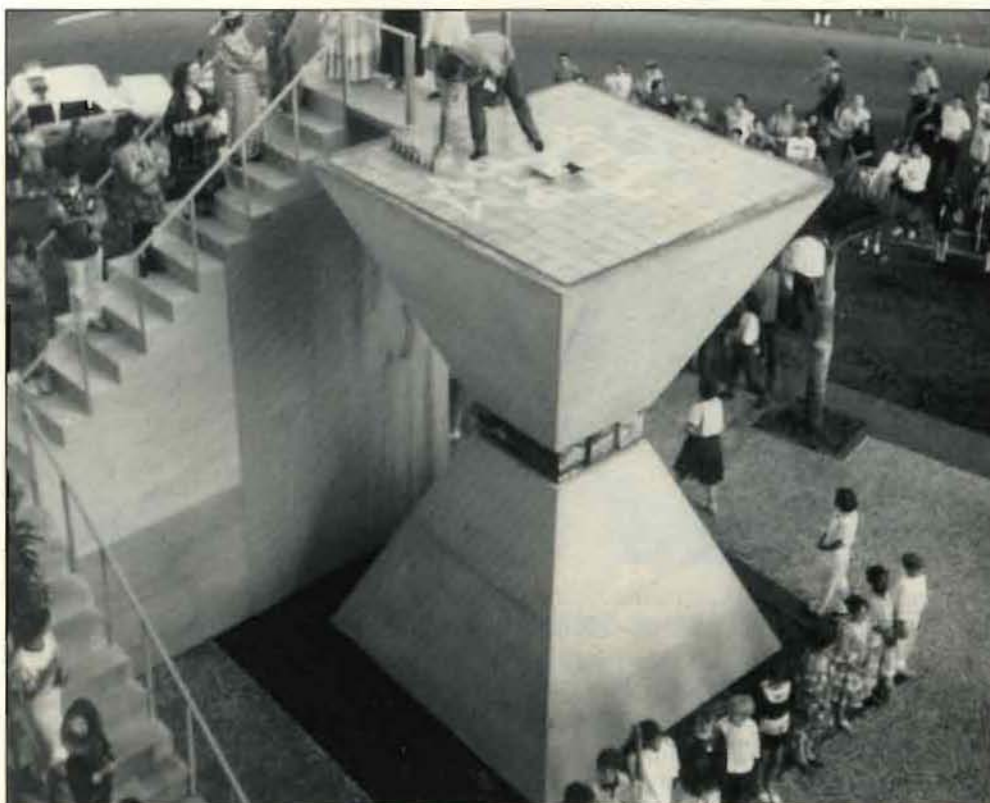
Many observers believe that UNCED's most enduring legacy will stem from the promotion of new values and attitudes, which were promulgated worldwide not only by the media who covered the Rio conferences but also by representatives of governments and organizations as they returned home with new ideas.

"The Earth Summit and the Global Forum represented a discernible shift in conceptualizing the interrelated problems of environment and development," said Lawrence Arturo, director of the Bahá'í International Community Office of the Environment. "A new global vision can be seen emerging from this process. The need for the unity of the peoples and nations of the world has begun to be discussed by governments, NGOs and others. Many now see this as the foundation for the creation of a sustainable future. Ultimately, this will prove to be Rio's most significant contribution to world civilization." ☸

"What happened outside the Earth Summit, at events like the Global Forum, was in some ways even more significant than the Summit itself, in that the spiritual viewpoint has been brought out in many discussions."

— Dr. Narendra Jain

As a lasting symbol of the Earth Summit and the '92 Global Forum, the Bahá'í International Community and the Bahá'í Community of Brazil erected this striking hourglass-shaped peace monument, into which has been deposited soil from many nations. The monument, which was designed by the renowned Brazilian sculptor Siron Franco, stands near the entrance to the Santos Dumont Airport in Rio de Janeiro.



Bahá'í contributions to Rio: a monument for peace, a book of children's art, a cultural series, and...

From the Earth Summit plenary to the tents of the Global Forum, Bahá'í participation in Rio de Janeiro was substantial

RIO DE JANEIRO — A hundred years ago, when European delegations visited Ethiopia, the Emperor entertained them and showered them with presents. Before the foreigners departed, however, he decreed the European's feet be washed, lest they carry out of the country any of Ethiopia's sacred soil.

Not any more. In a colorful closing ceremony intended to symbolize the new spirit of global cooperation inspired by the Earth Summit, samples of soil from Ethiopia and more than 40 other nations were deposited together in a distinctive hour-

glass-shaped "peace monument" constructed in Rio at the initiative of the Bahá'í International Community.

The project was designed to reflect the reality of human interdependence, and its symbolism was not lost on participants.

"In the past, we did not allow anyone to take our soil out of the country willingly," said Zegeye Asfaw, Ethiopia's Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Development, in a press conference before the ceremony. "But our determination is to see a peaceful and prosperous earth, and that is why we have delivered our soil to the peace monument."

The peace monument project, which received widespread media attention in Brazil and internationally, was one of several discrete contributions of the Bahá'í International Community and its national affiliates to the meetings on environment and development in Rio. Other Bahá'í-sponsored events

and activities in Rio included:

- The preparation and production of a book of artwork and essays by children from around the world about the need for greater environmental protection and for peace. This book, entitled *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children*, will ultimately be presented to representatives of all of the governments that participated in the Earth Summit.

- A day-long symposium, held at the '92 Global Forum, on "Values and Institutions for a Sustainable and Ever-Advancing World Civilization."

- The responsibility for organizing a series of evening music and cultural programs for the '92 Global Forum. The "Evening Series in the Park" took place every night during the Global Forum in the Flamengo Park Amphitheater.

- The delivery of a statement to government delegations at the UNCED plenary by the Bahá'í International Community about the need for greater international cooperation and the importance of spiritual principles in bringing about the attitudinal changes necessary to promote sustainable development. [See page 2.]

The Peace Monument

More than 400 people attended the inauguration for the Peace Monument on

14 June, which was listed among the closing ceremonies of UNCED and the '92 Global Forum. There were more than 30 representatives from the media and at least seven representatives from government delegations to UNCED.

A line of children dressed in the costumes of many countries passed from hand to hand the soil of 42 nations for deposit into the five-meter concrete and ceramic monument, which was designed by and built under the supervision of the renowned Brazilian artist and sculptor, Siron Franco. It is composed of two pyramids, one inverted on top of the other, creating an hourglass shape intended to symbolize the fact that time is running out for humanity unless it unites in a new spirit of global cooperation.

Many of the soil samples were taken from sacred or historic sites. Soil from Iceland, for example, was taken from that country's most sacred and historic spot, the site of the first parliament, which was founded 1100 years ago. Soil from India was taken from Shakti Sthal, the site of the monument to the late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who was the only head of state to attend the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment.

Etched in four languages on the four sides of the upper pyramid is a quote from



Above: The cover of *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children*, which collected artwork on sustainable development themes from children from all over the world. Left: A drawing by Rodrigo Ribeiro Camilo da Silva, a 13-year-old student at the School of the Nations in Brasilia, Brazil, is among the works published in *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children*. It reflects his concerns about the world's environmental situation.



Bahá'u'lláh, the founder of the Bahá'í Faith, who wrote more than a century ago: "The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens." The quotation is displayed in English, Portuguese, Chinese and Terena, an indigenous language of Brazil.

On the lower half of the structure the words "world peace" have been engraved in more than 35 languages. A glass strip at the monument's midpoint displays multi-colored soils taken from the contributing nations.

Constructed near the Santos Dumont Airport, just north of Flamengo Park and the site of the '92 Global Forum, the monument will stand as a lasting symbol of the Earth Summit and the Global Forum.

The Children's Book

The book, *Tomorrow Belongs to the Children: Contribution to Earth Summit '92*, brought together the concerns of children from more than 25 countries and offers an inspiring glimpse of what the world could be like if the peoples and nations of the world can learn to cooperate in building an environmentally sustainable future.

Produced by the Bahá'í International

Community, with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Associação Masrour pelo Bem-Estar e Educação da Família (ASMA), the book has contributions from children of virtually every religious and cultural background.

The book was officially released at the Global Forum on 12 June. For the first edition of the 78-page book, 15,000 copies were printed. Half have been donated to UNICEF in support of children's environmental programs. The remaining copies are being distributed to non-governmental organizations, government delegations and heads of state.

"The artwork and essays in this book poignantly reflect the heartfelt concerns of the world's children as they face a world threatened by the potential of environmental degradation, uneven development, and continued political conflict in which the future seems so uncertain," said Roberto Eghrari, the Secretary-General of the Bahá'í Community of Brazil, which also assisted in the book's preparation and publication.

The 80 selections of artwork and essays in the book were done by elementary school children in 26 countries. They were chosen from thousands of submissions.

Other Contributions

The "Evening Series in the Park," nightly musical and cultural performances during the Global Forum, was organized by the Bahá'í International Community, which provided a full-time staff person in the Global Forum office. The Series, in many ways, became the heart and soul of the Global Forum, a time and place where diverse people could come together without any particular agenda.

The intention of the Evening Series was, in the words of the Forum organizers, "to reflect the cultural diversity of the Human Family with different musical genres from around the world."

Between 2,000 and 4,000 people gathered each night to see these shows. On 13 June, the final night of the Evening Series, six acts featuring Bahá'í performers were presented as a "Unity Show."

Bahá'ís were also active in many of the conferences and events that took place in the Global Forum. Bahá'í representatives contributed to the drafting of several of the NGO Treaties which were produced at the Forum. ☉

Kevin Locke, a Lakota of the Standing Rock Reservation in South Dakota, U.S.A., and his daughter Waniya performed the traditional Lakota hoop dance on the final evening of the "Evening Series in the Park" series at the '92 Global Forum. The series was organized by the Bahá'í International Community. The Lockes are Bahá'ís.



NGOs lay plans for 1995 World Conference on Women in China

NEW YORK—Representatives from more than 50 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) met in June for the first in a series of consultations on the upcoming United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, which is now scheduled to be held in Beijing, China, in 1995. Similar meetings are also being held in Geneva and Vienna.

Aimed at starting a worldwide process of developing strategies for NGOs in relation to the Conference, and specifically to help plan a parallel conference for NGOs, the New York meeting on 25 June was primarily a brainstorming session.

"One of the ideas we came up with, and that we hope will happen, is for there to be a worldwide Day for Women during the Conference," said Mary S. Power, chair of the New York NGO Committee on the Status of Women and a representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the United Nations.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held from 4-15 September 1995, will have as its subtitle "Action for Equality, Development and Peace." The Conference is expected to focus on these topics and on action to overcome the slow pace of progress in the advancement of women, measured by the "Forward-Looking Strategies" as adopted at the 1985 World Conference on Women in Nairobi.

As at previous Conferences on Women, a parallel NGO meeting will be held. Planning for the "NGO Forum '95" is being undertaken under the auspices of a planning committee, composed presently of more than 50 international NGOs, established by the Conference of NGOs in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (CONGO). A small steering committee has been established to coordinate the process of drawing in NGO input from around the world. (See photo.)

"The Forum itself will be structured to permit the widest possible exchange of ideas, programs, resources and perspectives," said Ms. Power. "The Chinese Government has agreed that the Forum will be open to all who are concerned with the

status of women, whether women, men, members of NGOs, development specialists, the media or Conference delegates." ☉



Review: *Emergence*

(Continued from back page)

creation of a new world order must of necessity come as an apocalyptic break with the past, or whether means can be found to smooth the transition.

The other essays are equally engaging as they contrast various approaches to the new world order with the Bahá'í vision of the future. Holly Hanson's essay on development contrasts the ideologies of capitalism and Marxism with the Bahá'í view; Charles Lerche examines human nature itself, addressing whether aggressive behavior is inherent; and Brian Lepard discusses how to build on present international institutions, like the United Nations.

For anyone concerned with humanity's transition to a new type of global society, *Emergence* is a must read book. Although it dwells extensively on the Bahá'í view of this process, the careful comparison with other theories and systems makes it an important volume for evaluating the various models by which humanity might move into the future. ☉

Members of the Chinese delegation to the 36th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women met in Vienna in March with members of the NGO Steering Committee on the Fourth World Conference on Women to discuss plans for a parallel NGO meeting. Pictured, left to right, are: Chen Shiqui, member of the Chinese delegation; Irene Hoskins, chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, Geneva; Wang Shuxian, head of the Chinese delegation; Ellen Kimmel-McDonnell, chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, Vienna; Marlene Parenzan, coordinator, NGO Forum '95; Chen Yongling, member Chinese delegation; and Mary Power, chair of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, New York.

A model for global change

Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order

Edited by
Charles Lerche

Bahá'í
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Trust

London: 1991

Although much has been said in recent years about the coming of a "New World Order," there has been little discussion about exactly how the transition to a new global society might occur.

Many proponents of global change, for example, talk about the need for a widespread change in attitudes and values. Yet there have been few explorations of how such new values might be promulgated, or even exactly what those values should be.

The essays in *Emergence: Dimensions of a New World Order* offer an enormous service by examining, from six different perspectives, various models for world order and transformation — and then contrasting them with the Bahá'í vision for the future.

In his introduction, for example, editor Charles Lerche, a professor of international relations with the Boston University Overseas Program in Europe, notes that there are three principal approaches to the subject of world order: 1) a "conservative outlook" that views contemporary global political and economic systems as sufficient now and for the future; 2) a "reformist attitude" that promotes modifications in world political and economic institutions to address our most acute problems; and, 3) a "commitment to the need for global transformation" based on new social values and institutions.

Of these approaches, Dr. Lerche writes, the Bahá'í approach falls into the last category — and goes beyond. "The Bahá'í view ... brings a unique perspective to bear on the problem of world order," he writes. It involves "a profound reorientation in the inner life and the outlook of the individual." To Bahá'ís, he says, "the emergence of a new world order represents the 'coming of age' of the human race as well as the fulfillment of past and present eschatological hopes."

The essays, written by six different people who are all Bahá'ís, then proceed to explore the issue of world order from six areas of specialization: international organization, development, environment, political theory, sociology (addressing the question of human nature), and world order models (probing into the scholarly theories of this emerging field).

Perhaps the most compelling essay is

the book's first one, written by Loni Bramson-Lerche, a religious historian. Entitled "An Analysis of the Bahá'í World Order Model," she addresses squarely the question which so many other proponents of a new world order have only touched on: how will the transition from the old to the new order be accomplished?

Ms. Bramson-Lerche considers first the theories of various academic specialists, from Richard Falk to Johan Galtung, who have considered world order issues. She then proceeds to detail how Bahá'ís understand the historic processes now re-shaping the world's political, economic and social landscape.

In her view, most theorists have neglected the role of spirituality in the transition process. On this point, she offers the worldwide Bahá'í community as a model for change. "Bahá'ís believe that in order to establish a new set of values it is necessary for all people to have a renewed sense of spirituality," she writes.

Review

EMERGENCE

Dimensions of a *New World Order*



Edited by Charles Lerche

Ms. Bramson-Lerche then describes exactly how Bahá'ís see the transition to a new world order. Her analysis is especially interesting because of her exploration of issues that are rarely discussed outside the Bahá'í community, such as whether the

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