

[AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN]

21 March 2010

To the Believers in the Cradle of the Faith

Dearly loved Friends,

On this blessed day of Naw-Rúz, our hearts are drawn ever closer to you. This is a happy and joyous season. The fields and meadows are adorned with blossoms, and the air is fragrant with their perfume. In the northern hemisphere, nature stirs with new life, arrayed in spectacular beauty. The world of existence is rejuvenated, and all created things are in a state of motion and change. This is particularly true of the blessed land of Iran—the very envy of paradise—extolled by the beloved Master as a land that “fostereth love”, whose “heavenly meadows teem with sweet herbs and flowers”.

The pure-hearted people of Iran, following a tradition stretching back several thousand years, observe as a national festival this day that marks the commencement of spring. They put aside all grievances from the preceding year and focus their thoughts on loving fellowship. Bahá'ís across the globe, of every nation and ethnicity, likewise celebrate with great jubilation the festival of Naw-Rúz, as explicitly ordained in the Most Holy Book, and regard it as an opportunity to foster friendship and unity among the peoples of the world.

The year now drawing to a close witnessed events so painful and heart-rending, both for you and your compatriots, that it may be difficult for many to share in the joy of this season. But you who have surrendered your hearts to the Blessed Beauty have no doubt of the bright future of Iran. You know well that the world of humanity is ripe with promise and that the agony and suffering, the upheaval and commotion everywhere experienced are but a part of the long and arduous journey towards the unification of humankind and the birth of a global civilization. You, who are so conscious of the need to eschew all forms of prejudice, violence and dissension, who have every confidence in the power of the light of unity to illuminate the world of humanity, who have seen the influence of this power in your own community, can no doubt play a critical role in alleviating the pain and suffering of your fellow citizens.

The constructive resilience and steadfastness that the members of your community, both young and old, have shown in the face of innumerable tribulations these past few years have won our profound respect and gratitude and have evoked the admiration of people of all walks of life. We yield thanks to God that you are so keenly aware of the spiritual mission which Bahá'u'lláh has entrusted to His self-sacrificing followers in the Cradle of His Faith and ever mindful of the spiritual responsibilities with which you have been charged, never flagging in your efforts to carry them out. Raise up your voices, then, in praise of the Lord of Hosts and take delight in the crown of glory that has been set upon your heads; hold fast to the cord of

grace that connects you to the true Friend and render thanks for the bounty He has bestowed upon you.

We offer ardent prayers in the Holy Shrines for the noble people of Iran and beseech God to grant you peace, comfort and tranquillity.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]