

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom

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Letter from Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'ís of Iran concerning education

A soul-stirring letter dated 1 October 2014 was issued by the Supreme Body to the Bahá'ís of Iran, encouraging them in their efforts to triumph over falsehood and the negative forces that assail society, and praising the resilience and purity with which the community endeavours to acquire knowledge and educate their young. After studying this extraordinary guidance, the National Spiritual Assembly felt inspired to make a significant financial contribution, both this year and next, towards the tuition costs of students from Iran who are studying outside of the country.

Copies of the 1 October letter of the House of Justice were shared recently on NEWS in both English and Persian. They can also be accessed via the UK Bahá'í Downloads website at <http://admin.bahai.org.uk/believers-in-iran/>

Movement of clusters

Drawing on reports and analysis from the Regional Bahá'í Councils, the National Assembly, in conjunction with Counsellor Shirin Fozdar-Foroudi, reviewed the progress of each of the nineteen goal clusters in the UK along the continuum of growth. Specific approaches were suggested for some of the clusters to help them advance towards the goal of launching a programme of growth. The National Assembly is continuing to closely follow this essential aspect of the work in collaboration with the relevant institutions and agencies.

Refurbishment of the Guardian's Resting Place

Under the guidance of the House of Justice, the National Assembly is carrying out an extensive programme to refurbish and beautify the Resting Place of the beloved Guardian. This includes renovating the monument, plinth and surrounding balustrade; extending and replanting the surrounding flower beds; rebuilding the wall that encases the outer court of the Resting Place; and installing a replica gate at the front entrance. Additional work will continue in the coming months on beautifying the surrounding area of the cemetery.

In a recent communication to the National Assembly, one of the partners of the firm of landscape architects commissioned to undertake the work shared: "I will not be charging for my time on this project as I want to give service... I feel I am growing and get so much out of being at the site and

meeting such wonderful people that it feels wrong for me to charge for my time.” This friend is not a member of the Bahá’í community.

The National Assembly was deeply moved by this generous and sincere sentiment towards service, and was reminded that in a letter of 21 September 2014 to the National Assembly, the House of Justice kindly expressed its gratitude for the work carried out to date on “this cherished site”, which “will undoubtedly contribute to the serenity and spiritual atmosphere visitors will experience there for years to come”.

We are pleased to enclose some recent photographs of the monument and the flower beds around it, which give an indication of the reinvigorated beauty and dignity that now adorns the site.

Websites for children and youth

Further to a recommendation that was passed at National Convention to develop online content for children and junior youth, the National Assembly appreciated the desire for such a resource, but felt that the human and financial resources required to develop and maintain such a website were beyond the current capacity of the community. Happily there is an excellent website currently in existence which may be of interest to children and this can be found at <http://www.brilliantstarmagazine.org/>

Marriage and family life resource materials

The National Assembly consulted upon the availability of resources for those interested in reading about marriage and family life from a Bahá’í perspective. As a result, it decided to share with the community a list of resources, which was distributed on NEWS in recent days and can also be accessed via the UK Bahá’í Downloads website at <http://admin.bahai.org.uk/marriage-resources/>

Meeting with staff and volunteers at the National Ḥazíratu’l-Quds

The staff and volunteers who directly serve the institution of the National Assembly, including those who offer their valuable services from home, were invited to join the National Assembly for prayers. This was a wonderful opportunity for staff and volunteers to meet with the members of the National Assembly and to reflect together on the various areas of activity that take place to support the Assembly’s work. The National Assembly is deeply grateful to all those who offer their time to ensure that the necessary administrative tasks of the Cause are carried out, and for the devoted and loving spirit with which they engage in this work.

We take this opportunity to wish all the friends a blessed and joyous celebration of the Birth of Bahá’u’lláh!

With our warmest love,

National Spiritual Assembly

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ’ÍS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

Enclosure