

TRANSLATION FROM PERSIAN

(Department of the Secretariat)

3 June 2008

To the believers in the Cradle of the Faith

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Almost three weeks have passed since the recent arrest of the members of the distinguished body termed the “Friends in Iran”. No reliable information regarding their circumstances or whereabouts is available. This lack of news and the fact that these dear ones are deprived of access to their families and to legal counsel to defend their rights are causes of deep concern to the Bahá'ís of the world and to all those who seek justice and equity.

What is a source of comfort to our grief-stricken hearts is the courage and steadfastness you have manifested in the face of this crisis. You continue to discharge your spiritual obligations in unity and resolutely adhere to the Divine Teachings. Relying on heavenly grace, you are exerting efforts to protect and safeguard the interests of the Faith. The support that the press and other mass media have given to the oppressed believers in Iran, the advocacy of their cause undertaken by social activists, and the sympathy voiced by Iranian intellectuals evoke our hope and deep gratitude.

Observe how an increasing number of Iranians, who in honouring their ancient traditions, value human rights, believe that the time has now passed for ignorant prejudices to cause division and discrimination amongst people, and recognize that the true exaltation of the nation of Iran is to be attained through unity in diversity. Rest assured that the Iranian people will exert themselves to fulfil such a vision. How regrettable that a small band of those, their hearts darkened by the clouds of prejudice, have yielded to hatred and animosity, are incapable of comprehending the truth that Bahá'ís have no intention but to serve the world of humanity and to assist in the establishment of a spiritual civilization, attribute to you baseless conspiracies, persecute you for your religious beliefs and practices, and seek to inflict harm upon you. Yet, you recall the counsels of Bahá'u'lláh, Who asserts: “That one indeed is a man who, today, dedicateth himself to the service of the entire human race.”

Strive, then, to exemplify these words of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá: “It behoveth the loved ones of the Lord to be the signs and tokens of His universal mercy and the embodiments of His own excelling grace. Like the sun, let them cast their rays upon garden and rubbish heap alike, and even as clouds in spring, let them shed down their rain upon flower and thorn.” Despite the current crisis, pay no heed to oppression and cruelty and, inspired by the Divine Teachings, act in the opposite manner. Focus your thoughts on being a source of good to those around you. Exert every endeavour to serve your fellow citizens—heirs to a culture rich and humane—who

themselves suffer from many an injustice. Avoid all divisiveness and conflict, consort with everyone with kindness and sincerity, and engage with your compatriots in the discussion of ideas and the exchange of thoughts on matters with which they are anxiously concerned. Ignite in their hearts the flame of hope, faith, and assurance in Iran's glorious future and in the bright destiny of humankind which you well know is sure to come to pass.

We supplicate in the Holy Shrines for the protection of the believers in the Cradle of the Faith.

[signed: The Universal House of Justice]

cc: International Teaching Centre