

# THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

25 November 2016

To the Bahá'ís of the World

Dearly loved Friends,

Today, the Day of the Covenant, marks the start of a new term of service for the members of the Auxiliary Boards for the Protection and Propagation of the Faith throughout the world, a term which will conclude in the final hours of the first century of the Formative Age. These consecrated officers of the Cause constitute an institution originally conceived and created by Shoghi Effendi to assist the Hands of the Cause of God in their “dual and sacred task of safeguarding the Faith and of promoting its teaching activities.” Now serving as auxiliaries to the Continental Counsellors, they and their assistants play a decisive part in the unfoldment of the global Plans, bringing to the work breadth of vision and clarity of thought, flexibility and resourcefulness. In cluster after cluster, from the first stirrings of activity, they labour alongside the friends, assisting individuals, communities, and institutions to focus their attention on the Plan, to maintain a conception of what needs to be done and the next steps to be taken, and to appreciate the complementarity of the efforts of all the friends and the need for mutual support. And in every aspect of their service, they foster a spirit of love and unity. So great will be the demands asked of them in the present Plan that we feel compelled to add to the ranks of Auxiliary Board members some 144, bringing the total number to 1,134, equally divided between the Boards for Protection and Propagation. As the Auxiliary Board members take up their new appointments, they will be assisted in deepening their understanding of the spiritual nature of their work and the wide-ranging responsibilities they will shoulder through a series of conferences, called for by the International Teaching Centre, that will take place between now and Riḍván 2017. It is our ardent hope that, as a result of these gatherings, an added surge of energy will be diffused throughout the community, reinforcing the valiant exertions of the friends everywhere, and we will offer our supplications at the Sacred Threshold that the sacrificial efforts of the Auxiliary Board members may draw forth unceasing confirmations from the hosts of the celestial Concourse.

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