

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

27 Rutland Gate, London SW7 1PD

Tel: +44-20-7584-2566 E-mail: nsa@bahai.org.uk

When replying please

refer to: GC-35202

4 November 2020

2 Qudrat 177 B.E.

FROM THE TABLE OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY

Contents

- **Compilation on Social Action**
- **Sustaining the spirit of the community during difficult times**
- **Spiritual health and intellectual life of the community**
- **Participation in the discourses of society**
- **Other topics**

All believers in the United Kingdom

Dearly loved Friends,

The National Spiritual Assembly is pleased to share with you some of the subjects upon which it has been reflecting at its most recent meetings, including during its much valued consultations with Counsellor Shirin Fozdar-Foroudi.

Compilation on Social Action

The National Spiritual Assembly has engaged in an enriching consultation on the important new compilation on Social Action, prepared by the Research Department of the Universal House of Justice. The members of National Assembly studied the compilation individually and then together explored the subject further, in a posture of learning, to enhance their understanding of some of the distinctive elements of the Bahá'í approach to this important field of endeavour. There is much to learn and the National Assembly recognises that it will no doubt draw often on the compilation and its concepts in the months and years ahead. The compilation can be [found online here](#) and is [available in book form from Bahá'í Books UK](#).

Sustaining the spirit of the community during difficult times

In its 9 May 2020 message to all National Spiritual Assemblies, the Universal House of Justice stated that “creative approaches will be required to sustain the collective spirit of the community during difficult times.” Looking to the winter months ahead, and the uncertain and often changing arrangements, the National Assembly feels that, within the framework of the Five Year Plan, the arts can play a significant and far greater role than at present in sustaining the spirits of all. To this end, it has brought together a group of friends to give creative thought to a range of initiatives that might be integrated into community life and its activities. One outcome has been the creation of [Elevate Create](#), intended as an online resource and inspiration bank, suggesting creative pursuits, sharing artistic offerings and ideas that can be used or adapted to suit the needs of the community or a particular activity.

Spiritual health and intellectual life of the community

In consultation with the Counsellor and all of the Auxiliary Board members in the United Kingdom, the National Assembly has been further reflecting on the spiritual health of the community. In the

year ahead, which marks the centenary of the passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, it is essential that every believer’s understanding of the Covenant is further developed and enhanced. To this end, the National Assembly is looking at how increasing numbers can engage in study of Ruhi Books 8 and 9 which are integral to this understanding and the development of the individual’s spiritual health and wellbeing.

With the regard to the cultivation of the life of the mind, the National Assembly believes that it is a fundamental right and responsibility, relevant to everyone, throughout every stage of life. It is clear that the training institute process has within it the capacity to greatly develop and enhance the spiritual health and intellectual capacities of those who participate. The Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Programme, for example, is a powerful tool for the development of literacy, mathematics, and self-expression. In addition the nascent Special Interest Groups being overseen by the Association for Bahá’í Studies will contribute much to assisting the friends to applying insights from the Revelation to their professional and other interests.

Participation in the discourses of society

The Office of Public Affairs has been sharing its experience and insights gained from participating in the prevalent discourses of society. These assist the National Assembly in its own reading of the reality of the United Kingdom today.

Participating in discourses is now the central element to all external affairs work, including media, our Web presence and government relations. The priority is being out in society, learning from key protagonists in different arenas and, where appropriate, offering Bahá’í insights and perspectives or creating spaces for discourses to occur. It has been heartening for the National Assembly to note that other organisations are increasingly respecting the Faith and its Teachings from their close contact with Bahá’í representatives in various settings.

Other topics

Here are a few of the other topics that you may be interested to know the National Assembly has been giving time to:

- Reflecting upon the recent use of social media in community outreach activities;
- Addressing the subject of preparation for, and the cultivation of, healthy marriages;
- Exploring the principle of deputisation in relation to the funding of teachers, tutors and pioneers;
- Preparing for the centenary of the Passing of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá and the opening of the Master’s Apartment at 17 Royal York Crescent, Bristol;
- Planning a befitting national online memorial gathering to honour Farzam Arbab, Douglas Martin and Violette Haake.

The National Assembly continues to pray at each of its monthly meetings for the entire Bahá’í community, and by name for those who are facing particular tests or challenges. Please also pray for the National Assembly that its efforts may be blessed by the confirmations of Bahá’u’lláh.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,



Patrick O’Mara,
Secretary