

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

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To the Bahá'ís in the United Kingdom

Dearly loved friends,

The National Spiritual Assembly decided recently that following its meetings it would, from time to time, share various decisions that it had made by way of a letter or a NEWS announcement. As you may be aware, the Assembly meets approximately every month. Its meetings usually start on Friday evening and end on Sunday afternoon, consulting for some 16-20 hours during this period. As you can imagine, many decisions are made across a variety of subjects and issues. Here are a few examples of decision from the last meeting.

Summer Schools 2012

The National Spiritual Assembly decided that the theme for Summer Schools in 2012 will be *'Abdu'l-Bahá - the Community Builder*. Councils and Committees who are organising these schools will be adopting this theme.

National Statistics Officer

A National Statistics Officer, Mr Riccardo Besharati, has been appointed. One of the important tools for Bahá'í Institutions at the cluster, regional and national level that enables effective planning and the prioritisation of resources is information, including statistics and the ability to use them effectively. The National Assembly is aware that in the United Kingdom we have considerable strides to make in the development of our capacity both to collect and to use statistics. With the appointment of a National Statistics Officer, it hopes that the development of this capacity will proceed in a more systematic manner across the regions.

Letters of the Universal House of Justice to the Believers in the Cradle of the Faith

Over the past number of years, the Universal House of Justice has been writing moving, eloquent and loving letters to the believers in the Cradle of the Faith which, in a profound manner, describe who we, the Bahá'ís, are and what we are about. These letters were written in Persian and have been officially translated into English.

The Assembly feels that these letters are of great significance and of immense value to share with those that are close to the Bahá'í community, especially those of Iranian background. As a result, it decided to prepare a compilation of those letters that can be shared and studied with friends of the Faith. Hopefully this compilation will be available in the coming weeks.

External Affairs

The National Assembly had a day-long consultation with Counsellor Shirin Fozdar-Foroudi as well as the core team of friends who are advancing this critically important field of endeavour. This was an important consultation during which all those engaged in the consultation developed a common

vision of how to operationalize the multiple areas of endeavour which External Affairs encompasses.

The Guardian's Resting Place

The National Spiritual Assembly consulted extensively regarding the further beautification and continuing maintenance and upkeep of the Guardian's Resting Place. These consultations concluded that it should consult with the Universal House of Justice before any significant measures were decided upon. It has therefore written to the House of Justice to seek their guidance on this matter.

Sunday opening at the National Haziratu'l-Quds

The National Haziratu'l-Quds has now been open for a number of months on Sundays and it is delightful to learn of the success of this with many friends visiting the building. The National Assembly has, therefore, decided to continue with this arrangement!

Births, deaths, declarations and marriages

It has been the practice now for many years to include details of births, deaths, declarations and marriages in the regular publication of the Assembly. The Assembly has decided not to include these in future for two reasons. Firstly, as the community grows, and will hopefully continue to grow, it becomes less and less feasible to include such a list. However, perhaps a more important reason is to comply with data protection legislation.

We hope that these little tit-bits from the Assembly table will be of interest to all.

Of course, as with every meeting, the community and all those engaged in serving the Cause, were remembered in the prayers of the Assembly.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

National Spiritual Assembly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Patrick O'Mara', written over a horizontal line.

Patrick O'Mara
Secretary