

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

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19 June 2013

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### **Riḍván message and Frontiers of Learning**

The National Spiritual Assembly was delighted to be joined by Counsellor Shirin Fozdar-Foroudi, the Bahá'í Council for England and the Training Institute Board for the United Kingdom for an extensive study of the abundant guidance that was recently released from the Bahá'í World Centre. This included the 2013 Riḍván message of the Universal House of Justice and a document entitled "Insights into Frontiers of Learning" that was prepared by the International Teaching Centre.

Our vision of the Plan was greatly enriched through this consultation, as we saw with even greater clarity how the methods and instruments of the Plan foster a potent "community-building" process that leads us, step-by-step, towards the New World Order envisioned by Bahá'u'lláh. In this context, fresh attention was given to the ways and means to advance the processes of growth in clusters at various stages of development. With eager anticipation, the National Assembly is now also making plans to consult in a similar vein with the Regional Bahá'í Councils of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales about advancing the clusters in their respective regions.

### **London youth conference**

Preparations for the London youth conference, which holds a special importance for the unfoldment of the Plan in this part of Europe, are continuing apace in consultation with the Counsellors. Under the guidance of the House of Justice, the Assembly is considering such matters as the training of the facilitators of the workshops, the collection of media material, the graceful integration of the arts into the programme, and a range of logistical matters. In this connection, the Assembly is grateful for the dedicated services of the London Youth Conference Committee, which is doing its utmost to bring the House of Justice's vision of the youth conferences into reality.

### **Letter of the Universal House of Justice on the subject of non-involvement in partisan politics**

The House of Justice released a highly significant letter, dated 2 March, which sets forth and contextualises the Bahá'í attitude towards politics. It is addressed to the Bahá'ís of Iran, but its content is relevant to the friends everywhere. The National Assembly benefited greatly from studying this letter in session, and recommends that all the friends, including those working with the Iranian diaspora, should study it in their cluster schools, deepenings and other gatherings.

Copies of the letter were previously distributed on NEWS in both English and Persian, and they are also available on the UK Bahá'í Downloads website ([admin.bahai.org.uk](http://admin.bahai.org.uk)). If you are not able to access the letter for any reason, please feel free to write to [nsa@bahai.org.uk](mailto:nsa@bahai.org.uk) so that a copy can be emailed to you.

### **Committees and Agency appointments**

As is the National Assembly's annual practice, it considered in April the membership of all the committees and agencies that serve the various needs of the UK Bahá'í community and made appointments accordingly. In considering these appointments, the National Assembly is mindful of the exemplary services rendered in so many fields of endeavour by so many souls, and that it is the sacrificial outpouring of time, energy and commitment, which are profound expressions of love for Bahá'u'lláh, that attract abundant confirmations to the work of the Faith. The National Assembly is deeply grateful to all those who have, and who continue, to offer their valuable services on the Assembly's committees and agencies.

### **Unit Convention Resolutions**

The National Assembly receives a great many Unit Convention Resolutions each year, and appreciates the thoughtfulness and care that are invested in each one. The resolutions from December 2012 are currently being considered by the Assembly, and this process will continue over the coming months. As done in recent years, once a response or line of action has been devised for each resolution they will be announced altogether to the community.

This same process is also used for those resolutions that were passed at National Convention.

### **Registration of Bahá'í Groups**

In accordance with the guidance of the beloved Guardian, communities with 2-8 believers are considered to be a Bahá'í group. However, most of the groups that exist in the UK are not presently registered with the National Assembly. Amongst other things, registering as a group will enable communities to receive communications that are sent from time to time to Local Spiritual Assemblies and groups. For this reason, the National Assembly decided to warmly encourage as many groups as possible to register, and recently sent guidance on how to do so to all those to whom this matter would apply.

### **Office of Public Affairs**

Together with Dr. Fozdar-Foroudi, the Assembly had a fruitful consultation with the Core Team of the Office of Public Affairs, which is the consultative body that guides the strategy and oversees the work of that Office.

Among the areas considered was the campaign to mark the fifth anniversary of the incarceration of the former Yárán. The Assembly was delighted to hear of the multi-faceted approach that had been devised for this significant anniversary, which included the public presentation of an open letter to Ministers of Government; parliamentary and media outreach; efforts to secure support from other religious leaders; and an event to launch the volume *Prison Poems* by Mahvash Sabet, one of the former Yárán members.

The Office's efforts to learn about contributing to discourses at the national level also received much attention, and new strategies were devised based on the experiences and lessons garnered to date.

These are but a sample of the many and diverse matters that the National Assembly consults upon at its meetings. It is a source of great joy to serve such a dynamic, purposeful and blessed community!

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

National Spiritual Assembly