

BAHÁ'Í
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY

Office of Public Information

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To all National Spiritual Assemblies

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Recently a newspaper correspondent in the United States of America asked the Bahá'ís for their views concerning the establishment of the Lesser Peace and the occurrence of catastrophic events at the end of the twentieth century. The enclosed statement was prepared, with the approval of the Universal House of Justice, as a basis for response to this and other such questions. We are forwarding it to you as you may find it useful in your public information work.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,



For the Office of Public Information

Enclosure

cc: The Hands of the Cause of God
International Teaching Centre
Boards of Counsellors
Counsellors

PEACE AMONG THE NATIONS

World Peace, a hallmark of the emerging global civilization, will be realized as a tangible expression of the principle of the oneness of humankind. This assurance is given in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Such a peace will result from the culmination of two distinct but simultaneous and mutually reinforcing processes: one leading to the spiritual unity of the human race, referred to as the "Most Great Peace"; the other to the political unity of nations and known as the "Lesser Peace". The former is a distant goal, requiring a monumental change in human conduct that only religious faith can ensure; the other is more immediate and can already be detected on the political horizon. The one is directly related to the efforts of the Bahá'í community in promoting the pivotal principle of their Faith; the other is dependent on the actions of world political leaders and not on any Bahá'í plan or action.

The political unity of nations implies the achievement of a relationship among them that will enable them to resolve questions of international import through consultation rather than war and that will lead to the establishment of a world government. The attainment of peace in the political realm is discernible through the workings of a process that can be seen as having been definitely established in the twentieth century amid the terror and turmoil that have characterized so much of this period. It is noteworthy that the majority of the nations have come into being during this century and that they have opted for peaceful relations with one another by joining in the membership of the United Nations and through participation in regional organizations that facilitate their working together. Moreover, the process of political unification is gaining acceleration through the awakening of a consciousness of peace among the world's peoples that validates the work of the United Nations, and through advances in science and technology, which have already contracted and transformed the world into a single complex organism.

The horrific experiences of two world wars which gave birth at first to the League of Nations and then to the United Nations; the frequency with which world leaders, particularly in the decade of the nineties, have met and agreed on the resolution of global issues; the call for a global order that issued from the participation of these leaders in the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations; the multiplication of organizations of civil society that focus attention on a variety of international concerns through the operation of an ever-expanding network of activities; the widespread debates on the need for global governance and numerous organized efforts towards world peace; the emergence of international tribunals; the rapid developments in communications technology that have made the planet borderless -- these are among the voluminous evidences of a momentum toward peaceful international relations that has clearly become irreversible.