

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

24 November 2014

Transmitted by email: [deleted]

Dr. [deleted]
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The Universal House of Justice was pleased to receive your email letter dated 18 August 2014 conveying your gratitude for its announcement concerning the implementation of the Bahá'í calendar and requesting clarification regarding the date for the Twin Holy Birthdays in 2015 set out in the table sent to all National Spiritual Assemblies. We have been asked to respond as follows.

The question may be more easily resolved if you think in terms of the Bahá'í dates, not the Gregorian ones, given that the Bahá'í day begins at sunset. As you mention, the eighth new moon following Naw-Rúz occurs after sunset on 11 November 2015, the Bahá'í date for which is 9 Qudrat 172. This refers to the day of the moon's conjunction with the sun, that is, the moon's dark phase. As stated in the House of Justice's letter of 10 July 2014 to the Bahá'ís of the World, the Twin Holy Birthdays are to be observed "on the first and the second day following the occurrence of the eighth new moon after Naw-Rúz, as determined in advance by astronomical tables using Tīhrán as the point of reference." Since the eighth new moon falls on 9 Qudrat, the Twin Birthdays are to be celebrated on the two days following that day, which are 10 and 11 Qudrat 172, coinciding with 13 and 14 November of the Gregorian calendar in 2015.

The method for determining the lunar event associated with the Twin Birthdays for the Bahá'í calendar is different than the method used to mark the start of a new month in the Islamic calendar in that it is not associated with the observance of the light of the first crescent. Although, as you note, the first day of the Islamic month, which begins with the appearance of the first crescent, may fall on 21 March 2015, the astronomical new moon, the moon's dark phase, falls on 20 March, which is 19 'Alá' 171.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat