

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

17 August 2006

To the Bahá'ís of the World

Dearly loved Friends,

By the grace of a merciful Providence, the month-long crisis that posed a grave danger to life in this region, and a clear threat to the safety of the World Centre of our Faith, subsided a few days ago. Our hearts reach out to the innocent victims on both sides of the fiery conflict it entailed. Their relief from grief is the object of our ardent prayers.

We affirm with gratitude to Bahá'u'lláh that no damage was done to the Holy Places and that the friends here remained in safety, pursuing their tasks with steadiness of purpose and exemplary perseverance.

During the early days of this perilous period our spirits were uplifted by the radiant resolve of the 172 friends who were able to come as participants in the last programme for the 2005–2006 pilgrimage season. Hailing from 16 countries, they arrived as the clouds of strife hung heavy over the Holy Land. Given the unpredictability of the situation, it was not until the ninth night of their sojourn that the pilgrims attained to the Sacred Threshold at Bahjí. This was for them an unexpected bounty marking the high point of a pilgrimage experience unlike any other thus far recorded. And so they returned to the fields of service from whence they came with fulfilled hearts, their souls quickened, ready to focus the enhanced measure of their spiritual energy on realizing the global aim of the Five Year Plan.

The recent turbulence once again involving the Holy Land was only the latest among the recurrent upheavals so characteristic of unsettled conditions that have long obtained in the Middle East; it was only one among a mounting tide of world-shaking afflictions. To the followers of the Blessed Beauty imbued with a world-healing vision of the Divine Plan in its current phase, the disquiet intermittently affecting this Land of the Prophets may well be regarded, beyond all other contexts, as a reminder of—indeed, a spur for—the efforts to be made, the tasks urgently to be done. Press on, then, undeterred by any trouble, confident of the promised glory of the divinely assured outcome.

Just two days ago, we went to Bahjí and bowed down at the Sacred Threshold to give thanks to the Beloved on behalf of every one of you for the protection He had vouchsafed to the World Centre of His Faith, and we continue to pray for His confirmation of every step you take to advance His mighty Cause.

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