

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

March 2, 2016

To all Local Spiritual Assemblies
and registered Bahá'í groups

Dearest Bahá'í Friends,

A little over two months ago, in a suburb of Paris, a highly significant event focused on climate change was taking place as the year rapidly drew to a close. Styled COP21 (short for the 21st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change), the event drew to the famed City of Light more than 150 heads of state, some 30,000 representatives of governments, international organizations, civil society, and business—and the news media.

In partnership with the Bahá'í International Community (BIC) and the International Environment Forum (a Bahá'í-inspired organization), this Assembly sent a small delegation to COP21. A statement —[Shared Vision, Shared Volition: Choosing our Global Future Together](#)—was prepared and circulated by the BIC. Bahá'í participants also organized or co-sponsored five panel discussions on a wide range of related topics. The discussions presented positive examples of how spiritual qualities such as justice, trustworthiness, accountability, and unity can be brought to bear on the problem of climate change.

After two weeks of negotiations, the 195 states participating in COP21 adopted by consensus the historic Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a safe level, setting themselves and much of the world on a common pathway to clean energy.

While the Paris Agreement represents a landmark achievement in international cooperation, the challenges of implementing it are formidable and are not only practical but spiritual in nature. Faith communities will continue to play an important part in this work by highlighting the moral and ethical principles supporting action on climate change, and by taking practical steps to alter their own impact on climate.

In recent years, Bahá'í communities across the country have participated in the annual Preach-in on Global Warming organized by Interfaith Power and Light. This year, the Preach-in has been scheduled to coincide with Earth Week, April 15–24, and has been renamed “Faith Climate Action Week.” Planners envision it as an occasion for getting outside, celebrating the splendors of our natural world, engaging in acts of service benefitting the environment—tree planting and park clean-ups, for example—and taking steps to reduce wasteful energy-use habits. It will also be an occasion for finding the spiritual dimension of efforts to ensure the earth remains—for present and future generations—a beautiful, livable planet with abundant, clean, and healthful natural resources. We encourage you to join with other people of faith in this endeavor and have attached information on how to register your activities.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,



Kenneth E. Bowers
Secretary

Attachment