

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

September 14, 2016

To all Local Spiritual Assemblies in
the Atlantic, California, Four Corners,
Northeast, Northern Plains, Northwest,
Prairie States, South Central, and
Southeastern regions

Dearest Bahá'í Friends,

In its message to the Conference of the Continental Boards of Counselors on December 28, 2010, the Universal House of Justice discusses service on Bahá'í institutions, noting both the “tremendous privilege” and the “responsibility” such service entails. For every Local Spiritual Assembly, participation in the annual election of its respective Regional Bahá'í Council must surely rank high in the host of its weighty responsibilities.

The election call materials accompanying this letter have been designed to assist you in scheduling a meeting of your Assembly for this purpose and in completing and submitting valid ballots within the required timeframe. This year, you may hold meetings for the purpose of casting ballots for Council membership any time from October 17–23. The National Spiritual Assembly trusts that, in anticipation of the election, you have already taken steps to ensure that each member of your institution understands her or his responsibility in this regard, is familiar with the characteristics desirable in members serving on a Regional Bahá'í Council, and is committed to participation in this extremely important process.

As you know, the Regional Bahá'í Councils “have a crucial role to play in the effective prosecution of the Five Year Plan.” To further prepare for the election, we strongly suggest that you take time to reflect on the qualifications for Council membership described below, bearing them in mind as you later cast your ballots.

In a letter to another National Spiritual Assembly, the Universal House of Justice states:

Clearly, in casting their votes, the electors will give due regard to the qualities specified by the Guardian such as selfless devotion, recognized

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ability and unquestioned loyalty, as well as to factors such as age distribution, diversity and gender. Yet they must also realize that at this time Regional Councils are responsible largely for overseeing the execution of the global Plan in the territories under their jurisdiction, in collaboration with the Counsellors and their deputies, ensuring that the two complementary movements central to its progress steadily unfold. It is only natural, then, that Local Assembly members would select for service on a Council men and women who, through their understanding of the institute process, their proven experience with the core activities, their ability to contribute to learning at the grassroots and their constructive attitudes, can best guide the unfoldment of the Five Year Plan.

As with all Bahá'í elections, the election of your Regional Bahá'í Council should be carried out in an atmosphere of quiet and prayerful reflection, mindful of the sacredness of the occasion. We ask that you ensure that each member of your Assembly is provided with a copy of this letter for her or his personal study well in advance of the election, and that at the election meeting itself, the letter be read aloud prior to the actual casting of ballots.

As you select for service on your Regional Bahá'í Council "those women and men who, through their proven experience in the activities of the Plan, their capacity to participate in the learning process, and their upright character and constructive attitudes, can best advance the process of entry by troops," be assured our warm encouragement and prayers surround you.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,



Kenneth E. Bowers
Secretary

Enclosures