

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

March 27, 2017

To all Local Spiritual Assemblies
and registered Bahá'í groups

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

In our February 25 letter on "America and the Five Year Plan," we shared with you some reflections on the current state of affairs in the nation and the prime responsibility of the followers of the Blessed Beauty to affirm the truth of the oneness of humanity.

One of the most serious maladies afflicting the nation is materialism. Immersed in the business of daily life, it is possible to overlook the extent to which we are all, to some degree, infected with this spiritual disorder. Immoderate consumption is considered normal, and a constant quest to increase one's economic gain is viewed as praiseworthy. We know this pattern of existence is not only mistaken but harmful to the health of the human family. Yet we are all members of society and are not immune to the influence of prevailing attitudes.

It is not difficult to trace the roots of the environmental crisis facing the world. The costs of ill-considered methods of industrial production are high levels of toxins poisoning our air, soil, and water. The perceived obsolescence of consumer electronics results in landfills full to overflowing. The demand for cheaper food can lead to deforestation, the loss of topsoil, and the contamination of water sources. Humanity's seemingly unquenchable thirst for fossil fuels to power its engines has led to the release into the earth's precious atmosphere of levels of carbon dioxide that threaten our very existence.

The global nature of these problems—and their origins in materialism—is elucidated by the Universal House of Justice in its March 1 message on economic well-being:

The welfare of any segment of humanity is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the whole. Humanity's collective life suffers when any one group thinks of its own well-being in isolation from that of its neighbours' or pursues economic gain without regard for how the natural environment, which provides sustenance for all, is affected.

A large part of the solution will come from raising our friends' and neighbors' awareness of the need for responsible choices in our individual lives as economic and environmental actors—as well as raising collective awareness of how communities can engage in environmental stewardship. In this connection, Interfaith Power and Light will again this year organize "Faith Climate Action Week," April 17–23, as an opportunity to reflect and act on climate change. Further, for those friends who would like to more deeply consider the issue of climate in the context of the Bahá'í writings, the Wilmette Institute course on climate change may be of interest. Links for informative and innovative materials and resources, along with information on the course, are provided at the end of this letter.

We encourage you to join with other people of Faith in this endeavor and register your activities at the Faith Climate Action Week website.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,



Kenneth E. Bowers
Secretary

[Faith Climate Action Week](#)
[BlessedTomorrow](#)
[Wilmette Institute course on climate change](#)