

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

28 November 2002

Transmitted by email: loni.bramson@verizon.net

Dr. Loni Bramson
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The Universal House of Justice has received your letter of 10 September 2002, and has asked us to respond as follows.

The House of Justice commends your careful study of the authoritative writings of the Faith, and your efforts to obtain clarification of the issues pertaining to the attainment of the unity of the nations of the world, and the establishment of the Lesser Peace. In response to the specific question posed in the concluding paragraph of your letter, we have been asked to inform you that the passages to which you refer do not indicate a change in a decision of the House of Justice based on new evidence. There is no contradiction between them. You are encouraged to persist in your efforts to discover the unity of meaning which reconciles the statements made in these several passages.

The difficulties you have encountered in your diligent efforts for clarification may well arise from the novelty of the concept of evolutionary process in contemporary thinking and discussion about world events. The Bahá'í view of the movement toward world peace is that of the operation of great processes, which may well extend over many centuries, and which are moving humanity toward a condition clearly specified in the Bahá'í writings, that of the Most Great Peace. Understanding such a view calls for a change in thinking from that which focuses exclusively on events. Admittedly the processes described in the Bahá'í writings do include events, but their operation consists of far more than those specific events.

The Research Department memorandum of 19 April 2001, together with our covering letter, refers to the unity of nations being, in the words of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "securely established" during the twentieth century. One might well expect that this unity will go through a process of development, including setbacks and challenges to its strength, which will lead gradually to its being institutionalized through bodies created to protect it and translate it into practical reality expressed in cooperation, decision-making, and collective action.

The material also refers to the distinction between the unity of nations and the Lesser Peace. It is clear that these two terms should not be used synonymously. However, they are closely related; the unity of nations may properly be regarded as part of the process of the evolution of the Lesser Peace in the movement of humanity toward an enduring world peace.

The term “Lesser Peace” can be used with a variety of meanings. It is often associated only with fulfilment of the prediction of the “mighty convocation” to which reference is made by the Universal House of Justice, in “The Promise of World Peace” or establishment of the international body to which the nations will cede part of their sovereignty in regard to waging war. However, it is also used, in some instances, to refer to the entire process extending back to the earliest indications in the twentieth century and forward to the future unfoldment of the process. From the former perspective a sharp distinction is made between the achievement of unity of nations and the Lesser Peace. The latter perspective would be reflected in statements associating the unity of nations with the establishment of the Lesser Peace.

The House of Justice trusts that your careful study of the clarifications provided here will lead you to a unity of understanding in which you will find no contradiction between the various statements quoted in your letter, and will enable you to gain a deeper understanding of the evolutionary processes now apparent as the world proceeds along the path of unity and peace.

With loving Bahá’í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat