

**BAHÁ'Í
INTERNATIONAL
COMMUNITY**

United Nations Office

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The National Spiritual Assembly of
the Bahá'ís of the Russian Federation

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

The time is fast approaching for the 56th session of the United Nations General Assembly that will be held in New York from mid-September until mid-December 2001. The General Assembly will, once again, consider the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of the Bahá'ís, and it is our ardent hope that it might seriously consider adopting a resolution. We are writing, as in years past, to seek the assistance of your National Spiritual Assembly in implementing the strategy outlined by the Universal House of Justice for the defense of the Bahá'í community in Iran at the 56th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

You may recall that on 20 April 2001 the 57th session of the Commission on Human Rights adopted a resolution on Iran calling for the full emancipation of the Bahá'í community in Iran. This resolution makes specific reference to the Bahá'ís. In operative paragraph 9, the Commission calls upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran "...to implement fully the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance relating to the Bahá'ís and other minority groups until they are completely emancipated." In our view, this shows the clearest expression of what the international community expects of the Iranian Government.

During the last twelve months we have continued to note changes in the voting pattern of a number of the traditional co-sponsors of the resolution on Iran. Although many of these countries have moved closer to the Iranian government, others have come back to support the resolution. All things considered, there is still strong support for a resolution by some influential countries. In view of the unstable political environment and the precarious situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran, we have been instructed by the Universal House of Justice to continue to pursue a strong resolution on Iran, following the pattern of action taken in previous years.

With the above-mentioned points in mind we draw your attention to the strategy to be implemented at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly.

It is our ardent hope the resolution will include the following:

- A call for the implementation of the recommendations contained in Amor's report to the 53rd session of the Commission on Human Rights;
- A call for the emancipation of the Bahá'ís;
- A decision to continue the examination of the situation of human rights in Iran, including the situation of the Bahá'ís, at the 57th session of the General Assembly.

You should, therefore, appeal to your government to support a resolution regarding the human rights situation in Iran, making reference to the Bahá'ís, at the forthcoming 56th session of the United Nations General Assembly. We hope that such a resolution would include a decision to continue monitoring, at its 57th session, the human rights situation in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including the situation of minority groups such as the Bahá'ís.

We are enclosing for your information a copy of the resolution on Iran adopted at the 57th session of the Commission on Human Rights and the most recent report of Professor Copithorne. We are also enclosing the "Current Situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran, August 2001" for you to share with your government.

We deeply appreciate the invaluable assistance of your National Spiritual Assembly in bringing to the attention of your government the situation of the Bahá'í community of Iran. We kindly request that you inform the Universal House of Justice and our office of any action undertaken in this regard, and we thank you for your efforts to ensure the adoption of a resolution on Iran at the forthcoming United Nations General Assembly.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Techeste Ahderom
Principal Representative
to the United Nations

Enclosures:

1. *Resolution on Human Rights situation in Iran at the 57th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights*
2. *Report of the Special Representative on Iran to the 57th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights*
3. *The Current Situation of the Bahá'ís in Iran, August 2001*