



## **BAHA'I FAITH & NWO**

### INTRODUCTION

Before we begin, let's acknowledge that, fundamentally, it's our leaders and not any one of our inherent races, sexes, genders, nationalities, ages or whatever else that's directing the madness on this planet at this time. Our individual qualities only contribute to the madness when we fall for the age-old divide to conquer tactic and allow ourselves to identify by the labels that our oppressors have assigned to us. We're all in this together, as collective human beings, no matter what colour we are, where we hail from or how we live our lives. If we contribute to toxic humanity, then, from my perspective, toxic humanity is exactly what we'll get in return. Let's be better, wiser and stronger than that! Let's be all that we can be, together, and defeat this damned darkness, once and for all!!

### BAHA'I NEW WORLD ORDER

#### **HAND OF THE CAUSE OF GOD**

Hand of the Cause was a title given to prominent early members of the Bahá'í Faith, appointed for life by the religion's founders. Of the fifty individuals given the title, the last living was 'Alí-Muhammad Varqá who died in 2007. Hands of the Cause played a significant role in propagating the religion, and protecting it from schism.

With the passing of Shoghi Effendi in 1957, the twenty-seven living Hands of the Cause at the time would be the last appointed. The Universal House of Justice, the governing body first elected in 1963, created the Institution of the Counsellors in 1968 and the appointed Continental Counsellors over time took on the role that the Hands of the Cause were filling. The announcement in 1968 also changed the role of the Hand of the Cause, changing them from continental appointments to worldwide, and nine Counsellors working at the International Teaching Centre took on the role of the nine Hands of the Cause who worked in the Bahá'í World Centre.

The most complete list of the Hands available is from The Bahá'í World: Vol XIV. The Universal House of Justice has said that this list may not be complete, and that a study of the letters and archives may reveal others named to this position.

'Abdu'l-Baha in his will and testament asks the Hands of the Cause of God to be "ever watchful" and "so soon as they find anyone beginning to oppose and protest against the Guardian of the Cause of God, cast him out from the congregation of the people of Baha and in no wise accept any excuse from him."

The Hands of the Cause are also referred to by Shoghi Effendi as the "Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth".

1. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hands\\_of\\_the\\_Cause](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hands_of_the_Cause)

## **SHOGHI EFFENDI**

### Ministry of the Custodians

In Shoghi Effendi's final message to the Baha'i World, dated October 1957, he named the Hands of the Cause of God, "the Chief Stewards of Bahá'u'lláh's embryonic World Commonwealth." Following the death of Shoghi Effendi, the Bahá'í Faith was temporarily stewarded by the Hands of the Cause, who elected among themselves nine "Custodians" to serve in Haifa as the head of the Faith. They reserved to the "entire body of the Hands of the Cause" the responsibility to determine the transition of the International Bahá'í Council into the Universal House of Justice, and that the Custodians reserved to themselves the authority to determine and expel Covenant-breakers. This stewardship oversaw the execution of the final years of Shoghi Effendi's ordinances of the ten year crusade (which lasted until 1963) culminating and transitioning to the election and establishment of the Universal House of Justice, at the first Baha'i World Congress in 1963.

As early as January 1959, Mason Remey, one of the custodial Hands, believed that he was the second Guardian and successor to Shoghi Effendi. That summer after a conclave of the Hands in Haifa, Remey abandoned his position and moved to Washington D.C., then soon after announced his claim to absolute leadership, causing a minor schism that attracted about 100 followers, mostly in the United States. Remey was excommunicated by a unanimous decision of the remaining 26 Hands. Although initially disturbed, the mainstream Bahá'ís paid little attention to his movement within a few years.

### Election of the Universal House of Justice

At the end of the Ten Year Crusade in 1963, the Universal House of Justice was first elected. It was authorized to adjudicate on situations not covered in scripture. As its first order of business, the Universal House of Justice evaluated the situation caused by the fact that the Guardian had not appointed a successor. It determined that under the circumstances, given the criteria for succession described in the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, there was no legitimate way for another Guardian to be appointed. Therefore, although the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá leaves provisions for a succession of Guardians, Shoghi Effendi remains the first and last occupant of this office.

Bahá'u'lláh envisioned a scenario in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas in which the line of Guardians would be broken prior to the establishment of the Universal House of Justice, and in the interim the Hands of the Cause of God would administer the affairs of the Baha'i community.

### Guardianship

The institution of the 'Guardian' provided a hereditary line of heads of the religion, in many respects similar to the Shia Imamate.[32] Each Guardian was to be appointed by the previous from among the male descendants of Bahá'u'lláh, preferably according to primogeniture. The appointment was to be made during the Guardian's lifetime and clearly assented to by a group of Hands of the Cause. The Guardian would be the head of the Universal House of Justice, and had the authority to expel its members. He would also be responsible for the receipt of Huqúqu'lláh, appoint new Hands of the Cause, provide "authoritative and binding" interpretations of the Bahá'í writings, and excommunicate Covenant-breakers.

The issue of successorship to 'Abdu'l-Bahá was in the minds of early Bahá'ís, and although the Universal House of Justice was an institution mentioned by Bahá'u'lláh, the institution of the Guardianship was not clearly introduced until the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Bahá was publicly read after his death.

In the will, Shoghi Effendi found that he had been designated as "the Sign of God, the chosen branch, the Guardian of the Cause of God". He also learned that he had been designated as this when he was still a small child. As Guardian, he was appointed as head of the religion, someone whom the Bahá'ís had to look to for guidance.

### Shoghi Effendi on the Guardianship

Building on the foundation that had been established in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's will, Shoghi Effendi elaborated on the role of the Guardian in several works, including Bahá'í Administration and the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh. In those works, he went to great

lengths to emphasize that he himself and any future Guardian should never be viewed as equal to 'Abdu'l-Bahá, or regarded as a holy person. He asked Bahá'ís not to celebrate his birthday or have his picture on display. In his correspondences, Shoghi Effendi signed his letters to Bahá'ís as "brother" and "co-worker," to the extent that even when addressing youth, he referred to himself as "Your True Brother."

Shoghi Effendi wrote that the infallibility of his interpretations only extended to matters relating to the Bahá'í Faith and not subjects such as economics and science.

In his writings, Shoghi Effendi delineates a distinct separation of powers between the "twin pillars" of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. The roles of the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice are complementary, the former providing authoritative interpretation, and the latter providing flexibility and the authority to adjudicate on "questions that are obscure and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book." Shoghi Effendi went into detail explaining that the institutions are interdependent and had their own specific spheres of jurisdiction. For example, the Guardian could define the sphere of legislative action and request that a particular decision be reconsidered, but could not dictate the constitution, override the decisions, or influence the election of the Universal House of Justice. In explaining the importance of the Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi wrote that without it the World Order of Bahá'u'lláh would be "mutilated." In its legislation the Universal House of Justice turns to the mass of interpretation left by Shoghi Effendi."

2. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoghi\\_Effendi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoghi_Effendi)

### **MARY MAXWELL (Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum)**

"Rúhíyyih Rabbání (8 August 1910 – 19 January 2000), born as Mary Sutherland Maxwell and best known by the title Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhíyyih Khánum, was the wife of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, from 1937 to 1957. In 1952, she was elevated to the office of Hand of the Cause of God, for which she attended to issues related to the expansion and protection of the Bahá'í Faith, and served an important role in the transfer of authority from 1957 to 1963.

Rúhíyyih Rabbání was raised in Montreal, Quebec. After two trips to the Bahá'í holy land in Haifa, Israel, she engaged in many youth activities in the Bahá'í community. She married Shoghi Effendi in 1937. After his death, Rúhíyyih Rabbání became for Bahá'ís the last remaining link to the family of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who headed the Bahá'í Faith from 1892 to 1921 and was the eldest son of the faith's founder, Bahá'u'lláh. In 2004, CBC viewers voted her number 44 on the list of "greatest Canadians" on the television show The Greatest Canadian.

Rúhíyyih Khánúm was the author of several published books, such as Prescription for Living and The Priceless Pearl.

Almost immediately after their marriage, she served as the Guardian's secretary, and then in 1941 until 1957 she served as Shoghi Effendi's principal secretary in English. In 1951, she was appointed to the International Bahá'í Council, which was an administrative institution of the Bahá'í Faith created as a precursor to the Universal House of Justice to act as a liaison between the Council and Shoghi Effendi. Later on, on March 26, 1952, she was appointed to the office of Hand of the Cause of God – a distinguished rank in service to the religion – for which she attended to issues related to the propagation and protection of the religion.

After Shoghi Effendi died in 1957, she became for Bahá'ís the last remaining link to the family of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who headed the Faith from 1892 to 1921 and was the eldest son of the Faith's Founder, Bahá'u'lláh.

#### Ministry of the Custodians

In 1957, her husband, Shoghi Effendi, died without having appointed a successor. Rúhíyyih Khánúm was among the 27 Hands of the Cause who stewarded the religion for the six-year interim, before the Universal House of Justice was scheduled to be elected in 1963. The Hands voted among themselves for nine individuals to work at the Bahá'í World Centre to run the administration of the Faith, a position to which Rúhíyyih Khánúm was elected; these nine were designated the Custodians. During this time, she worked on assuring the completion of the ten-year international teaching plan which was launched by Shoghi Effendi in 1953. Upon the election of the Universal House of Justice in 1963, the ending point of Shoghi Effendi's ten-year plan, the nine Hands acting as interim head of the Faith closed their office.

From 1957 until her death, Rúhíyyih Khánúm traveled to over 185 countries and territories working with the world's several million Bahá'ís. She especially encouraged members of indigenous peoples to participate in the global Bahá'í community.[2] Her travels took her to all the continents and to small islands. Some of her travels involved extended stays. For four years, she traveled for 58,000 kilometers in a Landrover through sub-Saharan Africa, visiting 34 countries, in 19 of which she was received by the head of state. On another trip, she visited nearly 30 countries in Asia and the Pacific islands during a seven-month span. From January to March 1970, she crossed Africa from east to west, driving 2/3 of the distance herself, visiting many country's communities, meeting with individuals and institutions, both Bahá'í and civic.

In 1975–6, she travelled by boat through the tributaries of the Amazon River of Brazil and visited the high mountain ranges of Peru and Bolivia. Thirty six tribal groups were visited over a period of six months; the trip was called The Green Light Expedition,] which followed Khanum's The Great African Safari. There have also been projects developed from the original expedition – In the Footsteps of the Green Light Expedition and Tear of the Clouds.

During her travels, she was received by the following heads of state and government:

Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia,  
Malietao Tanumafili II of Western Samoa  
Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India  
President Félix Houphouët-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire  
President Carlos Menem of Argentina  
Prime Minister Edward Seaga of Jamaica, and  
Javier Pérez de Cuellar, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%BAh%C3%ADyyih\\_Kh%C3%A1num](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%BAh%C3%ADyyih_Kh%C3%A1num)

## **BAHA'I NWO**

“The phrase "new world order" in the Bahá'í Faith refers to the replacement of the collective political norms and values of the 19th century with a new system of worldwide governance that incorporates the Bahá'í ideals of unity and justice for all nations, races, creeds, and classes. The idea of world unification, both politically and spiritually, is at the heart of Bahá'í teachings.

Bahá'u'lláh taught that the future order will be the embodiment of God's scheme for mankind, the end goal of which is the emergence of the "Most Great Peace". Later on his successors, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, interpreted "unification of mankind" as the eventual establishment of a world commonwealth, later as a democratic elected world government based on principles of equity and justice. Before the "Most Great Peace", Bahá'u'lláh envisioned a "Lesser Peace", a condition of unity and peace between countries established by governments rather than the Bahá'í community.

The Bahá'í vision of a New World Order has been described as related to utopianism. Bahá'í author Joseph Sheppard emphasises the balance between unity and diversity in the Bahá'í system, stating that in the New world order "the cultural identity and diversity of individuals must be protected, respected and valued as integral to the whole" so as to avoid the extreme of unity leading to uniformity.”

4. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_world\\_order\\_\(Bah%C3%A1%BC%C3%AD\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_world_order_(Bah%C3%A1%BC%C3%AD))

## **BAHA'I INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

"The Bahá'í International Community, or the BIC, is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) representing the members of the Bahá'í Faith; it was first chartered in March 1948 with the United Nations, and currently has affiliates in over 180 countries and territories.

Hilda Yen was a founding and key figure in the establishment of the BIC according to Mildred Mottahedeh. Mottahedeh underscored Yen's service upon her death in 1970: "This noble lady played an important role in the development of the Baha'i Faith in the international field, and it was through her efforts that the Baha'is began their work with the United Nations", and wrote a memorial.

The BIC seeks to "promote world peace by creating the conditions in which unity emerges as the natural state of human existence" by promoting and applying principles which are derived from the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith to develop a united and sustainable civilization. The BIC also works on the advancement of human rights, the advancement of women, universal education, the encouragement of just economic development, the protection of the environment, and a sense of world citizenship.

To achieve its purpose, the BIC cooperates with governments, the United Nations and other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations; in May 1970 it gained consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and in 1976 with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Then in 1989 the BIC developed a working relationship with the World Health Organization, and it also has a working relationship with various other United Nations agencies and enterprises including the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The BIC has also undertaken joint development programs with various other United Nations agencies; in the 2000 Millennium Forum of the United Nations a Bahá'í was invited as the only non-governmental speaker during the summit.

The Bahá'í International Community has offices at the United Nations in New York and Geneva and representations to United Nations regional commissions and other offices in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Nairobi, Rome, Santiago, and Vienna. In recent years an Office of the Environment and an Office for the Advancement of Women were established as part of its United Nations Office. There also exists an Office of Public Information which is based at the Bahá'í World Centre in Haifa, Israel; that office distributes information about the Bahá'í Faith and publishes One Country, a quarterly newsletter.

On 4 March 2009, the Bahá'í International Community released an open letter to Iran's Chief Prosecutor, Ayatollah Qorban-Ali Dorri-Najafabadi, addressing his statements regarding the administrative affairs of the Bahá'ís of Iran.”

5. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%CA%BC%C3%AD\\_International\\_Community](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bah%C3%A1%CA%BC%C3%AD_International_Community)

**STATEMENT OF H.E. MR. JULIAN ROBERT HUNTE, PRESIDENT OF THE 58TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO THE MODEL YOUTH COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING**

“(CHOGM) Madam Chair, National Youth CHOGM, Mr. Secretary General, Mr. Stuart Mole, Director General of the Royal Commonwealth Society, participants in this model CHOGM, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning: The Commonwealth's longstanding investment in youth recognizes the key role young people must play in advancing international cooperation, and the importance of preparing them to play that role. Today's model CHOGM focuses on critical aspects of that preparation - consultations, negotiations, decision-making and consensus building. I wish to commend The Royal Commonwealth Society, a pivotal member of the informal Commonwealth, for its continuing initiative to ensure that youth remain an important focus of Commonwealth Day celebrations. I wish to thank Director-General Stuart Mole and the Society for inviting me to be part of this opening ceremony here in historic Marlborough House. I thank you, the participants, because I share your excitement, as you step into enormous shoes, take up the mantle of government and experience first hand the challenges of leadership in an increasingly difficult and complex world. Like the leaders you will represent, you will face problems on a global scale. You will come to realize that although problems may be beyond your borders, you must be an integral part of initiatives for their resolution. There is, after all, but one world, and it stands to reason that there is but one global agenda. All those working for the future of multilateralism, including government leaders and heads of regional and international organizations - our Secretary-General Don McKinnon included - know this only too well. The Commonwealth Day Theme, "Building a Commonwealth of Freedom" focuses on a critical but complex concept in respect of our extensive global agenda of common interests and common concerns. I believe that it addresses fundamentally the "better standards of life in larger freedoms" enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. These are also ideals that find expression in Commonwealth Declarations, including the Harare Commonwealth Declaration. I would strongly counsel you to take a broad based approach to the concept of freedom, which would allow you to focus on all critical aspects of human endeavours. Viewing freedom from this broader perspective will make it clear that it involves much more than keeping



the peace, since in and of itself this will not ensure security and freedom. We must act holistically.

We must resolve crisis before they engulf people in conflict and war. After all, conflict management can never be a substitute for conflict prevention. Freedom directs us to cooperate to free people from fear of terrorism, the perils of drug trafficking, and the illegal transfer of small arms and light weapons. Hand in hand with our efforts to maintain peace and security and to promote democracy and good governance, however, we must develop policy options that respond to the needs and aspiration of people the world over for their human rights to be respected, and for freedom from poverty, ignorance, deadly pandemics including HIV/AIDS and for economic progress. We must ensure gender equality and act to ameliorate the full range of social problems affecting countries, particularly in the developing world. This is especially critical for the Commonwealth, as the vast majority of its Member States are developing countries. What I am proposing here is not a straightforward matter - it challenges countries, rich and poor, developed and developing, to change the way they perceive their priorities, both nationally and internationally. It also requires governments, particularly those of the developed world, to make and keep commitments particularly in the area of financing for development. Importantly, it underscores that powerful and influential states have an important role to play in meeting the goals and objectives of the global agenda, but should not dominate it. **I want, now, to definitively make the point to which I have alluded throughout my conversation with you this morning. It is that the Commonwealth and the United Nations share the same global agenda, and that the goals and objectives of the Commonwealth are complementary to those of the United Nations, with which it has observer status.** Understandably, each body by nature of its membership, structure and functioning approach common problems from a somewhat different perspective, each bringing its particular strengths and capacities to bear on the tasks at hand. We in the Commonwealth value its approach, particularly its far-reaching tolerance of diversity and its capacity to build consensus around issues of importance to its member states. From this organization has come sustained commitment, for example, on the issue of apartheid, where it has worked alongside the people of South Africa and leaders including Archbishop Tutu. The organization is also to be credited with some of the most focused and innovative approaches to problems of development. Commodities, international cooperation in tax matters, small states, and strategies for setting consistent and realistic economic and social policies - the Commonwealth has provided significant support for its members in all these areas. Importantly, when the Commonwealth develops consensus on an issue, it can impact the policies of the United Nations and other regional and international organizations. Its fifty-three member states represent more than a quarter of the United Nations membership and are represented in regional and other groups around the world. In that

regard, the Commonwealth's development initiatives are particularly important at this time, when member states are increasingly committing to bringing the United Nations development agenda back to center stage.

A Commonwealth worldview - this is the approach I urge you to take to the Model CHOGM. Be creative, be innovative, present the big ideas. A better Commonwealth and a better world is in your hands. Thank you.”

6. <https://www.un.org/en/ga/president/58/pdf/statements/20040309-chogm.pdf>

## **UNITING THE WORLD IN ONE POLITICAL COMMONWEALTH**

“The Baha’i Faith brings not only a new spirituality and a new religion to humanity—it also brings a new way of governing ourselves internationally.

Abdu’l-Baha described, in detail, the formation and the functions of that global governing body heralded by Baha’u’llah:

True civilization will unfurl its banner in the midmost heart of the world whenever a certain number of its distinguished and high-minded sovereigns—the shining exemplars of devotion and determination—shall, for the good and happiness of all mankind, arise, with firm resolve and clear vision, to establish the Cause of Universal Peace. They must make the Cause of Peace the object of general consultation, and seek by every means in their power to establish a Union of the nations of the world. They must conclude a binding treaty and establish a covenant, the provisions of which shall be sound, inviolable and definite. They must proclaim it to all the world and obtain for it the sanction of all the human race. This supreme and noble undertaking—the real source of the peace and well-being of all the world—should be regarded as sacred by all that dwell on earth. All the forces of humanity must be mobilized to ensure the stability and permanence of this Most Great Covenant. In this all-embracing Pact the limits and frontiers of each and every nation should be clearly fixed, the principles underlying the relations of governments towards one another definitely laid down, and all international agreements and obligations ascertained. In like manner, the size of the armaments of every government should be strictly limited, for if the preparations for war and the military forces of any nation should be allowed to increase, they will arouse the suspicion of others. The fundamental principle underlying this solemn Pact should be so fixed that if any government later violate any one of its provisions, all the governments on earth should arise to reduce it to utter submission, nay the human race as a whole should resolve, with every power at its disposal, to destroy that government. Should this greatest of all remedies be applied to the sick body of the world, it will assuredly recover from its ills and will remain eternally safe and secure.

Observe that if such a happy situation be forthcoming, no government would need continually to pile up the weapons of war, nor feel itself obliged to produce ever new military weapons with which to conquer the human race. A small force for the purposes of internal security, the correction of criminal and disorderly elements and the prevention of local disturbances, would be required—no more. In this way the entire population would, first of all, be relieved of the crushing burden of expenditure currently imposed for military purposes, and secondly, great numbers of people would cease to devote their time to the continual devising of new weapons of destruction—those testimonials of greed and bloodthirstiness, so inconsistent with the gift of life—and would instead bend their efforts to the production of whatever will foster human existence and peace and well-being, and would become the cause of universal development and prosperity. Then every nation on earth will reign in honor, and every people will be cradled in tranquillity and content.

A few, unaware of the power latent in human endeavor, consider this matter as highly impracticable, nay even beyond the scope of man's utmost efforts. Such is not the case, however. On the contrary, thanks to the unfailing grace of God, the loving-kindness of His favored ones, the unrivaled endeavors of wise and capable souls, and the thoughts and ideas of the peerless leaders of this age, nothing whatsoever can be regarded as unattainable. Endeavor, ceaseless endeavor, is required. Nothing short of an indomitable determination can possibly achieve it. – The Secret of Divine Civilization, pp. 64-67.

Global governance, collective security and other such matters might seem at first not to be spiritual issues, and may appear to lie outside of the sphere of religion. But justice is a fundamental law of God. On a world scale, people must now act to enforce justice for all. Occasionally there could be the need to resort to force in order to prevent greater evils from occurring; hence the principle of collective security. Abdu'l-Baha wrote:

A rabid dog, if given the chance, can kill a thousand animals and men. Therefore, compassion shown to wild and ravaging beasts is cruelty to the peaceful ones—and so the harmful must be dealt with.

... Kindness cannot be shown the tyrant, the deceiver, or the thief, because, far from awakening them to the error of their ways, it maketh them to continue in their perversity as before. – Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, pp. 158-160.

**Baha'u'llah foresaw that the world will eventually unite as one political commonwealth—but that the road to that unity will not be smooth.** Subsequent history has seen the cause of international peace move forward in fits and starts,

punctuated both by important steps forward and by disastrous setbacks. The first international body resembling the visionary conception described by Abdu'l-Baha was the League of Nations, formed at the end of World War I in the hope of preventing another destructive world conflict. But Abdu'l-Baha himself stated that the League of Nations would not succeed in establishing peace because the leaders of nations had not yet developed sufficient consciousness of the need for a universal body for international arbitration. Immediately after the close of World War I, he predicted that "in the future another war, fiercer than the last, will assuredly break out; verily, of this there is no doubt whatever." – Ibid., p. 307.

After a second world cataclysm, the United Nations was established in 1946. Although it has achieved many notable things, yet it has failed to become a decisive force for peace because its national members are still gripped to a great extent by their own narrow interests. The supreme tribunal Baha'u'llah envisioned has yet to emerge. Whether it will develop from the United Nations or be established by a new Parliament of Humanity it will, according to Abdu'l-Baha, "fulfill this sacred task" of establishing universal peace "with the utmost might and power." – Ibid., p. 306.

As we move further into the twenty-first century, we can all see that humanity is becoming increasingly conscious, if only dimly so, that the Earth is the common homeland of all. More and more, thoughtful people recognize the need for a new system of international relationships that will preserve peace and ensure prosperity for all citizens of the planet. The Baha'i teachings emphasize that political arrangements in and of themselves will not ensure lasting peace. More than this is required, for humanity must also heed the unifying message of Baha'u'llah and become spiritually transformed through the power of the Word of God."

7. <https://bahaiteachings.org/uniting-world-one-political-commonwealth/>

## **TOGETHER WE UNITE: THE ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH IN ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE THROUGH PHARMACEUTICAL CARE AMIDST THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

"The world currently faces unprecedented health challenges as COVID-19 poses a huge threat to health systems, economies and societies as we know it. The events of the current COVID-19 pandemic have further emphasised existing issues within our health systems. There is no better time than now to come together in global solidarity to tackle these evolving threats of COVID-19 pandemic. The Commonwealth is an ideally placed network to tackle these global health challenges, with its wide-reaching networks of governmental, non-governmental and civil society organisations across all continents. Although the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) originally scheduled to take place in Kigali in Rwanda 22–27 June 2020 has been

postponed in view of COVID-19, Commonwealth country discussions are continuing, centred on the CHOGM key theme of ‘Delivering a Common Future: Connecting, Innovating, Transforming’, and five subthemes of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Innovation; Trade; Environment; Governance and the Rule of Law; and Youth. The planned CHOGM and Commonwealth itself provides all members a timely platform to consider innovative ways to connect, innovate and transform healthcare to meet the needs of their populations. This commentary considers these five CHOGM subthemes and how member nations can be supported to achieve universal health coverage through optimising medicines use and outcomes, in the midst of a global pandemic in line with the global health agenda.”

8. <https://joppp.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40545-020-00214-6>

### **THE ROLE OF THE COMMONWEALTH IN LEADING A GLOBAL RESET**

“The 2022 Commonwealth Business Forum (CBF 2022), which is held alongside the Women’s Forum, the Youth Forum and the People’s Forum, commenced on Tuesday (21 June), with the participation of over 1,500 delegates, including political leaders, business leaders, young entrepreneurs and representatives from global and regional development institutions and trade and investment organisations.

The opening ceremony of the Forum was held at the Kigali Conference and Exhibition Village (KCEV), in Rwanda’s capital city. HE Paul Kagame, the President of Rwanda, Right Hon. Philip Edward Davis, the Prime Minister of the Bahamas, Hon. Patricia Scotland, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Makhtor Diop, Managing Director and Executive Vice President of the World Bank, Dr Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank and Lord Marland, Chair of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council (CWEIC) were among those who attended the event.

“When I took office as Secretary-General in 2016, I outlined my vision to put the ‘wealth’ back into the Commonwealth; and to put the ‘common’ back into wealth so that we all share in our future prosperity,” Hon. Patricia Scotland said in her address. “At the heart of our mission is trade – the lifeblood of economic activity and the arteries of the economic relationships between our Commonwealth member countries. The Commonwealth Advantage. I hope CBF 2022 provides us with the opportunity to come even closer together and redouble our commitment to enhance the framework for intra-Commonwealth trade – and set the target to reach US\$ 2 trillion in Commonwealth Trade by 2030 beyond doubt.”

On his part, President Kagame underscored the need to work together and uplift each other in this “family of nations”. “There is already the understanding that we must work for a common future. We have to work towards that, and make sure we get it. It’s a work

in progress, and we're moving towards it – and I am optimistic,” he said. “We must ensure nobody is left behind – such as small and developing nations – and uplift everyone to move towards and fulfil that obligation to the ‘common-ness’ we aspire to in this family of nations.”

In his remarks, Lord Marland, spoke of the role of the Commonwealth in global business, trade and investment. “How many times people have said to me, what is the point of the commonwealth? And if they wanted a good example of what the point of the commonwealth, they should look no further than here. 1700 delegates from 50 countries around the commonwealth all with a single endeavor. We have leaders of countries, leaders of business, millionaires, entrepreneurs, philanthropists and royalty. Where else do you get that?” he said.

“This is the commonwealth family; this is what is gathered for the next few days to celebrate and to create a future and a big future for the commonwealth... This is how it is done; interaction, network, discussing and trading together,” the Chair of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council added. “For three days we will talk enterprise investments, because through these we have prosperity, growth and lifting people out of poverty, and these are going to be absolutely critical in this post[-pandemic] era.”

During this year’s Forum, focused on ‘A Global Reset’, delegates will deliberate on several key global issues, as well as the role of the Commonwealth in leading the global recovery from the pandemic. Accordingly, participants attended session plenaries, breakouts and think tanks to discuss ideas and explore challenges to develop pathways towards practical outcomes. The day also featured the CBF 2022 Exhibition, which provided companies and organisations from across the Commonwealth to showcase their products and services.”

9. <https://www.commonwealthunion.com/the-role-of-the-commonwealth-in-leading-a-global-reset/>

### **BAHA’I INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY (BIC) - UNITED NATIONS**

“BIC NEW YORK — The Bahá’í International Community (BIC) launched a statement on the eve of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, inviting UN officials, ambassadors of member states, non-governmental organizations and other social actors to explore themes concerning humanity’s movement toward universal peace.

The statement, “A Governance Befitting: Humanity and the Path Toward a Just Global Order,” has, in the brief time since its publication in September, already begun to

stimulate profound reflection and thoughtful discussion about the role of international structures.

Commenting on the statement, H.E. Alvaro Albacete, Ambassador of Spain and Deputy Secretary General of KAICIID, says, “The idea of global coalitions is very much embedded in the [statement] ... I want to pay tribute to actors very important to forge global coalitions, not only UN member states. And, I want to focus on the importance of religious actors in forging those global coalitions. The role is very important in areas such as development, education, health, and so on.

“Today, in the UN, we count on a very innovative body which is the Multi-Faith Advisory Council. It’s the first step as religious voices are heard at the United Nations. And it happens that that body is chaired by the Bahá’í community and its representative, Bani Dugal. I want to congratulate the Bahá’í Community for the good work that it is doing through that important body at the United Nations.”

Azza Karam, Secretary General of Religions for Peace, says of the statement: “It speaks powerfully to the moment of now and to the needs of every single human being on this earth and every single institution.” She continues: “I am particularly taken by how clear and articulate and eloquent the statement is on the need for us to ... come together. The Bahá’í Faith has always inspired me to understand something that is fundamental to all faith traditions around the world: the acknowledgement ... of the fact that we are all one. ... Our survival on this planet, the planet’s survival, is fundamentally dependent on whether or not we will get this simple fact deep into our systems. We thrive when we are one. We self-destruct when we believe that our boundaries matter.”

Fergus Watt, of the coordination group for the UN 2020 campaign, says the statement “focuses on some of the broader international trends that are animating human progress toward a world community.”

Mr. Watt highlights how the concept of unity presented in the statement is one “that embraces diversity of national, legal, cultural, and political traditions, but situated within an ethical basis that reminds us of the shared values that are intrinsic to humans everywhere: an acknowledgment of interdependence, a shared ethic of justice, and a recognition that humanity is one.

“The statement also recognizes that the transformation that is ongoing is a gradual process, it is a step-by-step process, but that every step makes the next possible.”

Sovaida Ma’ani Ewing of the Center for Peace and Global Governance says, “We are becoming aware that being one organism makes us open to global challenges. But we realize that we lack precisely the global decision-making structures needed to tackle these problems. This is why new structures such as a directly-elected international body are needed.”

Richard Ponzio, Director of the Stimson Center’s Just Security 2020 Program, highlights the notion of a global civic ethic mentioned in the statement as essential to building toward greater degrees of international cooperation, stating: “Everybody has their own definition of a global civic ethic. It is great to see it referred to in ‘A Governance Befitting,’ and how no issue with that scope and significance has challenged us to come together and build not only a global structure, institutions, norms, and tools to respond to [global] challenges, but to also have ethical and moral principles that underpin these institutions. That is at the heart of a global civic ethic.”

The BIC is looking ahead, seeing the coming quarter century—stretching from the United Nations’ 75th anniversary to its centenary—as a critical period in determining the fortunes of humanity. The launch event, which welcomed some 200 attendees across the world, was an invitation to further exploration and one of many contributions the BIC is making to discussions about the need for systems of global cooperation to be strengthened.

Bani Dugal, Principal Representative of the Bahá’í International Community, states: “We hope this is the beginning of a series of conversations that will be part of a movement of change to bring us to the centenary of the UN as a much more evolved world order characterized by equality, unity, lasting peace, and understanding among the governments and peoples of the world. The next 25 years are of critical importance for the life of humanity.””

10. <https://news.bahai.org/story/1461/>

#### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION - BAHÁ’Í**

11. <https://www.bic.org/statements/sustainable-development-spiritual-dimension>

#### **A GOVERNANCE BEFITTING - DOCUMENT**

“Humanity and the path toward a just global order”

12. [https://www.bic.org/sites/default/files/pdf/un75\\_20201020.pdf](https://www.bic.org/sites/default/files/pdf/un75_20201020.pdf)

#### **COMMONWEALTH - UNITED NATIONS - PLEDGE TO WORK AS PARTNERS**



“Commonwealth Secretary-General Patricia Scotland has met the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to discuss ways the two organisations can work even closer together.

The meeting took place at a critical stage in international relations with many countries facing unprecedented challenges and existential threats.

In an engaging and outcomes-focused discussion on the margins of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly in New York, the two Secretaries-General underscored shared values and goals in meeting global challenges.

As Commonwealth countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Caribbean respond to crises, the two leaders agreed on the importance of working together to tackle present and future challenges in areas including disaster response, tackling climate change, conflict prevention and the empowerment of women.”

13. <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/commonwealth-and-united-nations-pledge-work-partners>

## **LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND - UNITED NATIONS**

“Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It represents the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and of humanity as a whole.

LNOB not only entails reaching the poorest of the poor, but requires combating discrimination and rising inequalities within and amongst countries, and their root causes. A major cause of people being left behind is persistent forms of discrimination, including gender discrimination, which leaves individuals, families and whole communities marginalized, and excluded. It is grounded in the UN’s normative standards that are foundational principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law and national legal systems across the world.

LNOB compels us to focus on discrimination and inequalities (often multiple and intersecting) that undermine the agency of people as holders of rights. Many of the barriers people face in accessing services, resources and equal opportunities are not simply accidents of fate or a lack of availability of resources, but rather the result of discriminatory laws, policies and social practices that leave particular groups of people further and further behind.

The UN approach to leaving no one behind is set out in the Shared Framework on Leaving No One Behind: Equality and Non-Discrimination at the Heart of Sustainable Development, endorsed by the Chief Executives Board in November 2016. This includes a shared framework for action to ensure the UN System puts the imperative to combat inequalities and discrimination at the forefront of United Nations efforts to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Operationalizing the commitment to LNOB at the country level requires a comprehensive approach with a series of steps, including identifying who is being left behind and why; identifying effective measures to address root causes; monitoring and measuring progress; and ensuring accountability for LNOB. Ensuring free, active and meaningful participation of all stakeholders, particularly those left behind is a key component of all steps and phases of policy, planning and programming for LNOB. The UNSDG Operational Guide for UNCTs on Leaving No One Behind provides a framework for:

Operationalizing the LNOB pledge to leave no one behind using a step-by-step approach.

Adapting and employing relevant tools from across the UN System to assess who is left behind and why; sequencing & prioritizing solutions; tracking and monitoring progress; and ensuring follow-up and review.

Integrating this methodology into UN programming and policy support for Member States.

Identifying inequalities and discrimination requires the generation of evidence and data collection and disaggregation that go beyond gender, geography and age, to include all grounds of discrimination prohibited under international law, ensuring that all forms of discrimination and other root causes of inequalities are identified and addressed. The human rights-based approach to data helps in ensuring the use of data and statistics is consistent with international human rights norms and principles, including for participation, self-identification, transparency, privacy and accountability.

LNOB is one of the six Guiding Principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. The Companion Piece on the Guiding Principles provides guidance to United Nations country teams on application of the LNOB in the context of the Cooperation Framework.”

14. <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

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