

Evolution of the Bahá'í Faith

Epochs and Plans

Bahá'í Administration 3

Bahá'í Epochs and Plans

The history and evolution of the Baha'i Faith is described as a series of centuries, epochs and plans, starting in 1844

While it will take centuries to see the full fruition of Bahá'í teachings in the Golden Age and the Most Great Peace, governments can already take steps towards the Lesser Peace, eliminating war through collective security

“We are in the cycle which began with Adam, and its universal Manifestation is Bahá'u'lláh” FWU, p 54

THE MAJESTIC PROCESS: CYCLES, ERAS, AGES, EPOCHS and STAGES

The Bahá'í cycle – “...a cycle that must extend over a period of at least five hundred thousand years.” WOB, p 102

The Bahá'í Era- Beginning May 23, 1844 (GPB, p. xi) with the Dispensation of the Báb followed by the Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh in 1853 which will last at least 1000 years (KA, p. 32, p.196) ¹

The Heroic Age ² (The Primitive, Apostolic Age)			The Formative Age (The Transitional, The Iron Age)											The Golden Age				
First Epoch	Second Epoch	Third Epoch	First Epoch	Second Epoch	Third Epoch	Fourth Epoch	Fifth ³ Epoch					The Kingdom Of God On Earth						
The Evolution of `Abdu'l-Bahá's Divine Plan																		
			First Epoch			Second Epoch												
			1st Stage	2nd Stage	3rd Stage	1st Stage	2nd Stage	3rd Stage	4th Stage	5th Stage	6th Stage	7th Stage	8th Stage ⁵	9th Stage ⁵	10th Stage ⁵	11th Stage ⁵		
			7 year Plan	7 year Plan	10 year Plan	9 year Plan	5 year Plan	7 year Plan	6 year Plan	3 year Plan	4 year Plan	1 year Plan	5 ⁴ year Plan	5 ⁴ year Plan	5 ⁴ year Plan	5 ⁴ year Plan		
1844	1853	1892 ⁴	1921	1937 1944	1946 1953	1953 1963	1964 1973	1974 1979	1979 1986	1986 1992	1993 1996	1996 2000	2001	2001 2006	2006 2011	2011 2016	2016 2021	2044 ¹
Ministry of The Báb	Ministry of Bahá'u'lláh	Ministry of `Abdu'l-Bahá		Ministry of Shoghi Effendí		HoC ⁷	Universal House of Justice											

1. The Dispensation of the Báb: 1844 – 1853; The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh 1853 – to at least 1000 years
2. The Heroic Age terminates with the passing of `Abdu'l-Bahá (GPB, p. xiv). Also more particularly with the passing of the Greatest Holy Leaf in 1932 (WOB, p. 98)
3. Fifth Epoch of the Formative Age entered. (UHJ letter 16th January 2001)
4. The 5 Year Plan begins a series of four 5 Year Plans from 2001 – 2021, culminating in the centenary of the inception of the Formative Age. (UHJ letter Ridván 2001)
5. Stage number not yet known but presumed to continue in sequence of numbers from the 8th stage in 2001
6. See This Decisive Hour, p. 95 re: foundation of future civilizations to have been established during the second Bahá'í Century
7. Ministry of the Hands of the Cause. 1957 - 1963

Epochs
and
Plans

First
Century
of the
Formative
Age

Direction of the Bahá'í Faith

- Heroic Age 1844-1921 (Missions of the Bab, Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha)
- The Guardianship, Shoghi Effendi, 1921-1957
- Custodianship of the Hands of the Cause 1957-1963
- Election of the Universal House of Justice 1963

Bahá'í Ages and Centuries

- Formative age starting 1921
- First century of the Formative Age 1921-2021
- First century of the Baha'i Era 1844-1944
- Second century of the Formative Age 2021-2121
- Second century of the Baha'i Era 1944-2044
- towards the Golden Age in future centuries

Bahá'í Teaching Plans

To inspire and direct the teaching efforts of the Baha'i communities around the world, the institutions of the Baha'i Faith have adopted teaching plans with geographic and numerical goals to be achieved within a defined period of time

Teaching plans start at Ridvan, 21 April

Those who arise to go and live in a goal country, area or community are called pioneers

Bahá'í Teaching Plans – First Epoch

First Seven Year Plan (US and Canada) 1937-1944

- Open all Latin America

Indian Six Year Plan 1938-1944

British Six Year Plan 1944-1950

- Open Scotland, Wales, Ireland

Second Seven Year Plan (US and Canada) 1946-1953

Ten Year Crusade 1953-1963

- The development of institutions at the Bahá'í World Centre
- Consolidation of the twelve countries where the Faith was well established
- Consolidation of all other territories already open
- Opening the remaining "chief virgin territories" around the globe
(becoming *Knights of Bahá'u'lláh*)

بیت‌الامم

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1844-1952

INFORMATION STATISTICAL AND COMPARATIVE

Including Supplement

TEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í TEACHING

AND CONSOLIDATION PLAN

1953-1963

Compiled by

SHOGHI EFFENDI

Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith

Teaching
Plans

1953
1963

بیت‌الامم

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1844-1963

INFORMATION

STATISTICAL & COMPARATIVE

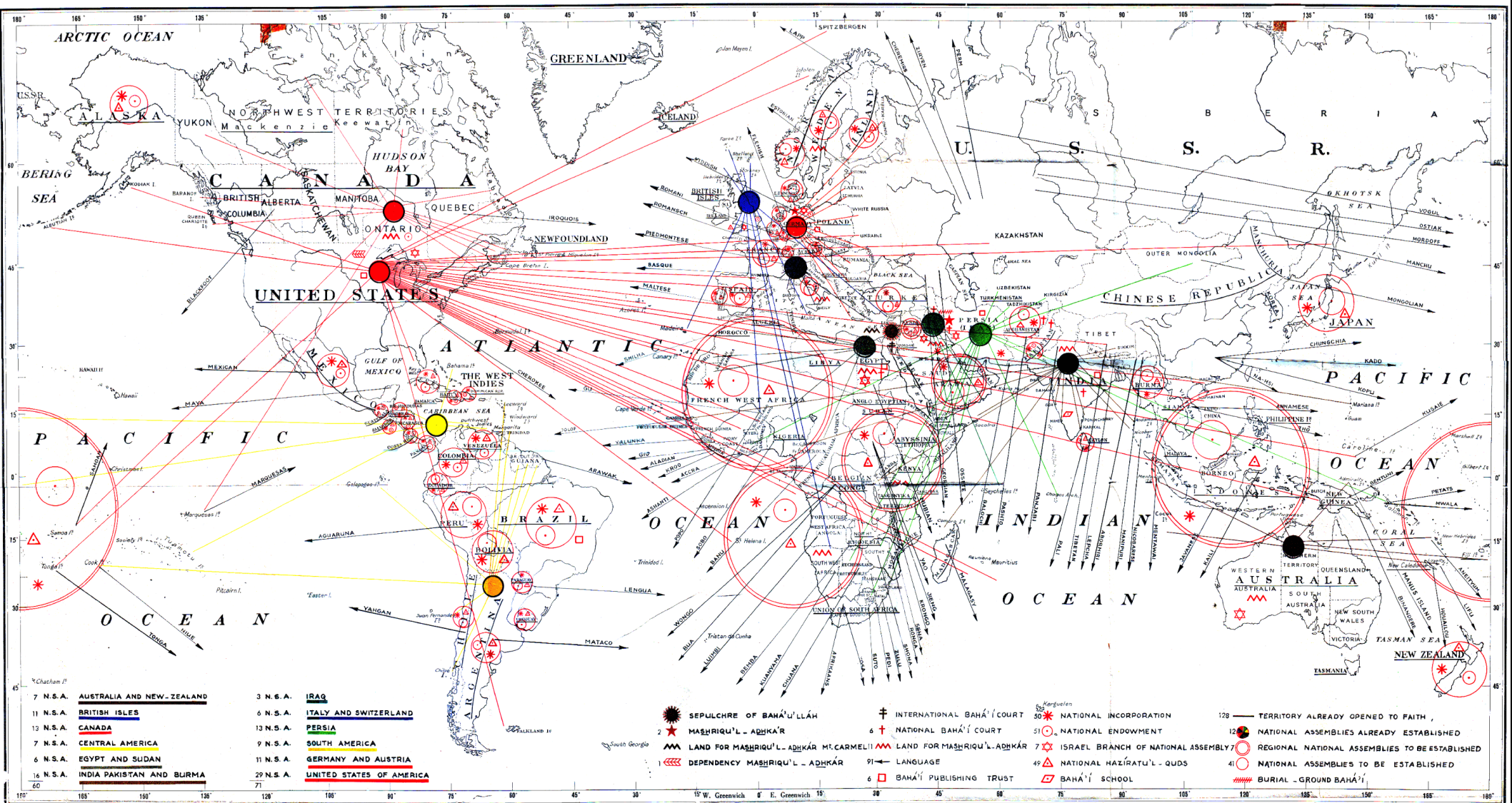
INCLUDING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE

TEN YEAR INTERNATIONAL BAHÁ'Í
TEACHING & CONSOLIDATION PLAN

1953-1963

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COMPILED BY THE HANDS OF THE CAUSE
RESIDING IN THE HOLY LAND



Shoghi Effendi's map of the goals of the Ten-year Crusade 1953

Bahá'í Teaching Plans – Second Epoch

Nine Year Plan 1964-1973

Five Year Plan 1974-1979

Seven Year Plan 1979-1986

Six Year Plan 1986-1992

Holy Year 1992

Three Year Plan 1993-1996

Four Year Plan 1996-2000

Twelve Month Plan 2000-2001

1964-1973

ANALYSIS OF THE
NINE YEAR
INTERNATIONAL TEACHING PLAN

of the
BAHÁ'Í FAITH

APRIL 1964

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

Teaching Plans

1964
1973

1974
1979

1974-1979

ANALYSIS OF THE
FIVE YEAR
INTERNATIONAL TEACHING
PLAN

of the
BAHÁ'Í FAITH

1974

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

*The
Six Year Plan
1986-1992*

SUMMARY OF
ACHIEVEMENTS



Teaching
Plans

1986
1992

1993
1996

*The
Three Year Plan
1993-1996*

SUMMARY OF
ACHIEVEMENTS



Bahá'í Teaching Plans – Second Epoch

Five Year Plan 2001-2006

Five Year Plan 2006-2011

Five Year Plan 2011-2016

Five Year Plan 2016-2021

One Year Plan 2021-2022

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN, 2001–2006
Summary of Achievements and Learning




 BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE

The Five Year Plan
2006–2011

*Summary of Achievements
and Learning*

 BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE



 BAHÁ'Í WORLD CENTRE



The Five Year Plan
2011–2016

*Summary of Achievements
and Learning*

Teaching Plans 2001–2016

Bahá'í Teaching Plans – Third Epoch

Global plans of the second century

Teaching plans start at Ridvan, 21 April

First series for 25 years to 2046

- One Year Plan 2021-2022
- Nine Year Plan 2022-2031

30 December 2021

To the Conference of the
Continental Boards of Counsellors

Dearly loved Friends,

1 At Riqdán this year we described how, over the course of a quarter century, the Bahá'í world underwent a transformation that endowed it with an undreamed-of capacity to learn, to grow, and to serve humanity. But, however bright were the achievements of this period, they must be eclipsed by what is to come. By the conclusion of the new series of Plans recently begun, the Bahá'í community will need to have acquired capacities that can scarcely be glimpsed at present. In your deliberations over the coming days, you will be occupied with exploring what is required to bring into being such a fortified community.

2 Bahá'u'lláh states that “the purpose for which mortal men have, from utter nothingness, stepped into the realm of being, is that they may work for the betterment of the world and live together in concord and harmony.” He has revealed teachings that make this possible. Building a society that consciously pursues this collective purpose is the work of not only this generation, but of many generations to come, and Bahá'u'lláh's followers welcome all who labour alongside them in this undertaking. It means learning how to raise up vibrant, outward-looking communities; it means those communities learning how to bring about spiritual and material progress; it means learning how to contribute to the discourses that influence the direction of that progress. These areas of endeavour are, naturally, familiar ones. Seen from one perspective, they are quite distinct, each having its own characteristics and imperatives. Yet they all represent ways of awakening the energies latent in the human soul and channelling them towards the betterment of society. Together, they are means of releasing what the Guardian described as “the society-building power” of the Faith. This inherent power possessed by the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is visible even in the fledgling efforts of a Bahá'í community learning to serve humanity and promote the Word of God. And though the world society foreshadowed in His Revelation is of course far distant, communities that earnestly learning to apply His teachings to their social reality abound. How immensely blessed are those souls who, alive to the greatness of this Day and the significance of their actions, strive for the emergence of a society shaped by the divine teachings.

3 The series of global Plans that began at Riqdán will last a full twenty-five years. It will carry the ark of the Cause into the third century of the Bahá'í Era and conclude at Riqdán 2046. During this period, the Bahá'í world will be focused on a single aim: the release of the society-building power of the Faith in ever-greater measures. The pursuit of this overall aim will require a further rise in the capacity of the individual believer, the local community, and the institutions of the Faith. These three constant protagonists of the Plan each have a part to play, and each one has capacities and qualities that must be developed. However, each is incapable of manifesting its full potential on its own. It is by strengthening their dynamic relationships with one another that their powers are combined and multiplied. ‘Abdu’l-Bahá explains that the

Nine Year Plan 2022 2031

37 Over the last series of Plans, the community's capacity to maintain focus on the Faith's most pressing needs emerged as one of its most important strengths. However, this sense of focus has to accommodate many lines of action, all of which must advance without being in competition. This calls for an expanded vision, a nuanced understanding of coexisting imperatives, added flexibility, and heightened institutional collaboration. We are conscious that the Faith's resources are finite, and individuals experience many demands on their time. But as the Plan unfolds in a given place and the ranks of those who are willing to serve swell, the varied aspects of a rich and vibrant Bahá'í community life will advance in step, and the society-building power of the Faith shine forth.

A historic mission

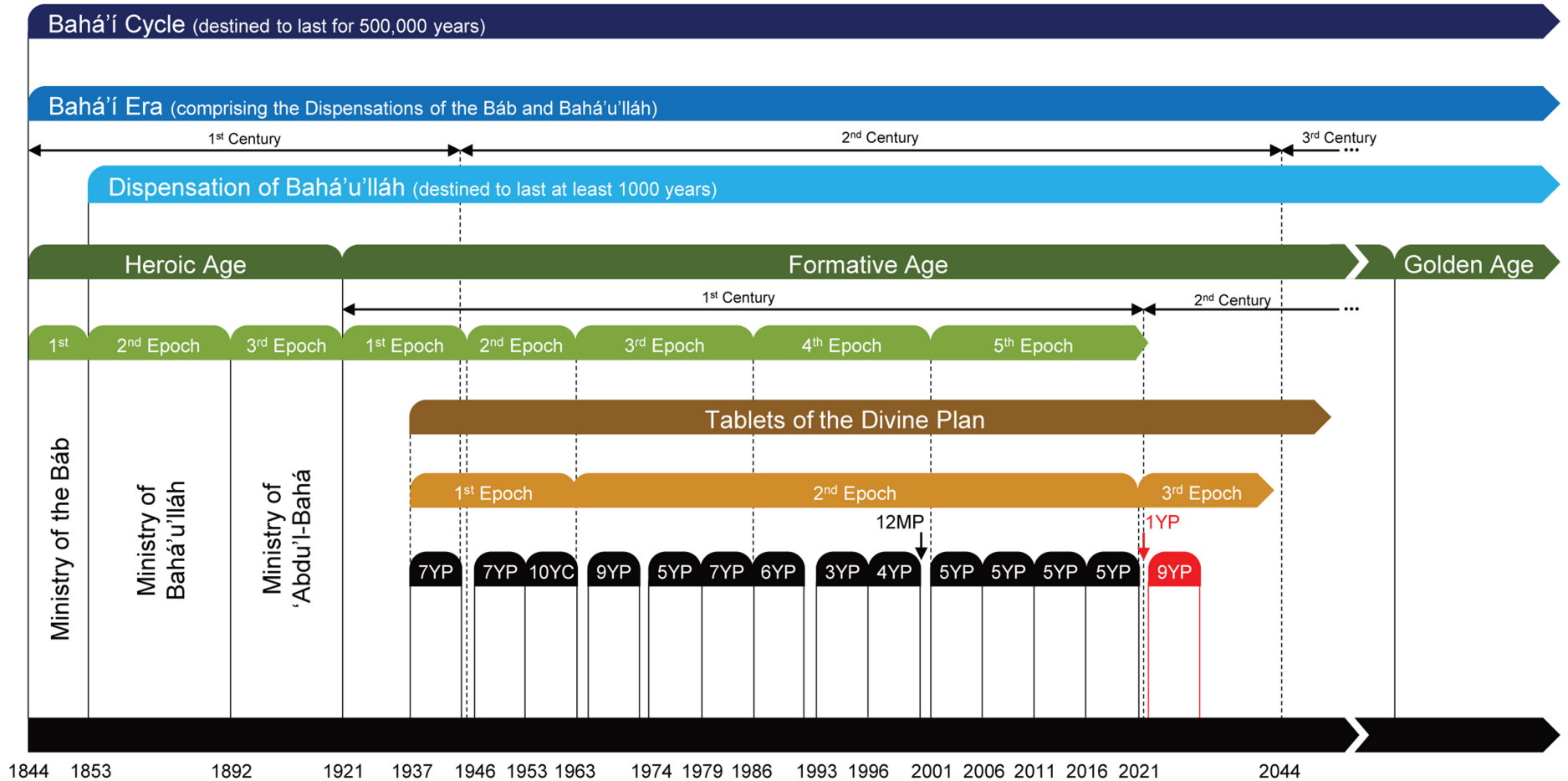
38 We hope to have impressed upon you, in these pages, that the present-day capacity of the Bahá'í community, combined with the discipline it has achieved through adherence to a coherent framework for action, has prepared it for an extensive, rigorous test of all its resources, spiritual as well as material. The Plan that will shortly commence—the first major undertaking in a sacred twenty-five-year venture, generational in its scope and significance—will make demands of the individual believer, the community, and the institutions reminiscent of the demands that the Guardian made of the Bahá'í world at the outset of the Ten Year Crusade. If, by the grace of Almighty God, the friends should succeed in reaching the heights of heroism to which they are now summoned, history will assuredly pay tribute to their actions in terms no less glowing than those with which it honours the glorious deeds that decorate the annals of the first century of the Formative Age.

39 We put great reliance on you and on National Spiritual Assemblies to ensure that, in all the efforts made to acquaint the friends with the nature of this collective enterprise, the perspective of history is kept fully in view. The civilization of today, for all its material prowess, has been found wanting, and the verdict has been issued by the Supreme Pen: “Know ye not that We have rolled up that which the people possessed, and have unfolded a new order in its place?” The establishment of Divine Civilization is, in the words of the Guardian, “the primary mission of the Bahá'í Faith”. It is to be built upon the most foundational qualities, ones for which the world stands in great need: unity, trustworthiness, mutual support, collaboration, fellow feeling, selflessness, commitment to truth, a sense of responsibility, a thirst to learn, the love of an all-embracing heart.

40 How we long to see humanity illumined with the love of its Lord; how we long to hear His praise on every tongue. Knowing the ardency of our wish, you know then the emotion with which, when we lay our heads upon the Most Holy Threshold, we implore Bahá'u'lláh to make you, and all who cherish His precious Faith, ever more perfect channels of His ineffable grace.

The Universal House of Justice

Unfoldment of the Bahá'í Faith



Previous Series of Global Plans New Series of Global Plans

Global Plans 2021-2046

The series of global Plans that began at Ridván will last a full twenty-five years. It will carry the ark of the Cause into the third century of the Bahá'í Era and conclude at Ridván 2046. During this period, the Bahá'í world will be focused on a single aim: the release of the society-building power of the Faith in ever-greater measures.

(Universal House of Justice, To the Conference of the Continental Board of Counsellors, 30 December 2021, §3)