

VI. Assembly Meetings

Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Shoghi Effendi

Original English



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I always eagerly await detailed and frequent reports from the National Assembly and desire strongly its members to meet as often as possible and actively, efficiently and constantly direct, co-ordinate and reinforce the activities of the individuals and Local Assemblies throughout India and Burma. I thirst for more specific information and urge its secretary to ensure that every communication from the Holy Land or from any other Bahá'í centre is promptly and widely distributed. I assure you of my loving prayers.

From a letter 5 March 1925 written by Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma

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Another factor which, in the Guardian's opinion, is essential to the development of your National Spiritual Assembly is the holding of frequent meetings. Although the members are stationed at great distances from one another yet they can communicate through correspondence. It is not necessary that all the members should be present in all the sessions. Those who, for some reason or another, are unable to attend in person the meetings of the National Spiritual Assembly can express their views in a written form and send them to the Assembly. The main point is that your national activities should not be let to suffer in any way, and its work be retarded and postponed because of such necessarily unimportant and secondary considerations.

From a letter 2 January 1934 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of India and Burma



ORIGINAL



AUDIO

The Guardian welcomes the step taken by your Assembly to increasingly devote its meetings to the consideration of major policies and plans, and to dwell less on matters of detail and of mere secondary administrative character. He would, however, urge that all decisions, unless of a trivial and insignificant nature dealing purely with routine work, should be reached after careful and conscientious deliberation by all the nine members. Any tendencies towards decentralization, or the delegation of authority to any person or body to make decisions on matters which directly and solely concern the National Spiritual Assembly itself, would be harmful and should be checked at the very outset.

It is for this very reason, namely to enable the National Spiritual Assembly to properly and fully discharge its functions of consultation and deliberation on issues that concern the national community under its jurisdiction, that its membership has been limited to nine, so that it may not be too unwieldy for making decisions that would often require quick action and mature deliberation by all the members. In order to safeguard the distinctive character of such a central and authoritative institution more frequent gatherings would seem imperative, particularly as the problems which it will be called upon to deal with are destined to increase in number and importance with the steady expansion of the Faith in North America.

From a letter 28 January 1939 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of the United States and Canada

Likewise, he feels that the National Spiritual Assembly should meet more often, even if all members cannot always be present. Decisions by correspondence lack the vitality of those that arise out of active consultation, and now the Faith is progressing so well there, and has a sound administrative foundation, more vigorous and systematic action is required.

From a letter 16 July 1946 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to the National Spiritual Assembly of Australia and New Zealand

