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## **Message from The Universal House of Justice to the World's Religious Leaders**

### **- A Summary -**

#### **A world with prejudices fading**

Humanity has begun to regard itself as one. Prejudices that once seemed to define the human condition are fading. Gender equality, for instance, has become an internationally accepted concept. Likewise, the “fetish of absolute national sovereignty” is giving way. The delusion of racial superiority, moreover, has become so stigmatized that no society can afford to be associated with it. While conflicts continue to cast their shadow on the world and whereas not all of humanity participates equally in reshaping and redefining the international order, this growing awareness of the world as one homeland has, in the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, reached a point “from which there is no credible possibility of return.”

#### **Religion - obstacle to unity?**

It is tragic, therefore, that organized religion, rather than contributing to this unifying trend, stands largely “paralyzed at the threshold of the future.” In particular by lending “credibility to fanaticism”, religion all too often acts as “one of the most formidable obstacles” to the very cause of peace and harmony that form the basis of its existence. Established religions appear caught in doctrines of “privileged access to truth” that have lead to the world's most intractable conflicts. As a result, disastrous eruptions of fanaticism continue to occur and religions continue to forfeit a key leadership role in world affairs.

### **The unique power of religion**

Large segments of the world population continue to look for religious guidance. Religion remains an essential and imperishable element of human consciousness, a power that reaches to humanity's very "roots of motivation". It constitutes the essential civilizing force in history, and as such the oneness of humankind cannot be effectively advanced without an infusion of spirituality.

### **Truth available to everyone**

For religion, however, to play its crucial role and avert a worldwide religious confrontation, the risks of which grow daily, its leadership must unambiguously renounce assertions of exclusive access to truth, which are the single most important source of disunity. The validity of all the world's principal religions must be wholeheartedly accepted. The understanding, already intuitive to many people, must be embraced that truth and spirituality are equally accessible to all of mankind, and that "God is one and that, beyond all diversity of cultural statement and human interpretation, religion is likewise one."

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