

# E PLURIBUS UNUM: A MORE PERFECT UNION

The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement.  
Its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching.  
It will lead all nations spiritually.

~Abdu'l-Bahá

1. Harken ye, O Rulers of America and the Presidents of the Republics therein, unto that which the Dove is warbling on the Branch of Eternity: "There is none other God but Me, the Ever-Abiding, the Forgiving, the All-Bountiful." Adorn ye the temple of dominion with the ornament of justice and of the fear of God, and its head with the crown of the remembrance of your Lord, the Creator of the heavens. Thus counseleth you He Who is the Dayspring of Names, as bidden by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise. The Promised One hath appeared in this glorified Station, whereat all beings, both seen and unseen, have rejoiced. Take ye advantage of the Day of God. Verily, to meet Him is better for you than all that whereon the sun shineth, could ye but know it. O concourse of rulers! Give ear unto that which hath been raised from the Dayspring of Grandeur: "Verily, there is none other God but Me, the Lord of Utterance, the All-Knowing." Bind ye the broken with the hands of justice, and crush the oppressor who flourisheth with the rod of the commandments of your Lord, the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

Bahá'u'lláh, *The Kitáb-i-Aqdas*

2. From the beginning of time until the present day, the light of Divine Revelation hath risen in the East and shed its radiance upon the West. The illumination thus shed hath, however, acquired in the West an extraordinary brilliancy. Consider the Faith proclaimed by Jesus. Though it first appeared in the East, yet not until its light had been shed upon the West did the full measure of its potentialities become manifest. ...

The day is approaching, when ye shall witness how, through the splendor of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh, the West will have replaced the East, radiating the light of Divine Guidance. ...

3. In the books of the Prophets, certain glad-tidings are recorded which are absolutely true and free from doubt. The East hath ever been the dawning-place of the Sun of Truth. In the

East all the Prophets of God have appeared ...The West hath acquired illumination from the East but in some respects the reflection of the light hath been greater in the Occident. This is specially true of Christianity. Jesus Christ appeared in Palestine and His teachings were founded in that country. Although the doors of the Kingdom were first opened in that land and the bestowals of God were spread broadcast from its center, the people of the West have embraced and promulgated Christianity more fully than the people of the East.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*

4. The continent of America is in the eyes of the one true God the land wherein the splendors of His light shall be revealed, where the mysteries of His Faith shall be unveiled, where the righteous will abide and the free assemble. ...The American people are indeed worthy of being the first to build the tabernacle of the great peace and proclaim the oneness of mankind... May America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment and all the world receive this heavenly blessing. For America has developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations...

5. ...May the inhabitants of this country become like angels of heaven with faces turned continually toward God. May all of them become servants of the omnipotent One. May they rise from their present material attainments to such a height that heavenly illumination may stream from this center to all the peoples of the world... ...The American continent gives signs and evidences of very great advancement. Its future is even more promising, for its influence and illumination are far-reaching. It will lead all nations spiritually.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*

6. O ye friends of God! Exert ye with heart and soul, so that association, love, unity and agreement be obtained between the hearts, all

the aims may be merged into one aim, all the songs become one song and the power of the Holy Spirit may become so overwhelmingly victorious as to overcome all the forces of the world of nature. Exert yourselves; your mission is unspeakably glorious. Should success crown your enterprise, America will assuredly evolve into a center from which waves of spiritual power will emanate, and the throne of the Kingdom of God will, in the plenitude of its majesty and glory, be firmly established.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan / 11.*

7. Therefore, rest ye assured in the confirmations of the Merciful and the assistance of the Most High; become ye sanctified above and purified from this world and the inhabitants thereof; suffer your intentions to work for the good of all; cut your attachment to the earth and like unto the essence of the spirit become ye light and delicate. Then with a firm resolution, a pure heart, a rejoiced spirit, and an eloquent tongue, engage your time in the promulgation of the divine principles so that the oneness of the world of humanity may pitch her canopy in the apex of America and all the nations of the world may follow the divine policy. This is certain, that the divine policy is justice and kindness toward all mankind.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, Tablets of the Divine Plan / 10.*

8. I pray in your behalf that your hearts may be enlightened with the light of the love of God; that your minds may develop daily; that your spirits may become aglow with the fire and illumination of His glad tidings, until these divine foundations may become established throughout the human world. The first of these institutions and foundations is the oneness of humanity and love among mankind. The second is the Most Great Peace. Praise be to God! This American democracy manifests capacity, showing forth readiness to become the standard-bearer of the Most Great Peace. May its hosts be the hosts of the oneness of humanity. May they serve the threshold of God and spread the message of the good pleasure of God.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace: 27.*

9. We shall, therefore, offer supplication in the divine threshold that a great love may take possession of the hearts of men and unite the

nations of the world. We will pray that the ensign of international peace may be uplifted and that the oneness of the world of humanity may be realized and accomplished. All this is made possible and practicable through your efforts. May this American democracy be the first nation to establish the foundation of international agreement. May it be the first nation to proclaim the universality of mankind. May it be the first to upraise the standard of the Most Great Peace, and through this nation of democracy may these philanthropic intentions and institutions be spread broadcast throughout the world. Truly, this is a great and revered nation. Here liberty has reached its highest degree. The intentions of its people are most praiseworthy. They are, indeed, worthy of being the first to build the Tabernacle of the Most Great Peace and proclaim the oneness of mankind. I will supplicate God for assistance and confirmation in your behalf.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace: 14*

10. This revered American nation presents evidences of greatness and worth. It is my hope that this just government will stand for peace so that warfare may be abolished throughout the world and the standards of national unity and reconciliation be upraised. This is the greatest attainment of the world of humanity. This American nation is equipped and empowered to accomplish that which will adorn the pages of history, to become the envy of the world and be blest in the East and the West for the triumph of its democracy. I pray that this may come to pass, and I ask the blessing of God in behalf of you all.

*'Abdu'l-Bahá, The Promulgation of Universal Peace: 42.*

11. I am greatly pleased with the city of New York. Its harbor entrance, its piers, buildings and broad avenues are magnificent and beautiful. Truly, it is a wonderful city. As New York has made such progress in material civilization, I hope that it may also advance spiritually in the Kingdom and Covenant of God so that the friends here may become the cause of the illumination of America, that this city may become the city of love and that the fragrances of God may be spread from this place to all parts of the world. I have come for this. I pray that you may be manifestations of the love of Bahá'u'lláh, that each one of you may become

yorlike a clear lamp of crystal from which the rays of the bounties of the Blessed Perfection may shine forth to all nations and peoples. This is my highest aspiration.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*: 1.

12. Therefore, the believers of God throughout all the republics of America, through the divine power, must become the cause of the promotion of heavenly teachings and the establishment of the oneness of humanity. Every one of the important souls must arise, blowing over all parts of America the breath of life, conferring upon the people a new spirit, baptizing them with the fire of the love of God, the water of life, and the breaths of the Holy Spirit so that the second birth may become realized. For it is written in the Gospel: “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Tablets of the Divine Plan* / 14.

13. A moment of historic portent has arrived for your nation as the conscience of its citizenry has stirred, creating possibilities for marked social change. It holds significance not only for the destiny of America anticipated in the Sacred Writings, but also for the mission entrusted to your community by the hand of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, who cherished you dearly and called you to a path of sacrifice and high endeavor.

The Universal House of Justice, 22 July 2020

14. We believe that the tribulations now encompassing much of the world are the symptoms of humanity’s failure to understand and embrace our essential oneness. The interrelated threats of climate change, gender discrimination, extreme wealth and poverty, unfair distribution of resources, and the like, all stem from this deficiency and can never be resolved if we do not awaken to our dependence upon each other. The world has contracted to a neighborhood, and it is important to appreciate that what we do in America impacts not only our own country, but the entire planet.

We should also never forget that the richness of our diversity, and our founding ideals of liberty and justice, attract the eyes of the world to us. They will be influenced by what we achieve, or fail to achieve, in this regard. It is not an

exaggeration to say that the cause of world peace is linked to our success in resolving the issue of racial injustice.

National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’ís of the United States, June 19, 2020

15. O Thou kind Lord! This gathering is turning to Thee. These hearts are radiant with Thy love. These minds and spirits are exhilarated by the message of Thy glad-tidings. O God! Let this American democracy become glorious in spiritual degrees even as it has aspired to material degrees, and render this just government victorious. Confirm this revered nation to upraise the standard of the oneness of humanity, to promulgate the Most Great Peace, to become thereby most glorious and praiseworthy among all the nations of the world. O God! This American nation is worthy of Thy favors and is deserving of Thy mercy. Make it precious and near to Thee through Thy bounty and bestowal.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Bahá’í Prayers*

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Your personal prayers

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Reflection on the Texts

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### **Discussion:**

Meaningful change can advance in unassuming settings at the grassroots. Where people are explicitly putting into practice the principle of the oneness of humanity, we have seen that contributors from different religious, racial, ethnic, political, cultural, and economic backgrounds can pursue shared goals. Under such conditions, they consult to bridge differences, reconcile perspectives, and make collective decisions. They are able to take action and learn their way forward. They do not have all the answers, but they are working on questions that are crucial to our common endeavor, such as...

- How can a shared devotional spirit help those of different belief systems experience all humanity and all life as an interdependent whole to which we all have moral obligations? How can that spirit reshape our relationships and our stewardship of the land’s resources?

*A Common Endeavor  
The Bahá’ís of the United States*