

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**



**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS  
(INCORPORATION) BILL 2024**

**NO. OF 2024**



**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS  
(INCORPORATION) BILL 2024**

**ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS**

**SECTIONS**

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5. Saving
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**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS  
(INCORPORATION) BILL 2024**

**No. of 2024**

AN ACT to provide for the Incorporation of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, to vest certain lands therein and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

WHEREAS the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands are part of a global community, and the Bahá'í Faith is widely recognized as an independent world religion with its spiritual and administrative Centre located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in the neighboring cities of 'Akká and Haifa, in northern Israel;

WHEREAS the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís has been serving the people and contributing to the society of Antigua and Barbuda and the Leeward Islands since 1967; and

WHEREAS the National Spiritual Assembly was originally incorporated under the Companies Act in 1983 and owns property on Nevis Street, and in Montserrat, and recently acquired its new headquarters in Belle Vue Heights with jurisdiction including eleven local Spiritual Assemblies and Groups throughout the Leeward Islands; and

WHEREAS the National Spiritual Assembly continues its devotional, educational, and social programmes with others for the betterment of communities and neighbourhoods through its headquarters in Belle Vue Heights and in other neighbourhoods throughout the Leeward Islands; and

WHEREAS it is desirable and expedient that the National Spiritual Assembly shall have the right to acquire, hold, deal with, and dispose of movable and immovable property in Antigua and Barbuda for the purposes of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands as defined in its Declaration of Trust and By-Laws of the National Spiritual Assembly herein attached in the Schedule.

**ENACTED** by the Parliament of Antigua and Barbuda as follows:

### **1. Short title**

This Act may be cited as the *National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands (Incorporation) Act, 2024*.

### **2. Incorporation**

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, hereinafter referred to as the National Spiritual Assembly, is hereby constituted a body corporate under the name and title of the “National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands” with perpetual succession and a common seal and with power and authority by that name to sue and be sued, to acquire and to hold real and personal property for all purposes connected with the National Spiritual Assembly in Antigua and Barbuda and with power to sell, mortgage, alienate, lease, exchange or otherwise dispose of the said property.

### **3. Execution of leases, transfers, and contracts**

All deeds of conveyance or re-conveyance, documents by mortgages, charges, assignments or other deeds and documents whatsoever and all powers of attorney and all notarial instruments required to be executed by the said National Spiritual Assembly shall be deemed sufficiently executed if sealed with its common seal and subscribed by the National Spiritual Assembly for the time being and such execution shall be valid and effectual at law.

### **4. Vesting**

All real and personal property in Antigua and Barbuda now held by or vested in any person on behalf of the National Spiritual Assembly in Antigua and Barbuda are hereby transferred to and vested in the National Spiritual Assembly and its successors for the same estates and interest and to the extent to which the same were respectively at the time of passing of this Act held or vested as aforesaid, subject to the rights, reservations and charges if any, now affecting the same and the trusts upon which the same are now held, without conveyance, transfer or assignment.

### **5. Saving**

Nothing in this Act contained shall affect or be deemed to affect the rights of His Majesty, his heirs and successors or any body, politic or corporate, or any other person except such as are mentioned in this Act and those claiming by, from or under them.

## **SCHEDULE “A”**

### **DECLARATION OF TRUST**

By the NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS  
OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS

WE, Janice Allison Adamson, Peter Glenn Derrick, Deborah Ann Eckert, Furio Favetti, Afsaneh Franklin, Darlene Linda Hodge, Mario Lance Michael, William S. Nedden, Edmond Leonard Paines, duly chosen by the representatives of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands on 30 April 2022, to be the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, with full power to establish a Trust as hereinafter set forth, hereby declare that from this date the powers, responsibilities, rights, privileges and obligations reposed in said National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands by Bahá'u'lláh, Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, its Interpreter and Exemplar, by Shoghi Effendi, its Guardian, and by the Universal House of Justice, ordained by Bahá'u'lláh in His Sacred Writings as the supreme body of the Bahá'í religion, shall be exercised, administered and carried on by the above-named National Spiritual Assembly and their duly qualified successors under this Declaration of Trust.

The National Spiritual Assembly in adopting this form of association, union and fellowship, and in selecting for itself the designation of Trustees of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, does so as the administrative body of a religious community which has had continuous existence and responsibility for the Leeward Islands. In consequence of these activities the National Spiritual Assembly is called upon to administer ever-increasing diversity and volume of affairs and properties for the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, that we, its members, now feel it both desirable and necessary to give our collective functions more definite legal form. This action is taken in complete unanimity and with full recognition of the sacred relationship thereby created. We acknowledge on behalf of ourselves and our successors in this Trust the exalted religious standard established by Bahá'u'lláh for Bahá'í administrative bodies in the Utterance: “Be ye Trustees of the Merciful One among men”; and seek the help of God and His guidance in order to fulfil that exhortation.

#### **ARTICLE I**

The name of said Trust shall be the “National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands.”

## ARTICLE II

Sharing the ideals and assisting the efforts of our fellow Bahá'ís to establish, uphold and promote the spiritual, educational and humanitarian teachings of human brotherhood, radiant faith, exalted character and selfless love revealed in the lives and utterances of all the Prophets and Messengers of God, Founders of the world's revealed religions—and given renewed creative energy and universal application to the conditions of this age in the life and utterances of Bahá'u'lláh—we declare the purposes and objects of this Trust to be to administer the affairs of the Cause of Bahá'u'lláh for the benefit of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands according to the principles of Bahá'í affiliation and administration created and established by Bahá'u'lláh, defined and explained by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, interpreted and amplified by Shoghi Effendi, and supplemented and applied by the Universal House of Justice.

These purposes are to be realized by means of devotional meetings; by public meetings and conferences of an educational, humanitarian and spiritual character; by the publication of books, magazines and newspapers; by the construction of temples of universal worship and of other institutions and edifices for humanitarian service; by supervising, unifying, promoting and generally administering the activities of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands in the fulfilment of their religious offices, duties and ideals; and by any other means appropriate to these ends, or any of these ends, or any of them.

Other purposes and objects of this Trust are:

- a. The right to enter into, make, perform and carry out contracts of every sort and kind for the furtherance of the objects of this Trust with any person, firm, association, corporation, private, public or municipal or body politic, or any state, territory or colony thereof, or any foreign government; and in this connection, and in all transactions under the terms of this Trust, to do any and all things which a co-partnership or natural person could do or exercise, and which now or hereafter may be authorized by law.
- b. To hold and be named as beneficiary under any trust established by law or otherwise or under any will or other testamentary instrument in connection with any gift, devise, or bequest in which a trust or trusts is or are established in any part or the world as well as in the Leeward Islands; to receive gifts, devises or bequests of money or other property.
- c. All and whatsoever the several purposes and objects set forth in the written utterances of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and enactments of the Universal

House of Justice, under which certain jurisdiction, powers and rights are granted to National Spiritual Assemblies.

- d. Generally, to do all things and acts which in the judgement of said Trustees, i.e. the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, are necessary, proper and advantageous to promote the complete and successful administration of this Trust.

### ARTICLE III

SECTION 1. All persons, firms, corporations and associations extending credit to, contracting with or having any claim against the Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, and the members thereof, of any character whatsoever, whether legal or equitable and whether arising out of contract or tort, shall look solely to the funds of the Trust and to the property of the Trust estate for payment or indemnity, or for the payment of any debt, damage, judgement or decree or any money that may otherwise become due or payable from the Trustees, so that neither the Trustees nor any of them, nor any of their officers or agents appointed by them hereunder, nor any beneficiary or beneficiaries herein named shall be personally liable therefor.

SECTION 2. Every note, bond, proposal, obligation or contract in writing or other agreement or instrument made or given under this Trust shall be explicitly executed by the National Spiritual Assembly, as Trustees, by their duly authorized officers or agents.

### ARTICLE IV

The Trustees, i.e., the National Spiritual Assembly, shall adopt for the conduct of the affairs entrusted to them under this Declaration of Trust, such by-laws, rules of procedure or regulations as are required to define and carry on its own administrative functions and those of the several local and other elements composing the body of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, not inconsistent with the terms of this instrument and all in accordance with the instructions and enactments of the Universal House of Justice.

### ARTICLE V

The central office of this Trust shall be located in Belle Vue Heights, Antigua.



**ARTICLE VI**

The seal of this Trust shall be circular in form, bearing the following description:  
“NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY BAHÁ'IS LEEWARD ISLANDS”

**ARTICLE VII**

This Declaration of Trust may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands at any special meeting duly called for that purpose, provided that at least thirty (30) days prior to the date fixed for said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.

**SCHEDULE “B”****BY-LAWS OF THE NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY****ARTICLE I**

THE National Spiritual Assembly, in the fulfilment of its sacred duties under this Trust, shall have exclusive jurisdiction and authority over all the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause throughout the Leeward Islands, including paramount authority in the administration of this Trust. It shall endeavour to stimulate, unify and coordinate the manifold activities of the Local Spiritual Assemblies (hereinafter defined) and of individual Bahá'ís in the Leeward Islands and by all possible means assist them to promote the oneness of mankind. It shall be charged with the recognition of such Local Assemblies, the scrutiny of all membership rolls, the calling of the Annual Meeting or special meeting and the seating of delegates to the Annual Meeting and their apportionment among the various electoral districts. It shall appoint all national Bahá'í committees and shall supervise the publication and distribution of Bahá'í literature, the reviewing of all writings pertaining to the Bahá'í Cause, the construction and administration of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkár and its accessory activities, and the collection and disbursement of all funds for the carrying on of this Trust. It shall decide whether any matter lies within its own jurisdiction or within the jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly. It shall, in such cases as it considers suitable and necessary, entertain appeals from the decisions of Local Spiritual Assemblies and shall have the right of final decision in all cases where the qualification of an individual or group

for continued voting rights and membership in the Bahá'í body is in question. It shall furthermore represent the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands in all their cooperative and spiritual activities with the Bahá'ís of other lands, and shall constitute the sole electoral body of the Leeward Islands in the election of the Universal House of Justice provided for in the sacred Writings of the Bahá'í Cause. Above all, the National Spiritual Assembly shall ever seek to attain that station of unity in devotion to the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh which will attract the confirmations of the Holy Spirit and enable the Assembly to serve the founding of the Most Great Peace. In all its deliberation and action the National Assembly shall have constantly before it as Divine guide and standard the utterance of Bahá'u'lláh:

“It behoveth them (i.e., members of Spiritual Assemblies) to be the trusted ones of the Merciful among men and to regard themselves as the guardians appointed of God for all that dwell on earth. It is incumbent upon them to take counsel together and to have regard for the interests of the servants of God, for His sake, even as they regard their own interests, and to choose that which is meet and seemly.”

## ARTICLE II

The Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, for whose benefit this Trust is established, shall consist of all persons of the age of 15 years or over resident in the Leeward Islands who are accepted by the National Spiritual Assembly as possessing the qualifications of Bahá'í faith and practice required under the following standard set forth by the Guardian of the Faith:

Full recognition of the station of the Báb, the Forerunner; of Bahá'u'lláh, the Author; and of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá, the True Exemplar of the Bahá'í religion; unreserved acceptance of, and submission to, whatsoever has been revealed by their Pen; loyal and steadfast adherence to every clause of ‘Abdu'l-Bahá's sacred Will; and close association with the spirit as well as the form of Bahá'í Administration throughout the world.

Those residing in the area of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly recognized by the National Assembly may declare their faith to, and be enrolled by, the Local Spiritual Assembly; those living outside any such area of local Bahá'í jurisdiction shall be enrolled in such manner as shall be prescribed by the National Assembly.

A Bahá'í is eligible to vote and to hold elective office upon attaining such age as is determined by the National Spiritual Assembly in conformity with the principles of Bahá'í Administration.

### ARTICLE III

The National Assembly shall consist of nine members chosen from among the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands, who shall be elected Bahá'ís eligible to vote in manner hereinafter provided, and who shall continue for the period of one year, or until their successors shall be elected.

### ARTICLE IV

The officers of the National Spiritual Assembly shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as may be found necessary for the proper conduct of its affairs. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Assembly taken by secret ballot.

### ARTICLE V

The first meeting a newly elected National Assembly shall be called by the member elected to membership by the highest number of votes or, in case two or more members have received the same said highest number of votes, then by the member selected by lot from among those members; and this member shall preside until the permanent Chairman shall be chosen. All subsequent meetings shall be called by the Secretary of the Assembly at the request of the Chairman or, in his absence or incapacity, of the Vice-Chairman, or of any three members of the Assembly; provided, however, that the Annual Meeting of the Assembly shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by a majority vote of the Assembly, as hereinafter provided.

### ARTICLE VI

Five members of the National Assembly present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum, and a majority vote of those present and constituting a quorum shall be sufficient for the conduct of business, except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws, and with due regard to the principle of unity and cordial fellowship involved in the institution of a Spiritual Assembly. The transactions and decisions of the National Assembly shall be recorded at each meeting by the Secretary, who shall supply copies of the minutes to the Assembly members after each meeting, and preserve the minutes in the official records of the Assembly.

### ARTICLE VII

Whenever in any locality of the Leeward Islands, the number of Bahá'ís resident therein recognized as eligible by the National Spiritual Assembly exceeds nine, all Baha'ís eligible to vote shall on the First Day of Riḍván of any year convene and elect by plurality vote a local administrative body of nine members, to be known as the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of that

community. Every such Spiritual Assembly shall be elected annually thereafter upon each successive First Day of Riḍván. The members shall hold office for the term of one year or until their successors are elected and qualified.

When, however, the number of Bahá'ís eligible to hold elective office in any authorized civil area is exactly nine, these shall on the First Day of Riḍván of any year, or in successive years, constitute themselves the Local Spiritual Assembly by joint declaration. Upon the recording of such declaration by the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly, said body of nine shall become established with the rights, privileges and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly as set forth in this instrument.

SECTION 1. Each newly elected Local Spiritual Assembly shall at once proceed in the manner indicated in Articles IV and V of these By-Laws to the election of its officers, who shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as the Assembly finds necessary for the conduct of its business and the fulfilment of its spiritual duties. Immediately thereafter the Secretary chosen shall transmit to the Secretary of the National Assembly the names of the members of the newly elected Assembly and a list of its officers.

SECTION 2. The general powers and duties of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be as set forth in the writings of Bahá'u'lláh, 'Abdu'l-Bahá and Shoghi Effendi, and as laid down by the Universal House of Justice.

SECTION 3. Among its more specific duties, a Local Spiritual Assembly shall have full jurisdiction of all Bahá'í activities and affairs within the local community, subject, however, to the exclusive and paramount authority of the National Spiritual Assembly as defined herein.

SECTION 4. Vacancies in the membership of a Local Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by election at a special meeting of the local Bahá'í community duly called for that purpose by the Assembly. In the event that the number of vacancies exceeds four, making a quorum of the Local Assembly impossible, the election shall be held under the supervision of the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. The business of the Local Assembly shall be conducted in like manner as provided for the deliberations of the National Assembly in Article VI above.

SECTION 6. The Local Assembly shall pass upon and approve the qualifications of each member of the Bahá'í community before such members shall be admitted to voting membership; but where an individual is dissatisfied with the ruling of the Local Spiritual Assembly upon his Bahá'í qualifications, such individual may appeal from the ruling to the National Assembly, which shall thereupon take jurisdiction of and finally decide the case.

SECTION 7. On or before the 1st day of November of each year the Secretary of each Local Assembly shall send to the Secretary of the National Assembly a duly certified list of the members of the local Bahá'í community for the information and approval of the National Assembly.

SECTION 8. All matters arising within a local Bahá'í community which are of purely local interest and do not affect the national interests of the Cause shall be under the primary jurisdiction of the Spiritual Assembly of that locality; but decision whether a particular matter involves the interest and welfare of the national Bahá'í body shall rest with the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 9. Any member of a local Bahá'í community may appeal from a decision of his Spiritual Assembly to the National Assembly, which shall determine whether it shall take jurisdiction of the matter or leave it to the Local Spiritual Assembly for reconsideration. In the event that the National Assembly assumes jurisdiction of the matter, its findings shall be final.

SECTION 10. Where any dissension exists within a local Bahá'í community of such character that it cannot be remedied by the efforts of the Local Spiritual Assembly, this condition shall be referred by the Spiritual Assembly for consideration to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose action in the matter shall be final.

SECTION 11. All questions arising between two or more Local Spiritual Assemblies, or between members of different Bahá'í communities, shall be submitted in the first instance to the National Assembly, which shall have original and final jurisdiction in all such matters.

SECTION 12. The sphere of jurisdiction of a Local Spiritual Assembly, with respect to residential qualification of membership, and voting rights of a believer in any Bahá'í community, shall be the locality included within the recognized civil limits.

All differences of opinion concerning the sphere of jurisdiction of any Local Spiritual Assembly or concerning the affiliation of any Bahá'í or group of Bahá'ís in the Leeward Islands shall be referred to the National Spiritual Assembly, whose decision in the matter shall be final.

## ARTICLE VIII

The members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be elected at an annual meeting to be known as the National Convention of the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands. This Convention shall be held at a time and place to be fixed by the National Assembly. The National Convention

shall be composed jointly of representatives chosen by the Bahá'ís of each electoral unit under the principle of proportionate representation, and the members of the National Spiritual Assembly.

Notice of the annual meeting shall be given by the National Assembly sixty days in advance in the Convention Call which sets forth the number of delegates assigned to the various electoral units in proportion to the number of Bahá'ís eligible to vote in each such unit, to a total number of delegates for the Bahá'ís of the Leeward Islands as decided by the National Assembly in conformity with the principles of Bahá'í Administration.

SECTION 1. All delegates to the Convention shall be elected by plurality vote. Bahá'ís who for illness or other unavoidable reasons are unable to be present at the election in person shall have the right to transmit their ballots to the meeting by mail or by such other means as are decided by the National Assembly. The meeting held in each electoral unit for the election of delegates shall be called by the National Spiritual Assembly and conducted by the Bahá'ís present under whatever procedure may be uniformly laid down by said body. Immediately after the meeting a certified report of the election containing the name and address of each delegate shall be transmitted to the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 2. All delegates to be seated at the Convention must be recognized Bahá'ís and residents of the electoral unit represented by them.

SECTION 3. The rights and privileges of a delegate may not be assigned nor may they be exercised by proxy.

SECTION 4. The recognition and seating of delegates to the National Convention shall be vested in the National Spiritual Assembly.

SECTION 5. Delegates unable to be present in person at the Convention shall have the right to transmit their ballots for election of the members of the National Assembly under whatever procedure is adopted by the National Assembly.

SECTION 6. If in any year the National Spiritual Assembly shall consider that it is impracticable or unwise to assemble together the delegates to the National Convention, the said Assembly shall provide ways and means by which the annual election and the other essential business of the Convention may be conducted by mail or by such other means as are decided by the National Assembly.

SECTION 7. The presiding officer of the National Spiritual Assembly present at the Convention shall call together the delegates, who after roll call shall proceed to the permanent

organization of the meeting, electing by ballot a Chairman, a Secretary and such other officers as are necessary for the proper conduct of the business of the Convention.

SECTION 8. The principal business of the annual meeting shall be consultation on Bahá'í activities, plans and policies, and the election of the nine members of the National Spiritual Assembly. Members of the National Assembly, whether or not elected delegates, may take a full part in the consultation and discussion but only delegates may participate in the election of Convention officers or in the annual election of the members of the National Assembly. All action by the delegates, other than the organization of the Convention, the transmission of messages to the World Centre of the Bahá'í Faith, and the election of the National Assembly, shall constitute advice and recommendation for consideration by the said Assembly, final decision in all matters concerning the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith in the Leeward Islands being vested solely in that body.

SECTION 9. The general order of business to be taken up at the Annual Convention shall be prepared by the National Spiritual Assembly in the form of an agenda, but any matter pertaining to the Bahá'í Faith introduced by any of the delegates may upon motion and vote be taken up as part of the Convention deliberations.

SECTION 10. The election of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be by plurality vote of the delegates recognized by the outgoing National Spiritual Assembly, i.e., the members elected shall be the nine persons receiving the greatest number of votes on the first ballot cast by delegates present at the Convention and delegates whose ballot has been transmitted to the Secretary of the National Spiritual Assembly by mail or other such means as are decided by the National Assembly. In case, by reason of a tie vote or votes, the full membership is not determined on the first ballot, then one or more additional ballots shall be taken on the persons tied until all nine members are elected.

SECTION 11. All official business transacted at the National Convention shall be recorded and preserved in the records of the National Assembly.

SECTION 12. Vacancies in the membership of the National Spiritual Assembly shall be filled by a plurality vote of the delegates composing the Convention which elected the Assembly, the ballot to be taken by mail or by such other means as are decided by the National Spiritual Assembly.

## ARTICLE IX

Where the National Spiritual Assembly has been given in these By-Laws exclusive and final jurisdiction, and paramount executive authority, in all matters pertaining to the activities and affairs of the Bahá'í Cause in the Leeward Islands, it is understood that any decision made or

action taken upon such matters shall be subject in every instance to ultimate review and approval by the Universal House of Justice.

#### ARTICLE X

Whatever functions and powers are not specifically attributable to Local Spiritual Assemblies in these By-Laws shall be considered vested in the National Spiritual Assembly, which body is authorized to delegate such discretionary functions and powers as it deems necessary and advisable to the Local Spiritual Assemblies within its jurisdiction.

#### ARTICLE XI

In order to preserve the spiritual character and purpose of Bahá'í elections, the practice of nominations or any other electoral method detrimental to a silent and prayerful election shall not prevail, so that each elector may vote for none but those whom prayer and reflection have inspired him to uphold.

Among the most outstanding and sacred duties incumbent upon those who have been called upon to initiate, direct and coordinate the affairs of the Cause as members of Local or National Spiritual Assemblies are:

To win by every means in their power the confidence and affection of those whom it is their privilege to serve; to investigate and acquaint themselves with the considered views, the prevailing sentiments and the personal convictions of those whose welfare it is their solemn obligation to promote; to purge their deliberations and the general conduct of their affairs of self-contained aloofness, the suspicion of secrecy, the stifling atmosphere of dictatorial assertiveness and of every word and deed that may savor of partiality, self-centeredness and prejudice; and while retaining the sacred right of final decision in their hands, to invite discussion, ventilate grievances, welcome advice and foster the sense of interdependence and co-partnership, of understanding and mutual confidence between themselves and all other Bahá'ís.

#### ARTICLE XII

These By-Laws may be amended by majority vote of the National Spiritual Assembly at any of its regular or special meetings, provided that at least fourteen days prior to the date fixed for the said meeting a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments is mailed to each member of the Assembly by the Secretary.





## **EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM**

The first National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís in the Eastern Caribbean was established in April 1967 and included Antigua. In 1981, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'ís of the Leeward Islands was established with its Seat in St John's. Known as the Bahá'í Centre on Upper Nevis Street, it has recently relocated to new headquarters in Belle Vue Heights.

The Bahá'ís are encouraged to be responsible citizens and strive to promote the best interests of their nation and government by making themselves productive, helpful members of society wholly committed to serving humanity for the love of God.

Bahá'ís view government as a system for maintaining the welfare and orderly progress of human society, and obedience to the laws of the land is a distinguishing feature of their beliefs. Bahá'ís encourage development of human virtues, unity, order, and cooperation as the basis for sound and lasting progress.

Bahá'u'lláh stated: “Say: no man can attain his true station except through his justice. No power can exist except through unity. No welfare and no well-being can be attained except through consultation.”

Hon. Sir Molwyn Joseph KGCN  
Minister with responsibility for  
Ecclesiastical Affairs

