

## Supreme Tribunal (*Mahkamiy-i-Kubra*)

### Question

What is meant by Bahá'í Court (in the Writings of the Guardian)? What is "Mahkamiy-i- Kubra" mentioned in the Writings and how does it differ from the Universal House of Justice? Is it the same as the General Assembly of the United Nations or it will be one of the organs of the Bahá'í Administrative Order?

### Answer

1. Regarding the Supreme Tribunal or the Supreme Court (*Mahkamiy-i-Kubra*), this term is used in Bahá'í Writings with different connotations. Sometimes it is a reference to the institutions of the Lesser Peace. (For example in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's Tablet to Dr. Forel, He outlines the method which could be followed at such a time).

At other times, however, when the context is the Bahá'í World Commonwealth, the World Tribunal becomes one of the principal organs, operating under the Universal House of Justice. That would be in the Golden Age of the Bahá'í Dispensation.

A study of the Constitution of the Universal House of Justice will show you that in its Declaration of Trust, five paragraphs are devoted to describe the powers and duties of the Supreme Body. The last paragraph consists of its judicial authority. It is this authority that it will transfer to the World Tribunal of the Great Peace, and then of the Most Great Peace.

There is yet another application of the term “court” in the writings of Shoghi Effendi.

You find this explained in “The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh” page 200. You will also find reference to such courts in the goals of the Ten Year Crusade—both internationally and nationally— for countries in the East, where religious courts (for Jews, Christians and Muslims) had been established during the Ottoman Rule. This region included Palestine—later carried over by Israel.

This was why Shoghi Effendi anticipated that the International Bahá'í Council would become such a religious Bahá'í court for Israel, if circumstances permitted. On the national level, the National Assembly of the country would become such a Bahá'í religious court but this has not yet materialized.

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