



**Australian Bahá'í Community**

19 February 2002

Justice G M Giudice  
President  
Industrial Relations Commission  
GPO Box 1994S  
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Justice Giudice,

This letter is intended as a submission from the Australian Bahá'í Community for the purposes of the Safety Net Review 2002.

As noted in our submission last year, the Bahá'í Community believes that extremes of wealth and poverty in society are profoundly harmful to its well-being and progress.

The Australian Bahá'í Community notes with concern that the gap between the highly paid and the lowly paid in Australia appears to be continuing to widen and that low paid working families continue to struggle to pay for the basic necessities of life. The adverse effects of this situation on Australian society are exacerbated by the links between low income and child poverty and by the overrepresentation of women in low paid employment.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that everyone is entitled to a standard of living adequate to provide for the health and well being of oneself and one's family. This right is given expression through a number of international instruments to which Australia is party, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The Bahá'í Community urges the Commission to address the question of pay rises for the low paid in Australia on the basis of the fundamental principle that every individual member of society is a trust of the whole and that the interests of the individual and those of society are inextricably linked.

Through the granting of an appropriate pay increase, the Commission has the opportunity to ensure Australian society deals justly and equitably with its members and provides the low paid with the means for living a dignified life.

Yours faithfully,

Tessa Scrine  
Parliamentary Liaison Officer