

WORLD HEADQUARTERS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

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July 1, 2002

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Dear Brothers:

As announced in *The Watchtower* of July 1, 2002, Jehovah's organization is planning to have some international conventions in various regions of the world during the year 2003. We would like to help missionaries who are serving in foreign lands to visit their home country and attend one of the district or international conventions. As you know, a similar arrangement in times past was of great encouragement to missionaries who have been faithfully serving in their foreign assignments. Visits by missionaries can also be a great encouragement to those considering the full-time service.

By the summer of 2003, it will have been five years since many of our missionaries have had an opportunity to visit their home country. These devoted missionaries have been willing to leave homes, parents, and an accustomed way of life, in order to serve in foreign lands "for the sake of the good news." (Mark 10:29, 30) They have contributed greatly to the growth of Jehovah's work in many places, as the thrilling reports in each succeeding *Yearbook* bear out. Now it is our opportunity to show appreciation for their wholehearted service by contributing toward bringing them home at convention time in 2003. They certainly deserve our loving consideration. The experiences of these missionaries in their preaching work can be a great encouragement to those back home.

In order to provide assistance to the missionaries for their travel expenses, we would like to suggest that donations be placed in the regular contribution box and that the congregation pass a resolution to send a certain dollar amount each month to the "2003 Convention Fund." These donations will be used to help missionaries travel home and attend a

convention in their land of origin. If the brothers in all the congregations were to donate an average of 10 to 15 cents per publisher per month, there should be sufficient funds for this arrangement. These funds can be remitted each month through MAY 2003, after which this fund will no longer be necessary. The contributions for this fund will be considered as a congregation expense in the "Congregation Expenditures" section of the *Monthly Congregation Account Report (S-30-E)* form July 2002 through May 2003. Please include all "2003 Convention Fund" donations on the *Record of Electronic Funds Transfer (T-62-E)* and in the space designated "WEFTS will provide appropriate prompts, if any" write "2003 Convention Fund" and the amount. Any contributions for this fund after May, 2003 should be added to the contributions for worldwide work and forwarded via WEFTS. Any surplus in the 2003 Convention Fund after all transportation costs are covered, will be transferred to the worldwide work.

Judging by our past experience, sufficient funds to accomplish the objective will be provided in this manner. Since the missionaries for the most part will travel the round trip by air and may have to go long distances, it will be quite expensive. But we believe that the brothers and sisters throughout the world will be happy to help the missionaries who have been out in the field since January 1, 2001, or longer, to attend district conventions in their homeland, and will show their agreement with this arrangement by their contributions. (Those currently serving in foreign assignments such as long-term International Servants working on construction projects Bethelites in foreign service etc., since January 2001 are also included in this arrangement.)—2 Cor. 8:14; 9:7.

The missionaries, and others in special full-time service as mentioned in the preceding paragraph, will be built up spiritually and physically by their visit home. After the visit and attendance at a district convention, they will return to their assignment well equipped to encourage their brothers in those lands and to continue in their missionary service with added enthusiasm.

Individuals who wish to contribute directly to this fund can do so, and when they make such donation to the Branch, they should indicate clearly that this is for the "2003 Convention Fund." The Branch will acknowledge these contributions for this special purpose in a manner similar to the way it acknowledges other donations such as for the worldwide work.

NOTE TO THOSE HAVING FRIENDS IN MISSIONARY SERVICE: Please do not send any money to the Branch stating that the funds so remitted should be used to bring some particular individual home at the time of the 2003 district convention. Any person in the congregation who wants to help a specific individual in this matter should see to it that the money goes *directly* to that person. In some countries direct help to a missionary may disqualify the donor from claiming any tax deductions for his donation. The

Branch cannot undertake to forward such travel funds to any particular individual.

However, we would suggest that rather than sending the money to the individual as a surprise, you should first inform the individual that you are holding the money for him and ask what should be done with it. In order to purchase the tickets, he or she may wish to have the funds available elsewhere rather than in the country of the missionary assignment. Correspondence on all matters of this kind should be carried on by the individuals and not through the Branch. Never send cash with letters to missionaries in foreign lands. Ask them how to send funds because there is much pilfering in many lands.

May Jehovah give his blessing to this arrangement and to your congregation, and may all continue to give a good witness in your territory. Let us all pray for Jehovah's direction and blessing in respect to the district conventions in 2003. Please be assured of our warm love and best wishes as we all press forward with you in serving Jehovah.—Josh. 24:15.

Please be assured of our warm Christian love.

Your Brothers,
Service Committee

P.S. This letter should be read at the first Service Meeting and the first *Watchtower* Study after it is received so that all of Jehovah's Witnesses will know of this arrangement to contribute to the "2003 Convention Fund." The resolution should be handled at this Service Meeting. Thereafter the congregation will be reminded of this arrangement once a month when the accounts servant reads his monthly report and tells the congregation what has been contributed and sent to the Branch.