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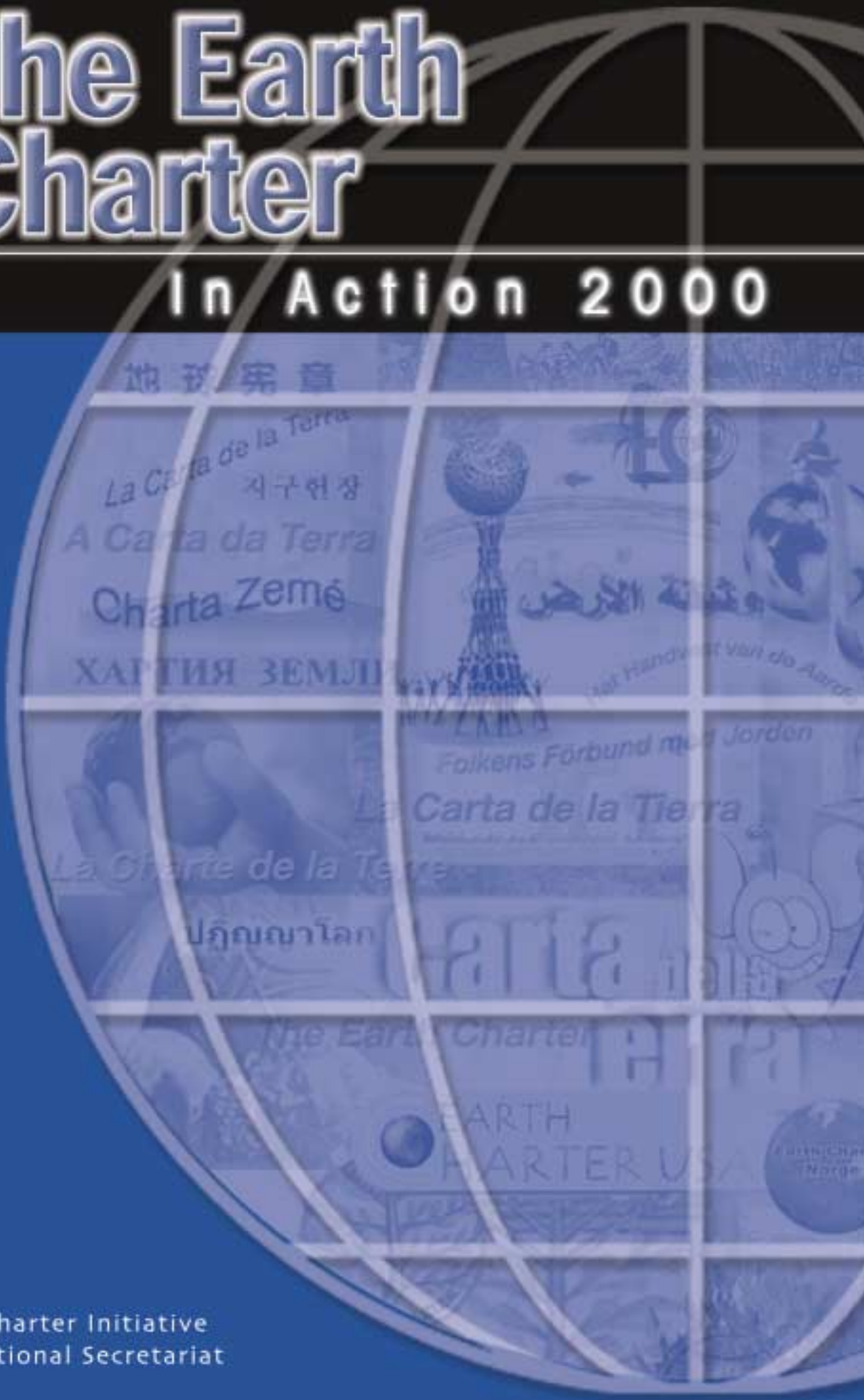
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The Earth Charter

In Action 2000



Earth Charter Initiative
International Secretariat



The Earth Charter in Action 2000

This report was prepared by
the Earth Charter Secretariat in Costa Rica
in collaboration with partner organizations

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FOREWORD:

A PERSONAL CHALLENGE

Any review of the past year and this report, which reflects our current plans, must begin by heralding the completion of the Earth Charter drafting process. To appreciate the full importance of this event, we must revisit the purposes of the task undertaken and carried out by the Drafting Committee, under the leadership of Professor Steven C. Rockefeller: to crystallize, out of the many contributions received from interested parties throughout the world, a consensus on the fundamental moral and ethical principles for building a just, sustainable and peaceful global society. This task was broadly inclusive and culturally diverse. It involved people from many nations and every sector of society who, with different religious beliefs and spiritual traditions, initiated an exciting journey towards defining and articulating a common set of values and principles, universally valid and acceptable. In this context, we wish to pay special tribute to the prodigious work done by Ms. Mirian Vilela, as the head of the small Secretariat, in supporting this process.

In March 2000, approval of the final document by the Earth Charter Commission, during its meeting held at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, represented an outstanding achievement. After intense and careful deliberation, the Commission reached agreement on the final version of the Earth Charter based upon the recommendations of the Drafting Committee. Following this historic milestone, the document was officially launched in June, at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands, during an event attended by many Earth Charter friends and supporters from around the world. On this occasion, the strong support and initiative of the government of this country was acknowledged with special appreciation. A highlight of this gathering was constituted by the presentation of the Charter to Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands. The ceremony in The Hague signaled the beginning of a new phase in the Earth Charter Initiative. Like the passing of the torch in the marathon of ancient times, or the Olympics of today, those to whom the torch is passed must continue the race. They must also pass this torch to others who will be inspired by it, applying the Earth Charter to their own lives, organizations and governments.

The endorsement of the Earth Charter by governments and, ultimately by the United Nations, remains a primary goal. Its basic authority, however, is derived from the literally thousands of people who have been involved in producing, disseminating and implementing the document. It has truly become a "Peoples" Earth Charter, designed to provide the behavior of individuals, organizations and governments with moral and ethical guidelines, towards Earth and each other, ensuring a more sustainable way of life on our planet.

The International Secretariat of the Earth Charter Initiative is located at the headquarters of the Earth Council in Costa Rica. This small country is noted for its commitment to peace and its leadership in making the protection of the environment and the achievement of sustainable development a national priority. An indication of this is the action of a security guard who had been given an Earth Charter poster by a staff member. Moved by it and understanding its importance, he and his family decided it should be placed at their local school so that other community members could also be inspired by it. This act is a very real tribute to the Drafting Committee and to all

of those who have participated in the process of formulating the Earth Charter. It represents the evidence of their success in capturing the fundamental ethical and moral principles the document promulgates, in words that are universally understood and appreciated. Thus, the Earth Charter has been launched at the grass-roots level, from which it derives its basic authority when presented to world leaders.

It is this very sense of common interest and commitment that the Earth Charter seeks to evoke. It underscores our need to recognize that the critical issues we face in ensuring a secure and sustainable future for the people of Earth can only be resolved through a shared commitment. This must be based on common values and interests, and operationalized through new partnerships between civil society, governments and business. This sense of universal responsibility and collaborative action is the key to our common future. So as the Earth Charter has become a living presence in the hearts and lives of a caring family in Costa Rica, and on the world stage at the Peace Palace in The Hague, now the challenge is to ensure that it will also enter into the hearts and minds of people everywhere.

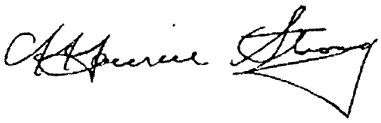
We all must work together in this mission, by disseminating the Earth Charter throughout the world and inviting others to adopt the document and apply it to their own lives, organizations and governments, which play key roles in the shaping of their societies. We must devote special efforts to ensure that the Earth Charter takes root in our schools, in the values of our institutions and businesses, and in the codes of conduct by which we govern ourselves professionally. We want to see the governments use the Charter to guide them in undertaking participatory governance in the implementation of their own development priorities. We have drawn great encouragement from the rapidly growing list of people in organizations, who are embracing the Earth Charter and using it to guide their work and their commitment to a sustainable future.

For the Earth Charter to have its full and essential impact, it must become a ongoing movement of continuous learning, transformation and practical application in the stream of life. Thus, the Charter must evoke dialogue, reflection, analysis and debate on the basic moral and ethical principles in which personal and organizational behavior must be rooted. These values must also guide those decisions we make and the policies we set, which will determine the future course of our societies and the world community.

The worker in Costa Rica who took the poster from the wall of his own small home to share it with his community in the local school, well understood the meaning and potential value of the Earth Charter. The extent to which that potential is realized throughout the world will depend on the commitment of each individual to the challenges and the opportunities it presents. We are immensely pleased and grateful for your interest, commitment and support, and urge all of you to continue to join us in the challenging task of ensuring that the Earth Charter will indeed enlighten the pathway to a more secure, sustainable and equitable future for the entire human community.



Mikhail S. Gorbachev
Co-chair
Earth Charter Commission



Maurice F. Strong
Co-chair
Earth Charter Commission

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY FROM THE SECRETARIAT

The Earth Charter International Secretariat, located in Costa Rica, serves as a facilitator and catalyst for Earth Charter activities taking place throughout the world. Our tasks include preparing and disseminating Earth Charter materials, approaching and engaging groups in using the Earth Charter, servicing Commission members and Earth Charter groups, and being involved in collaborating with and organizing Earth Charter events. Most important, and requiring collaboration from all of those involved, is our compilation of all available information on Earth Charter events for dissemination and sharing with all active groups world wide.

Upon adoption of the final document in March 2000, the Earth Charter Commission recommended changes in the structure of the Earth Charter Secretariat to adapt to the new phase of the Initiative. The Initiative is no longer under the joint guidance of the Earth Council and Green Cross, but is now to be overseen by the Commission itself through a specifically designated Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has been very active in the elaboration of the strategy and the content of materials produced during 2000.

In addition to the two historic moments of the Earth Charter Initiative mentioned in the foreword —the Earth Charter Commission meeting and The Hague Launch event, organized in collaboration with the Dutch National Commission for Development Cooperation (NCDO)— the Secretariat also organized, together with partner organizations, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, an official presentation of the Earth Charter to the President of Costa Rica. On this memorable occasion, held on November 6, 2000, the President, the Vice-President and the Minister of Education expressed their support to the Earth Charter.

During the year 2000 the Secretariat helped place the Earth Charter within international events or organized parallel presentations at these gatherings, including the NGO Millennium Forum (held in May), the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives - ICLEI World Congress (held in July), the Millennium Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders (held at the end of August) and the World Conservation Union - IUCN Congress (held in October). These presentations offered information on the Earth Charter and encouraged groups to engage in the Initiative and adopt the Charter.

One of the tasks after the official launch of the Earth Charter was to seek endorsements, both by individuals and organizations, as expressions of support for the Earth Charter. Endorsement is defined as signifying commitment to the spirit and aims of the document and an intention to use the Earth Charter in appropriate ways, given the situation of the individual or group. To facilitate this process, an online system for endorsements was set up on the Earth Charter website. This homepage was totally redesigned by June 2000, and material summarizing The Hague launch event was compiled and is now available online. New website sections developed during the year were: the Art Page, the Youth Initiative Page and the option for an online calendar of activities.

Translating the Earth Charter text and accompanying materials into various languages was one of the Secretariat's priorities in order to reach a broader number of people. Translations into 18 languages have been completed to date in collaboration with individuals and groups. Some of these translations were carried out by Earth Charter collaborators and we continue to seek the translation of materials into more languages.

There was ongoing communication with existing Earth Charter groups and individuals during 2000, and efforts were made to engage new organizations as facilitators or Earth Charter focal points. As a result, a number of individuals and groups from previously unrepresented countries in Africa and Asia such as: Mali, Benin, Cameroon and Bangladesh joined the Earth Charter Initiative. New international organizations took up the challenge; ICLEI endorsed the Earth Charter and committed to follow up with its members for utilization at the local authority level.

A number of presentations on the Earth Charter took place, from children's events to university groups and the Pole-to-Pole youth initiative, which carried the Earth Charter flag and symbolically planted it at the South Pole.

The Earth Charter Initiative was the beneficiary of strong support from Soka Gakkai International, which organized, in January 2000, the Earth Charter Asia Tour to engage groups in the region.

Additionally, Earth Charter educational materials were developed under the leadership of Radio Netherlands, which printed a storybook, Stories of

a Neighbor Planet, and produced an Earth Charter children's book. Radio Netherlands also produced radio magazine programmes on the Charter, which were broadcast throughout Latin America and the Carribean.

The Earth Charter Initiative continues to benefit from the significant support of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) programme of the Earth Council, through its network and staff, and regional area managers disseminating and promoting the Earth Charter.

Independent groups, such as university teachers, report to us on their use of the Earth Charter. An independent group in the USA is organizing the Grassroots Earth Charter Summits, scheduled for September 2001 in ten U.S. cities, that will coordinate activities in the various cities simultaneously.

The following is an overview of some initiatives undertaken during the year 2000, some independent and some in collaboration with the Secretariat.

- New Earth Charter websites were put in place in Brazil, Catalonia/Spain, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States. Each of them is the result of the country's Earth Charter group interest, initiative and work in each of these countries.
- Under the initiative of Green Cross and the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, the Republic of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation initiated an in-depth process of verification of the Earth Charter values and principles in compliance with its constitution. The Environment Committee of the Parliament worked on a Draft Resolution for the adoption of the Earth Charter by the Republic's full Parliament.
- A school teacher in Brazil developed educational materials with the Earth Charter theme for use in computer and science classes, this can be found in a kids education website "Kidlink".
- UNESCO developed a multimedia professional development programme for teachers entitled "Training and Learning for a Sustainable Future", which features the Earth Charter.
- Green Cross has been promoting an Earth Charter Youth Art Contest for the last three years, engaging schools in understanding the vision of the Charter and encouraging students to express their perspectives on a number of subjects.
- The Australian Earth Charter Group developed educational materials for primary and secondary schools on the Earth Charter. These materials were tested in a number of schools at the Capital Territory.
- The Earth Scout Initiative was launched in the Philippines, utilizing the Earth Charter as the basis for scout meetings, activities and its oath.
- The Toulouse French Group working on the Earth Charter organized workshops to share the message of this document with children, and received their feedback through artistic expression.
- Uzbekistan organized the Regional Earth Charter Youth Forum in November.
- The Armenian Earth Charter Committee is engaging civil society to reflect upon and use the Charter. They are using the document in university teaching and are also approaching the government for their support.
- In Benin, the Earth Charter is being translated into local languages.
- In Niger, the Earth Charter Committee is located together with the National Council for Sustainable Development at the office of the Prime Minister, and they are using the Charter in their national plan for sustainable development.
- The Earth Charter has been the subject of numerous books and booklets, as well as newsletters in various parts of the world.
- The Red Victorian "Bed, Breakfast & Art", a guest house located in San Francisco, California, has created a guest room dedicated to promoting the Earth Charter.

The Earth Charter can only become a living document through the efforts of individuals and groups in different parts of the world who want to make a difference and who realize that the Earth Charter can be useful in a variety of areas. Its broad and inclusive ethics are applicable to all of our interactions.

We invite you to read the Earth Charter Initiative Strategy for 2001/2002, read it slowly and deliberately, for somewhere in it is your challenge — one that you can create and nurture. Whether your concern is water, desertification, health care, poverty, human rights, civil society participation or environmental protection, the Charter can be a meaningful instrument to advance these causes, for the inner change involving values and ethics is the only change that will endure, to help us meet the barrage of challenges that we face together today and tomorow.

2. BUILDING BRIDGES

2.1 ENDORSEMENTS



The Earth Charter Initiative began to seek endorsements in July 2000, following the official launch held in June 2000. The concept of endorsement has broadened to include not only signing on, but seeing that the endorsement be put into action to the fullest extent possible. Some examples of endorsements are as follows:

- **The Millennium NGO Forum**, which brought together over 1,000 NGOs for its meeting at the UN headquarters in late May 2000, endorsed the Earth Charter in its final report and Declaration. In "We the Peoples Millennium Forum Declaration and Agenda for Action", the Forum "urges governments to endorse the Earth Charter in the UN General Assembly" and "urges civil society to adopt and disseminate the Earth Charter as a tool for promotion of values and actions which will create sustainable development".
- **The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - ICLEI**, formally endorsed the Earth Charter during its tenth anniversary World Congress held in Wittenberg, Germany. The resolution adopted in July 2000 by ICLEI states: *"We, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, endorse the Earth Charter. We commit our organization to the realization and promotion of its aims. We will seek to apply its principles in our programs, policies and other activities".* The endorsement by ICLEI is a significant step forward in securing government support for the Earth Charter vision.
- **The Amazonian Parliament** during their third Special Assembly, held in Lima, Peru, passed a resolution in July 2000 endorsing the Earth Charter and supporting endorsement by the United Nations General Assembly.
- **The Russian Association of the Indigenous Peoples of the North (RAIPON)**, which includes thirty-one indigenous peoples living in Siberia and the Russian Far East, formally endorsed the Earth Charter at its tenth anniversary meeting in the spring of 2000. In addition, the **Inuit Circumpolar Conference**, the **Fenno-Scandinavian Saami Council**, and the **Danish Committee of Nature and Peoples of the North** have joined RAIPON of Russia in pledging their full support of the Earth Charter. The support of these groups representing the inhabitants of the Arctic is especially significant, since their representatives were concerned with the wording of certain principles in early drafts of the Charter. Their concerns, however, were addressed, and they are now actively engaged in promoting the document.
- **Green Cross International** formally endorsed the Earth Charter during its annual meeting held in June, 2000 in Geneva, Switzerland. The gathering included representatives from its twenty-six national offices.
- **The Sierra Club United States** Board of Directors, during its meeting held in May, 2000 approved the following resolution -which was later approved as well by **The Sierra Club of Canada**'s National Board meeting on June 17, 2000: "The Sierra Club Board, acting upon the recommendation of the International Committee, endorses The Earth Charter, recently issued by the Earth Charter Commission and recommends that Club members and entities study its interdependent principles for a sustainable way of life as a common standard by which the conduct of all individuals, organizations, businesses, governments and transnational institutions is to be guided and assessed".
- **The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka**, led by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, has endorsed and is actively promoting the Earth Charter.
- **The University for Peace** passed a resolution during their Council meeting held in San José, Costa Rica, endorsing the Earth Charter. The resolution states that: "The Council strongly endorses the aims and the content of the Earth Charter and urges the Rector, in the development of the UPeace programme, to take these into account". (November 8, 2000). The University for Peace was created by the United Nations to serve as a center for research and education in support of world peace.
- **The Costa Rican National University** Board of Directors has agreed to start working on a project to integrate the Earth Charter into its curriculum for first year students. The university has organized a number of workshops with students on the theme of the Earth Charter.

- **The Global People s Assembly** voted unanimously that the "Global People's Assembly Service Council endorses and supports the Earth Charter in our work to encourage the development of local and regional People's Assemblies throughout the world."
- **Shalom, the International Network for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame** has endorsed the Earth Charter. This Religious Order has 4800 sisters in 35 countries throughout the world.
- **The National Wildlife Federation**, a premier conservation organization in the United States with over 4 million members and supporters and 46 state affiliate organizations, endorsed the Earth Charter stating: "Understanding that the Earth Charter 'is a declaration of interdependence and responsibility and an urgent call to build a global partnership for sustainable development' we find it consistent with the mission of the National Wildlife Federation. Accordingly, the National Wildlife Federation is pleased to endorse the spirit and aims of the Earth Charter".
- **The Global Security Institute** has endorsed the Earth Charter with a commitment to assist in the distribution of the Earth Charter to its membership and network.
- **The Convergence Foundation** of Canada, a long-term supporter of the Earth Charter has rendered its organizational endorsement and is leading the Earth Charter process in Quebec.
- **Population Coalition**, a US grassroots non-profit organization, has endorsed the Earth Charter and has offered its support by including articles on the Earth Charter in its newsletter, which is distributed among its 6000 members.
- **The Bellagio Forum for Sustainable Development** endorsed the Earth Charter and recommended that all members and affiliated associations also consider supporting the Earth Charter.
- **Medical Mission Sisters** has endorsed the Earth Charter by vote of its International Assembly and has pledged active support through its network organizations.
- **The Canopus Foundation**, a Swiss foundation that promotes the implementation of the concept of sustainable development, has endorsed the Earth Charter and is actively involved in further dissemination of the Charter through its associated organizations.
- **The Asian Council for People s Culture** has endorsed the Earth Charter and is actively promoting it through cultural performances. This Council is a Filipino indigenous people's organization that works with artistic expressions of values and principles for a better world.
- **The Center for Sustainable Development**, has endorsed the Earth Charter and agreed to promote and facilitate its use in Bangladesh.

2.2. INSTITUCIONAL SUPPORT

The following are examples of institutions that have actively collaborated with the Earth Charter Secretariat throughout the year, and serve to highlight the fact that the Earth Charter Initiative is built by those who are motivated to use and disseminate the Charter. It is through partnering and collaboration that we must consciously shape our future.

Amazonian Parliament

See Country update- Venezuela

Baha i International Community

Continuing efforts have been made to publicize the Earth Charter within the Baha'i International Community's network. An article on the development and content of the Earth Charter was published in Herald of the South, the magazine of the Baha'is in Australia and New Zealand. Peter Adriance, liaison for the Baha'i International Community with the Earth Charter Initiative, participated in the Earth Charter launch in The Hague in June. At the launch, Mr. Adriance praised the unprecedented scope of the drafting process and called for the circulation and use of the Charter as an educational tool for living sustainably on Earth. This story was covered in the online version of One Country, the newsletter of the Baha'i International Community.

http://www.onecountry.org/e114/e11414asearthcharter.htm

Boston Research Center for the 21st Century

At the Earth Charter launch in The Hague, Virginia Straus, Executive Director of the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century (BRC), representing Soka

Gakkai International, spoke on the history and current involvement of BRC and SGI with the Initiative. Ms. Straus stated that "We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is primarily about being more, not having more." The BRC has been active in the Earth Charter Initiative since 1997, organizing consultations and workshops as well as putting together three publications on the Earth Charter.

The sixth International Conference of the Society of Buddhist-Christian Studies, which convened in Washington, D.C. in August, provided an opportunity for over 170 scholars, students and practitioners to attend workshops during a whole week centered on "Buddhism, Christianity, and Global Healing." The Earth Charter was discussed over the course of the week in a workshop titled "Spirituality and the Earth Charter: Buddhist and Christian Approaches" led by Virginia Straus and Jay McDaniel of Hendrix College.

GLOBE Southern Africa

The Global Legislators Organization for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE) is an international parliamentary organization striving to improve the global environment through the legislative process and other means. The objectives of GLOBE are to enhance international cooperation among parliamentarians on global environmental issues, highlight environmental problems, urge effective action by governments and private sector leaders, suggest alternative approaches, and exert pressure to develop common environmental policy for sustainability. GLOBE Southern Africa has over 140 members in 15 countries throughout Southern and Eastern Africa. An Earth Charter article was included in their December 2000 newsletter and support for the Earth Charter Initiative has been established.

Green Cross International

Green Cross International formally endorsed the Earth Charter at its June annual meeting. Many branches of Green Cross, including Sweden, Italy and Burkina Faso, have been actively involved in the Earth Charter Initiative, particularly through the Youth Art Contest. Green Cross, in collaboration with UNESCO, FAO, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, has organized three international annual youth contests titled "Images for the Earth", carried out in support of the Earth Charter. In 2000, the theme was "Energy-Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiencies" and the contest included Green Cross participants from eight countries. The final winner was from Burkina Faso. The fourth edition of this contest will take place in the year 2001, with the theme "Trash: Waste and Lifestyles-Nothing is createdor destroyed in Nature, but everything is transformed".



Youth Earth Charter contest poster

(Activities of Green Cross Sweden, Italy, and Burkina Faso are included under the section of Country Updates in this report.)

International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives - ICLEI



The membership of ICLEI includes 350 cities, towns, and counties from all over the world. The Council held its 10th anniversary conference titled "Global Cities 21: ICLEI World Congress 2000" in Germany. The theme of the conference was the implementation of sustainable development at the local level as a transformation process. A special session de-voted to the Earth Charter took place under the theme "The Link between the Earth Charter and Local Sustainable Development Planning". This session presented a historical and contextual explanation of the Earth Charter with examples of specific experiences. On this occasion, the Mayors of Cape Town, South Africa, and Heidelberg, Germany participated in the panel, as well as a representative from the Municipality of San Jose, Costa Rica, who shared with the group their experience in incorporating the Earth Charter as part of their work and training programme. This session was well attended and provided a significant opportunity to foster dialogue. Strategies for involving local governments in the Earth Charter process were explored, in addition to the potential for integrating its principles in local sustainable development planning. This session was co-organized jointly by ICLEI and the Earth Council.

On July 1, during a plenary session held at the Luther Church in the city of Wittenberg, Mr. Maurice Strong, co-chair of the Earth Charter Commission and president of the Earth Council, offered a keynote speech where he made a call for ICLEI members to

embrace the Earth Charter. ICLEI then formally endorsed it and, as a follow-up, the organization is now actively seeking its membership to formally ratify the Earth Charter at public meetings and use the document.

Millennium People s Assembly Network - MPAN

The Service Council of the Global People's Assembly (GPA), created as an initiative of MPAN, voted unanimously to endorse and support the Earth Charter as a foundation document for local and regional People's Assemblies. Susan Zipp, representative of GPA and co-chair of MPAN, has presented the Earth Charter during the holding of local assemblies all over the world. The Earth Charter is used as a basis for discussing global issues at the local level, as well as a foundation document for development and action. On August 31, Ms. Zipp presented the Charter at the GPA special session and, in late 2000, in California, was a keynote speaker at an Earth Charter seminar held in cooperation with the United Nations Association and the World Federalists Association.

Pacifica Graduate Institute

The Pacifica Graduate Institute (PGI) has remained active within the Earth Charter Initiative since 1998. During the drafting process, PGI disseminated the Charter nationwide in the United States, especially among some 5,000 students for comments and feedback. Over the course of the year 2000, PGI promoted and encouraged participation in the Earth Charter Initiative in three major events. The first one was held during the Earth Day (April 22), at Santa Barbara City College (California); the second activity was the Pacifica's International Symposium of Archetypal Psychology (August 31-September 4), and the third event was a free public lecture held in Santa Barbara (November 16). On the occasion of the Earth Day event, Dr. Stephen Aizenstat, founding president of PGI, gave an overview of the Earth Charter process and distributed a handout he had prepared entitled. "Toward an Earth Charter Methodology". This and other materials on the Earth Charter were made available throughout the conference. During the International Symposium and the public lecture, copies of the Earth Charter were distributed among the participants. Continuing efforts and collaboration are expected in the near future.

Soka Gakkai International



In early 2000, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a long standing supporter and promoter of the Earth Charter Initiative, devoted a number of efforts, jointly with Earth Council representatives, to conduct an "Earth Charter Asia Tour". Over a two-week period, different events including exhibitions, panels, academic discussions and youth forums- were held with key local agencies, in order to promote the Earth Charter in the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong, South Korea and Japan. More than 3,000 people attended these events. The following are some highlights of these activities, which can also be found in the section of Country Updates of this report.

Philippines

Using the Earth Charter, awareness raising events took place during Earth Day, as well as litter clean-up activities.

Thailand

"Before It's Too Late", an environmental exhibit launched in January 2000, has toured nine cities and been seen by 180,000 people. In January, a round-table discussion on the Charter was held with the participation of academics and NGOs (co-hosted by the Thai Environment Institute and SGI Thailand).

South Korea

Over 800 people attended an Earth Charter seminar in January (including journalists and NGO activists) organized by the local SGI office. A follow-up panel discussion was also conducted.

Japan

KEEP, an environmental group working with Soka Gakkai in Osaka, is promoting the establishment of a citizen's forum on environmental protection, which will include the Earth Charter. The Soka University, located near Tokyo, is hosting a series of dialogues on the Charter.

2.3. EDUCATION INITIATIVES

The Earth Charter values and principles must be taught, contemplated, applied and internalized. To this end, the Earth Charter needs to be incorporated into both formal and non-formal education. This process must involve various communities, continue to integrate the Charter into the curriculum of schools and universities, and constitute an ongoing process of life-long learning.

Most Earth Charter activities can be defined as educational. Even the consultation process taught those involved a great deal about the common elements that were to be revealed and shared. The information listed below includes some of the special efforts undertaken; these are expected to be duplicated and enhanced by all who teach and develop educational materials on the Earth Charter.

- **UNESCO** has developed a multimedia teacher education programme entitled "Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future" as part of its programme "Educating for a Sustainable Future". The pilot version of the programme, in English, is available online at www.unesco.org/education/tlsf. Once an evaluation of the pilot version is completed, the programme will be finalized, translated into several languages, and made available free of charge by UNESCO on the web and as a CD-ROM.

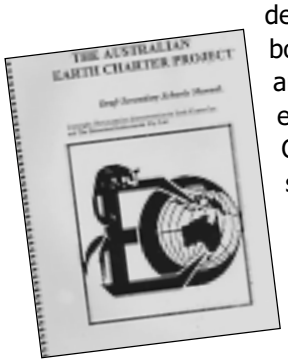
  The UNESCO programme includes a substantial section on the Earth Charter, as well as links to the Earth Charter web page. It also suggests ways to be involved in the Earth Charter process. The rest of the programme provides a valuable overview for teachers of the holistic and interdisciplinary concept of sustainability, its implications for teaching across the curriculum, its emphasis on values and ethics, and teaching strategies and methods that can be used for such subjects. Emphasis is placed on understanding the world around us, at community and at planetary levels, and of the responsibility shared by all to take action to build a sustainable future. This educational initiative is rooted in "a new vision of education which emphasizes a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to developing the knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as changes in values, behavior, and lifestyles". Visit this material at: <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/theme_a/uncofrm_a.htm>
  The home page is <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf.>



- The Programme **Culture for Peace and Democracy in Central America** at the University for Peace has created a teaching module on the Earth Charter, intended for formal and non-formal education. The objectives of the workbook are to engage individuals and groups to 1) reflect on the significance of interdependence, 2) reflect on the importance of an ethic of universal responsibility, and 3) reflect on the importance of adopting a set of values and a lifestyle that respects life and enables a sustainable future for all. This module uses the Earth Charter Preamble as its framework. For more information please contact Abelardo Brenes, e-mail: upazcult@sol.racsa.co.cr

- **University Leaders for a Sustainable Future.** Since early 2000, four organizations with a commitment to making sustainability a major focus in higher education agreed to form a "Global Higher Education for Sustainability Partnership" (GHESP). The organizations involved are the COPERNICUS Programme of the Association of European Universities (CRE), the International Association of Universities (IAU), the University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF); and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The four founding partners of this initiative are combining their strengths in an effort to mobilize universities and higher education institutions to support and teach on sustainable development. The Earth Charter is one of the major tools used in this initiative to promote education for sustainability. For more information please contact Wynn Calder, e-mail: ulsf@aol.com

- **The Australian Earth Charter Committee** has developed Earth Charter workbooks for primary and secondary schools. This is an initial experiment in how the Earth Charter can be utilized in school curricula. These materials cover different areas including English (and other languages), mathematics,



science, technology, health, stu-dies of society and the environment, and arts. Each section includes a main theme, background on the topic, activities and outcomes. During the year 2000, these materials were tested and utilized within a pilot project in 12 schools in the Australian Capital Territory. An evaluation is being prepared and revisions will include adding illustrations to the text and simplifying some activities for the lower-aged classes. Future plans are to create a homepage for these materials, accessible through the Earth Charter website. For more information contact Brendan Mackey, e-mail: Brendan.Mackey@anu.edu.au

- Inspired by the Earth Charter, **Radio Netherlands** office for Latin America, in collaboration with the Earth Council and the UNESCO regional office, developed a storybook called *History of a Neighboring Planet.* The booklet tells the story of beings from another planet who come to Earth to help solve the problems of environmental degradation and create a culture of peace. They also teach humans to care for fundamental issues in life. An exercise booklet based on the Earth Charter accompanies this story, which includes drawings, puzzles and guides for activities to do at home, such as planting a tree and recycling paper and the making of new paper. These booklets were deve-loped in conjunction with radio programmes and a planner book for children, where parts of the Earth Charter text are printed on the back page of each month. All these materials are inspired by the Earth Charter and include its text. For more information please contact José Perez, e-mail: rntccdi@sol.racsa.co.cr





Other organizations, such as the **Paulo Freire Institute**, have included the Earth Charter in their educational material and have used the document in their work and activities. University professors have contacted the Earth Charter Secretariat expressing their wish to use the Charter in individual courses. Inspired by the Earth Charter principles, the **Center for Global Education** in Italy is also promoting a two-year programme on ecological education. Many teachers have requested materials to be used in individually designed curricula.



Requests for Earth Charter materials, texts, and curriculum have increased constantly. In 2001, emphasis will be given in addressing these requests.

2.4. THE YOUTH INITIATIVE

The Earth Charter calls on us to increase our responsibility regarding the inclusion of future generations, as it is appropriate that those who will inherit the Earth be given voice now. The following are examples of some projects developed through the Earth Charter Youth Initiative to achieve this goal:

The Afro-Brazilian Association for Education and Preservation of Life (ABREVIDA)

Abrevida in Sao Paulo, Brazil has been promoting the Earth Charter as the theme of music festivals for young groups since 1999. These festivals are called "Cantando os Sentidos da Vida" (Singing the Meaning of Life) and are entering into the third phase of selecting the best songs that will then be performed in early 2001. A compact disc is expected to be produced as a result of this initiative and will be used to spread the message of the Earth Charter. These festivals are aimed at developing a practical appreciation and use of the Earth Charter among youth living in an under-privileged neighborhood in the city of Sao Paulo, an area with great violence and significant social problems.

Pole to Pole 2000



Pole to Pole was a nine-month journey made by 8 young adults seeking to initiate and support ongoing environmental an humanitarian projects throughout the world. The Pole to Pole team invited their audiences to pledge a shared vision of world harmony in action, by writing

down their personal vows and entrusting them to the expedition. They took these symbols of personal commitment (known as Millennium Challenges) and brought them to their final destination, the South Pole, to show the world that individuals can really make a difference, step by step. On their journey south (through the Americas), the Pole to Pole team passed through Costa Rica and met with Dumisani Nyoni of the Earth Charter Youth Initiative. They agreed to partner and carried the Earth Charter flag with them to the South Pole where, on January 1, 2001, the flag was symbolically planted. "We too must carry the Earth Charter, step by step, and embed it deeply" expressed one of the team members. They are planning two more expeditions, traveling from the South to the North Pole through Africa and Europe, and from the North to the South Pole through Asia and the Pacific.

Soka Gakkai International Hong Kong

Soka Gakkai Hong Kong (SGHK) held an Earth Charter day on Sunday, October 8 with the participation of 300 people. The event was planned by the Student Division (SD) with support of the National Earth Charter Committee. The theme was "The Earth Charter and the Youth". An introduction to the document was given followed by a presentation by the Youth Division Chief entitled "How to make your own Earth Charter". The presentation elaborated on how the Charter relates to our daily lives, and specifically, to life in Hong Kong. As part of this event, a play was presented, describing how democracy and equality start in the family and how to be environmentally conscious in the context of our daily lives.

International Youth Cooperation (IYOCO)

IYOCO is releasing a publication entitled *The Global Network.* It will include an address book of youth organizations worldwide, as well as important documents such as "The Hague Appeal for Peace Youth Agenda", "The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child", and "Twenty Ethics for the New Millennium". The Earth Charter will also be included in this publication. Distribution of this address book will provide youth organizations that do not have access to the Internet with the ability to communicate with other youth organizations around the world via other means (telephone, fax and/or mail). Some American youth networks are teaming up to create the digital, search-engine version of this publication.

Roda Viva-Brazil

Roda Viva in Rio de Janeiro has been developing a youth project for water quality monitoring at a watershed situated inside a conservation unit at the *Pedra Branca* State Park. They have been contacted by the Earth Charter Secretariat and are exploring the possibility of utilizing the Earth Charter as part of their ongoing training with youth.

The United Nations Student Association of Japan

The UN Student Association of Japan has formally endorsed the Earth Charter through the Earth Charter website. They plan on using it as a discussion tool and formulating ways to promote the document through their networks and affiliates. Moreover, plans are underway to have the Earth Charter included as a topic of discussion at the World Youth Congress to be held in 2002.

Youth Employment Summit (YES)
- Education Development Center, Boston, U.S.A

YES and the Earth Charter Secretariat agreed to join efforts in a partnership that will illustrate how employment creation projects can be effectively carried out using the Earth Charter as a guiding instrument. This project is also an example of a network made up of civil society, local governments, and youth groups. The focus of this initiative is a pilot project in Costa Rica that will use the Earth Charter as a guiding framework to address the issue of renewable energy development through the creation of sustainable livelihoods for youth.

2.5. THE ART PAGE



One of the ways the Earth Charter can be used is by inspiring those who read it to express its message through art, which has been proven to be a successful practice. Those who have transposed its words to artistic vision engage our imaginations and feelings and confirm that the Earth Charter's words reach into the core of what is

most human in us all. The Earth Charter has inspired paintings, drawings, collages, poems, and songs. These responses to the Earth Charter are a celebration to our initiative, and they strike ageless and universal chords. The Secretariat has put together an art section within the Charter's website displaying some of the artwork. The Art Page can be found at: http://www.earthcharter.org/art/

2.6. NEWSLETTERS, BULLETINS AND BOOKLETS

The following are some examples of publications in which the Earth Charter is featured.



Pedagogia da Terra
(Pedagogy of Earth)

By Moacir Gadotti, Editora Fundaçao Petrópolis, Sao Paulo

In this book Moacir Gadotti goes in depth on his previous thoughts in "Ecopedagogy and Sustainable Education", which today he calls Pedagogy of the Earth. Gadotti addresses the issues of trans-disciplinarity, sustainability, ethics, and global citizenship. The relationship of environmental education and eco-pedagogy is addressed, and the Earth Charter is widely presented as a planetary code of ethics.

Newsletter published by the Italian Earth Charter Group, Pronatura. This was a special issue on the Earth Charter, which was widely distributed in Italy.



Magazines where the Earth Charter is featured in the United Kingdom





The Peace Scroll, by Seed of Life Peace Foundation. Compiled and edited by Diana Rhodes, it has been elaborated using written proclamations of peace from World Leaders, Spiritual Leaders, Groups, organizations and individuals. This inspirational book can be used as a source in which to dip for daily intuitive guidance. The Earth Charter Initiative is a major focus in this publication, which features the history of the initiative and the document itself.



"In the Earth Charter, besides scientific, technological and economic directions, you will also find there is a running thread of spirituality, of peace and non-violence, of the need for compassion for others. The Earth Charter pleads for a new vision, a vision that recognizes that we are all one human family with a common destiny in spite of different social, cultural and biological diversity".

-Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Earth Charter Commissioner, India.

"I believe that the Earth Charter gives ethical and moral orientations that will help to strengthen the human spirit. Only a person who has self-confidence and is open to friendship and solidarity, can answer the challenges of our time. The Earth Charter opens a new phase not only in ecological movement, but also in the world's public life. We must do everything we can, so that this Charter is accepted exactly as it was designed: a set of vitally important rules".

-Hon. Mikhail Gorbachev, President of Green Cross International/Earth Charter Commissioner, Russia

" The Earth Charter is not a sacred writ, not something that we want simply people to sign on to. We want them to use it as a tool, to examine their own spiritual, ethical and moral motivational structures, to see how these can apply in practical ways to their own life, to the institutions they serve, to the governments and to international organizations".

*-**Hon. Maurice Strong, President of the Earth Council and Earth Charter Commissioner, Canada***

3. COUNTRY UPDATES

3.1 AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST



Benin

In October 2000, a new alliance was formed with the NGO known as Benin 21. The mission of this organization is to inspire local populations, encourage them to conserve the integrity of the diversity of nature, and assure that the use of their resources be economically and socially sustainable. To achieve these objectives, Benin 21 organizes conferences and workshops and lends support to diverse environmental protection efforts. Benin 21 is the facilitator of the Earth Charter Initiative in this country and is incorporating the Charter values and ethics in its own organizational framework.

Benin 21 has disseminated the Earth Charter among governmental agencies and officials, such as the Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Education. Private institutional collaboration includes the Network for Sustainable Agriculture Development and the Regroupement des Acteurs en Environnement Collines (Grouping of Environmental Actors). A short version of the Charter in French is being distributed for easier comprehension to larger groups of society. This version is being translated into local languages such as Fon, spoken by about 55% of the population; Adja and Idaatcha, common in the agricultural regions (which have been affected by desertification); and Dendi or Baatonu. These translations provide Earth Charter accessibility for the entire nation. Future plans include the dissemination of these translations, as well as ongoing discussions and presentations of the Earth Charter through different expressions and artists (singers, theater actors, and local comedians).

Burkina Faso

The Association of Volunteers for Development (AVD) actively promoted the Earth Charter during the year 2000. The document was included in the National Preparatory Workshop of the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), held on September 21-22 in Crepa. Discussions were held on the background and drafting process of the Earth Charter and included participants from women's organizations, prominent NGOs, youth groups and state officials. Introduction and dissemination of the Charter also took place in meetings of the Regional Committee concentrated on desertification and of the National Committee for the Selection of Projects. Environmental education using the Earth Charter has been conducted in workshops, and song and art contests have been conducted involving both of adults and youth.

In addition, the Green Cross office of Burkina Faso continues to promote the Earth Charter through the annual Youth Art Contest "Images of the Earth Charter", engaging students and schools. The topic of the 2001 contest will be "Trash: Waste and Lifestyles. Nothing is created or destroyed in Nature, but everything is transformed". Through this organization, the Earth Charter is being continuously promoted as a fundamental educational tool.

Cameroon

The NGO known as Nouvelle Afrique joined the Earth Charter Initiative in October 2000 and became its facilitator in Cameroon. This organization, officially formed in 1994, is a "club" of reflection made up of over 45 members. The purpose of Nouvelle Afrique is to open a forum for the discussion of issues related to modern life, along with recommendations and potential actions. Earth Charter activities have included its dissemination throughout the 10 provinces of Cameroon and among NGOs, spiritual groups, students, and political representatives. Future activities involve awareness-raising workshops within local communities and widespread media coverage. Efforts have been made to attend numerous events to reach individuals, organizations, and students, in order to encourage them to read, discuss, and put into action the principles of the Earth Charter.

Specific events where the Charter has been presented and disseminated, and where endorsements have been collected, include the National Arts and Culture Festival held in Limbe in December, which offered an opportunity to present the document to a receptive group of artists and intellectuals; a presentation to an ecumenical youth group in Douala, wherein the theme of interdependence as the main basis for the development of the Earth Charter led to discussions on religion, as a reference for interdependence; and, at Ngondo, a large cultural event in the region. On this occasion, the presentation

of the Charter was followed by a debate on the specific environmental problems faced in the Sawa region of Cameroon. Discussions were held regarding the United Nations support to the Charter and a number of suggestions were made, including the use of both international publicity and the document to focus attention on regional environmental issues. Earth Charter meetings are planned to be held with political parties, the Association for Women Jurors, the Alliance for a Just and Responsible World, and the Rotary Club, among others.

Egypt

The relationship with the Arab NGO Network for the Environment and Development (RAED) was strengthened during the year 2000. For years, RAED has been a collaborator with the Earth Council and, in this context, became involved with the Earth Charter Initiative. RAED´s tasks have focused on the promotion of the Charter in Egypt and the use of the document in the context of the country's activities. RAED works in collaboration with the Arab Office for the Youth and the Environment and its goals are:

- To gather, disseminate, and exchange regional and international data on different environmental and development problems;
- To serve as a coordinator for a number of regional community organizations, particularly regarding the exchange of skills and information;
- To mobilize already existing grassroots organizations to share this information and partake in the problem-solving process;
- To create new grassroots activities to be implemented by RAED's member organizations; and,
- To encourage the inclusion of community participation projects in government programmes.

Plans for next year include the widespread dissemination of the Earth Charter within various sectors of Egyptian society, awareness-raising activities, and the promotion of participation within the Earth Charter Initiative. RAED will organize a National Forum, inviting government representatives, parliamentarians, the academic sector, professional associations, business and religious groups, and NGOs.

Kenya

Through a long-time alliance with the Earth Charter project, the Green Belt Movement (GBM) has continued to be involved in the Initiative as the facilitator in Kenya, under the leadership of Professor Wangari Maathai, president of GBM and Earth Charter Commissioner. GBM is a grassroots NGO that focuses on environmental conservation and community development and is currently incorporating the Earth Charter into its major activities as a values framework. GBM is made up of different members, and each group implements the projects promoted by the Movement, such as the Earth Charter. Future plans include the continuation of widespread dissemination of the Charter and holding a conference intended for major stakeholders in the private, public, and NGO sectors to raise awareness of the Earth Charter and to encourage these sectors to become involved.

Mali

During the second half of the year 2000, the Association de Formation et d'Appui au Développement (AFAD - Association for the Formation and Support of Development) joined the Earth Charter Initiative, as a result of ongoing communication with the Secretariat. Activities carried out by AFAD have included the promotion of traditional medicine and the regeneration of medicinal plants; the transfer of technology regarding health issues (latrines, production of soaps and other health-related products); economic development, including training for rural populations and assistance and advice in relation to micro-enterprising. AFAD has shown great interest in the Earth Charter Initiative and, after holding inter-organizational meetings to discuss its implementation, the Association is currently incorporating the document into a number of already existing activities and broadly disseminating it throughout Mali. The Charter has been presented to the president of the Republic of Mali, the president of the National Assembly, the mayor of Bamako and the representative of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Bamako, among others. Existing plans include the strengthening of this dissemination initiative and the use of the Earth Charter throughout the country.

Mauritius

Over the course of the year 2000, students and

youth at large –considered the leaders of tomorrow– were fully involved in the Earth Charter process in Mauritius. It has been stated that "because the Charter is a code of conduct and a set of values, it is imperative that youth be exposed to these codes and values. Such codes and values will guide our youth to become the informed leaders of tomorrow." With this in mind, students and youth representatives agreed to create a forum facilitated by MAUDESCO. The Mauritius Youth Earth Charter Forum is promoting the document within the country and plans to extend its activities to its neighboring island States in the Indian Ocean. It also plans to establish an Indian Ocean Youth Forum for the Earth Charter. MAUDESCO has coordinated the Earth Charter process in Mauritius for three years, holding a number of consultations during this period. They are now focusing on youth participation and education by engaging individuals and groups to think of how the Earth Charter could be used in their particular areas.

Niger

During the year 2000, the National Environment Council for Sustainable Development of Niger (NECSD) held three training sessions on environment, development, and the Earth Charter. The training workshops were aimed at promoting the integration of environmental dimensions and fundamental ethical principles for a sustainable way of life into decisions made when formulating policies, programmes and projects. These sessions also intended to train senior managers of the public service in the evaluation and analysis of environmental impacts when dealing with development plans, programmes and projects.

During the part of the programme devoted to the Earth Charter, participants discussed the past involvement of Niger in the Earth Charter consultation process in 1999, the meaning and content of the Charter, and the need to continue with the process of implementation, use, and dissemination of the document. These sessions also established a working network between the NECSD and the administrative structure of civil society and the government. By using this network, the NECSD will be able to advance and evaluate the National Plan for the Environment and for Sustainable Development.

The last training session on the environment, development, and the Earth Charter, held on September 20-28, 2000 in the city of Torodi, brought together over 40 participants. Mr. Sala Assane Amadou, director of the Prime Minister's Office and president of the National Environment Council for Sustainable Development, chaired the opening of the workshop. During his speech, Mr. Assane Amadou, stressed the need to have the NECSD promote the dissemination and the use of the Earth Charter. He also stated that one of the major objectives that the NECSD should seek is to significantly change communities through education and by fostering a more inclusive viewpoint on environmental protection. Mr. Assane Amadou highlighted the role and responsibility of both the State and civil society to awakening a consciousness toward sustainability. He finally expressed his interest in the Earth Charter, since it does not only sets out the elements of sustainable development, but also explores the interrelationship of these elements, forming a cohesive whole. This meeting was sponsored by the Earth Charter Secretariat, jointly with the UNDP and Capacity 21 offices, which are seeking to advance the Niger process of establishing a National Plan for the Environment and for Sustainable Development.

The headquarters of the NECSD is located in the office of the Prime Minister. This illustrates the support achieved at the national level to implement the principles of sustainable development. Currently, a proposal submitted to the Prime Minister on integrating an Earth Charter Committee within the government is being considered. Among others, this committee would:

- Disseminate Earth Charter materials;
- Promote the use of the Charter through the existing network of the NECSD and training sessions;
- Translate and reproduce the Earth Charter into the main languages of this country;
- Ensure that the Charter principles are taken into consideration in national development plans;
- Have the Earth Charter endorsed by national civil and governmental organizations, prior to its submission for adoption by the parliament and the national government.

Nigeria

During the year 2000, the NGO Coalition for the Environment (NGOCE) initiated a dissemination and promotion process for the Earth Charter. NGOCE has

been in constant communication with the Secretariat and current plans include the translation of the Earth Charter into local languages such as Huasa, Yoruba, or Fulani, in order to reach more diverse population groups. NGOCE also started approaching other NGOs, businesses, and the government to engage in the Earth Charter Initiative, as well as to use and endorse the document.

Uganda

Integrated Rural Development Initiatives (IRDI), an NGO involved in the Earth Charter process since 1998, continues to be engaged in the Initiative and in the use of the Charter. Their belief is that sustainable development will be achieved by raising awareness of the consequences derived from human activities on Earth. Focusing on youth, IRDI has conducted workshops within schools aimed at promoting conservation and sustainable practices and using the Earth Charter as a tool for discussion. Tree planting has constituted an important component of these workshops, to instill vivid conservation understanding among children. Future plans include essay writing competitions, plays, music, and radio programmes in order to reach different sectors of the population. Work will also be conducted on the Earth Charter with Wildlife Clubs of Uganda and other organizations to promote the conservation of natural resources and create an environmentally literate population.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has taken part in the drafting process since 1998. In 2000, much was accomplished through the Africa 2000 Network. Most activities focused on the promotion of the Earth Charter Initiative, particularly regarding the vision of the document among groups of rural areas, as well as the understanding and strengthening of the initiative among indigenous people's. The Earth Charter is being promoted as a guide for planning, discussing, and implementing sustainable development policies.

General Update

During the second half of the year 2000, the Earth Charter Secretariat established initial contact with other countries in the region and further collaboration is anticipated, especially in the following countries:

In Iran, Mr. Taghi Farvar, of the Center for Sustainable Development (CENESTA), has expressed interest in disseminating the Earth Charter in this and in translating the Earth Charter into Persian.

In Morocco, Dr. Mohamed Ftouhi, of the Moroccan Club for Education in Population and the Environment, has endorsed the Earth Charter and will include it in educational activities and future research conducted on the environment.

In Tunisia, Dr. Abrougui Mohamed Ali, President of L'ATPNE (the Tunisian Association for the Protection of Nature and the Environment) has disseminated the Earth Charter through a civil society forum, which has brought together about 300 European and Mediterranean NGOs. Ongoing participation is expected.

3.2. ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Australia

The Australian National Earth Charter Committee continues to be active in the dissemination and promotion of the Earth Charter. The Committee has organized many events that have brought together different sectors of society. The Western Australia Earth Charter Committee held its own launch of the document on November 1st, 2000 at the Freemantle Art Centre, which lies south of Perth. This event was organized by the NGO known as Planit. On June 9, during the World Environment week, the governor, Sir Eric Neale, launched the Earth Charter in Adelaide, South Australia. The event was jointly sponsored by HASSELL Pty. Ltd. and the City of Salisbury and was attended by some 80 business leaders, State and local government representatives, and community and environmental organizations. Students of the Thomas More College sang an Earth Charter song, written by Nick Vall and arranged by Glyn Lehmann.

In Brisbane, an academic workshop on the Earth Charter was held at the Centre for Ethics, Justice, Law and Governance, Griffith University, followed by meetings with the State Premier's office and the Brisbane Deputy Lord Mayor. The Earth Charter was also presented at a forum entitled "Business Leaders for Sustainable Development", attended by approximately 100 heads of business and enterprises. As a result, four companies have agreed to participate in a steering committee to establish an NCSD in Australia,

under the auspices of the Earth Charter Committee.

The Australian National Earth Charter Committee, the Earth Charter Committee of the State of Queensland, and the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice, and Governance at Griffith University, jointly with the Earth Charter International Secretariat, are planning to hold an Asia Pacific Regional Earth Charter Conference, which will take place from November 28 to December 2, 2001. The Forum has been planned in Brisbane, due to the strong support given there to both the Earth Charter Initiative and sustainability issues. One of the main goals of this forum is to promote and secure commitment to the Charter as an international covenant by civil society, governments, and business/industries in the Asia Pacific region. This will also support the attainment of endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations General Assembly in 2002. Themes of the conference will revolve around the four main principles of the document: Respect and Care for the Community of Life, Ecological Integrity, Social and Economic Justice; and Democracy, Non-violence, and Peace.

An example of grassroots community action catalyzed by the Charter is the programme developed by the Ngaduri Earth Charter Group. This community of rural women in the Barrossa valley has committed to give expression to principle 12 of the Earth Charter by working with the Wirrigu, a local indigenous group. This is a long-term commitment based on the donation of a property to the Wirrigu people as a resource for hosting activities, and on the ongoing maintenance of this property together with catering for the healing workshops held at the property.

The Ngadjuri Earth Charter Group meets on a regular basis to discuss ways of incorporating the Charter principles into their everyday lives. Ngadjuri is an Aboriginal language clan in South Australia. Each month, an Earth Charter principle is selected for discussion, starting from principle one and continuing sequentially. It is also the objective of this group to carry out and be involved in projects that benefit and educate the broader community on the Charter. Promotion of the document as a blueprint for a way of life is an important aspect to the group.

During one of their Earth Charter meetings, the group hosted a special guest-speaker, a 45-year-old Aboriginal Wirrigu woman who shared her experiences as a "stolen generation" child. She spoke about being placed in white foster homes and being systematically abused, her slide into self-destruction, but also her climb out of it. She now works with Aboriginal people in "Healing Circles" to help them transcend the sense of loss and grief caused by the many cruelties carried out historically and through certain current attitudes. Deeply impacted by her account, the *Ngadjuri* Earth Charter group offered their support to her future work, including cooking at the Healing Circles and helping to maintain the one-hectare *Ngadjuri* sanctuary, which has been placed in her hands.

Bangladesh

The Centre for Sustainable Development, under the leadership of Mahfuz Ullah, who is also the chairperson of IUCN National Committee, is engaged in the use and dissemination of the Earth Charter in Bangladesh. They have planned at this stage the following activities:

1. Discussion meetings on application of Earth Charter as a guide for national planning;

2. Production of a briefing kit for journalists;

3. Incorporation of Earth Charter as a topic for discussion in training programmes for teachers and journalists;

4. Signature campaign for creating pressure on the government to endorse the Earth Charter and;

5. Incorporating information on global progress of Earth Charter in its monthly newsletter.



The Centre has produced and disseminated a booklet on the Earth Charter in the national language.

China

During the year 2000, Dr. Kangsheng Zhang, executive director of INFOTERRA, supported the dissemination and promotion of the Earth Charter in China. An Earth Charter booklet in Chinese was published and disseminated among various institutions including universities, colleges, government offices, NGOs, public libraries, and scientific and technical institutes all over the country. The material has also been made available to some 20 government Ministers. The goal of said activities is to advance the process of environmental protection and the implementation of sustainable development in China. In addition, Dr. Qian Ning, a well-known Chinese writer, helped to adapt the Earth Charter text, so that the current



Chinese version of the Charter uses a language that may convey the meaning of the principles more closely than the one resulted from only a direct translation. This is intended to increase the access of youth to the real meaning of the Earth Charter enabling them to better identify themselves with the issues and principles discussed.

The New School of Collaborative Learning (NSCL), an international bilingual school founded in Beijing, which focuses on nurturing self-motivated global citizenship, has included the Earth Charter as part of their science curriculum for 8th and 12th grades. In addition, the head of this school has reported that aspects of the Charter will be used in the Science Fair to be held on March 15, 2001, as well as during the holding of an NGO/IGO conference. Stephanie Tansey, a Senior Curriculum Advisor who promoted this initiative for NSCL, first used the Earth Charter during the Spring of 2000 as part of the school's Youth Conference on Creating a Sustainable Community. For more information on NSCL, please contact Jon Zatkin, Head of School, e-mail: nscl@netchina.com.cn, fax: 8610-6298-1620; or Stephanie Tansey, e-mail: tansey@usa.net

Hong Kong/China

Following the initial events described on page 8 of this report, which were co-sponsored by the Hong Kong Sustainable Development Forum and SGI -Hong Kong, special study groups on the Earth Charter have been set up within SGIHK. In June, the Student Division held an exhibition on the Earth Charter in the context of the environmental problems faced in Hong Kong. Student members of SGI presented on the Earth Charter during all regular SGIHK discussion meetings in July 2000.

India

Between May 1999 and May 2000, the Centre for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CESDI) organized a number of consultations and initiated discussions on the Earth Charter in different regions of the country such as Tiruvalla (Kerala), Bangalore (Karnataka), Baroda (Gujarat) and New Delhi. Articles and interviews focusing on the Earth Charter process and highlighting efforts of individuals and organizations on behalf of this initiative were published (including "Environmental Day Focus on Sustainable Development" by The New Indian Press). CESDI also published a special issue of its newsletter on April 22, 2000, focusing on the Earth Charter in connection with World Earth Day celebrations. Copies of the newsletter were sent to a large number of individuals, groups and organizations, contributing to increasing the dissemination of the Earth Charter worldwide.

In addition, the Delhi Public School Society (DPSS), under the leadership of Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Earth Charter Commissioner and Chair of the DPSS, has been utilizing the Earth Charter to raise awareness among thousands of children regarding sustainability principles and as an instrument for environmental education activities. The DPSS works with a number of schools in New Delhi and has integrated the Earth Charter as part of its activities with students. To illustrate this, Suleena Sapra, Director of DPSS, expressed that: "the underlying principles of the Earth Charter require a climate of peace for present and future generations. Keeping this in mind over a thousand children took a pledge for peace and signed the Declaration of Peace and Non-Violence which was inspired in the Earth Charter".

Students between the ages of 16 and 17 discussed the Earth Charter and held various public hearings for improving and taking care of the Earth. The students interacted with bureaucrats and political leaders, and asked probing questions. Also, water harvesting structures have been promoted in 60 of these schools in an effort to raise the ground water level of the land. The schools also printed a newsletter focusing on the Earth Charter principles as they relate to the caring of Earth.

Japan

An Earth Charter gathering with participants from private companies, NGOs, academia and members of the Parliament took place on January 24, 2000 at the House of Councilors. Mrs. Wakako Hironaka, Earth Charter commissioner and parliament member, convened the meeting, which included a presentation by Mr. Maurice Strong. The purpose of the gathering was to promote the participation of key Japanese

individuals and organizations in the Earth Charter Initiative. Earth Charter materials have been translated and printed in Japanese for dissemination. Mrs. Hironaka continues promoting the Charter as appropriate. The Green Cross office in Japan also continues to be involved in and supportive of the Earth Charter.

Malaysia

Organized by Soka Gakkai Malaysia (SGM), a forum entitled "Earth Charter: Its Contribution to Mankind in the 21st Century," was held on January 15 –17 and was attended by approxmately 1200 individuals. During this Environment Awareness Week, SGM opened an exhibit on the Earth Charter, which was attended by a large number of people, including school children. The event was sponsored by the Rotary Club and was held at the National Science Center in Kuala Lumpur. In addition, SGM held a series of other discussions and consultations on the Earth Charter and launched a Waste Recycling Project with a local NGO called "Treat Every Environment Special". This event included the Earth Charter in its agenda. In May, the SGM's Student Division joined the "Book Fair 2000", organized by the National Science Center, which attracted some 10,000 students. The SGM Student Division set up an exhibition to raise awareness of the Earth Charter and to demonstrate the environmental impact caused by the increase of paper consumption.



The Local Agenda 21/Sustainable Development Sub-committee organized a seminar on September 2, entitled "Training and Orientation Programme on the Principles of the Earth Charter". This seminar was led by Mr. C. C. Looi of Global Environment Center and Dr. Rajalingham Subramaniam, chairman of the Local Agenda 21 / Sustainable Development Sub-committee. Approximately 25 people attended this event, mostly community leaders within the municipality. The objective of this activity was to disseminate the Earth Charter and obtain feedback through a training and orientation programme. The seminar addressed local community leaders in the town of Petaling, Jaya in Malaysia, but the effects were broadened as the meeting called upon the Municipal County and the Ministry of Local Government and Housing to incorporate the principles of the Charter in those programmes aimed at implementing Local Agenda 21.

Nepal

The Nepal Earth Society was founded during the year 2000 with the specific purpose of supporting the Earth Charter Initiative in Nepal. This group has produced an Earth Charter brochure in both Nepali and Newari languages. Education programmes for school children using the Charter as a tool are underway in various parts of the Nepal kingdom, with over 1600 students already having benefited from these programmes.

In addition, a Nepali version of the Earth Charter has been disseminated among upper and lower house members of Parliament. Discussions with both the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Social Welfare, regarding the document, proved to be useful in promoting the Initiative. A national meeting on the Earth Charter, to be held in Pokhara Tourist City in early 2001, is being planned with the cooperation of the Kaski Environmental Journalist Society.



The Forum For Solidarity Equality Environment & Development also joined the Earth Charter Initiative. They have endorsed the Charter and are in the process to form a school network and a women network in partnership with grassroot organizations.

New Zealand/Aotearoa

A seminar on the Earth Charter, organized by the International Law Association (New Zealand branch), jointly with the New Zealand Centre for Environmental Law (NZCEL), took place on September 14. The seminar was led by Dr. Klaus Bosselmann, director of the NZCEL and one of the world's leading environmental lawyers and a pioneer on the issue of sustainable development. The history, purpose, and principles of the Earth Charter were presented for discussion. NZCEL coordinates the New Zealand National Earth Charter Campaign, with the aim of

promoting sustainability within the central and local governments, business and other key sectors of society.

In February 2000, The Tindall Foundation provided a grant to the NZCEL to help set up the National Earth Charter Campaign. In April 2000, a coordinating group was formed to establish a National Earth Charter Committee. In November, Prime Minister Helen Clark welcomed an Earth Charter delegation in her office and was briefed on the national campaign, which is currently working to obtain government endorsement in preparation for the UN General Assembly in 2002. Among other initiatives, a project to prepare a book of stories of New Zealanders and their relationship with the land (with a perspective on the Earth Charter principles) is being developed. Some leading educational bodies have included the Charter in their policy development, aiming at having the document included in the school curriculum, as has been done in Australia.

The National Committee has employed a campaign manager who is in the process of developing a national strategy. A Campaign Plan has been drafted and includes a case study for the implementation of the Earth Charter, focusing on Tongariro National Park, due to its national importance and the close connection between the natural environment and human settlements in the region. The case study will conclude with a Tongariro Conference, to be held in March or April 2001, which will also promote dialogue among various groups regarding the importance and implementation of the Charter. They have also developed an Earth Charter New Zealand website: http://www.earthcharter.auckland.ac.nz/

The Philippines

The Core Group for the Philippine Participation to the Earth Charter has continued with its consistent and ongoing promotion of this document as a valuable and holistic mechanism within a multi-sectoral society. In this context, the Philippine Institute of Alternative Futures (PIAF) has been offering and conducting training on sustainable development and the Earth Charter.

Under the coordination of PIAF, the Core Group achieved significant participation of a number of individuals in the Earth Charter activities during Earth Day celebrations in April 2000. An Earth Charter booth was placed in the celebration´s venue for distribution of materials and general information on the document. Training sessions and a forum with youth organizations and Earth Charter participants at large were conducted. These brief presentations triggered profound insights from school pupils who paraphrased the call of the Earth Charter as "live and lead a simple lifestyle". The booth was a contribution of the Core Group, both for continuing with the Earth Charter Campaign and for making the observance of the Earth Day as an inherent part of each Filipino's daily life. The Earth Charter Polling Station and Information Center was also a stage to review the Filipino Contribution to the People's Earth Charter that was crafted and adopted in June 1995.

In addition, inspired and based on the Charter, the Earth Scouts inaugurated their programme in Cahbriba, on September 22. In the words of Angel Ramos: "the Earth Scouts Programme promotes and nurtures the principles of the Earth Charter among children at the earliest possible age and through their most crucial formative years. It is voluntary and open to young people aged 3-16 who, with the active support of parents and guardians, undertake a continuous series of learning and experiential activities focused on the environment, all within the spirit of camaraderie and fun. Upon distinct achievement or completion of certain tasks designed appropriately for each age group, the child earns recognition and receives a badge, which is the basis for promotion to the next merit level. Thus, membership in the Earth Scouts entails a constant challenge to advance and progress in one's development as a good environmental citizen and advocate".

The launch event of the Earth Scouts started with an introductory overview, explaining the context and the significance of the Earth Scouts and the Earth Charter principles, followed by presentations that included a dance based on Joey Ayala's Magkaugnay, a celebration of our interconnectedness with all beings. Several modules of the "Earth Laboratory", which will be part of the facilities of the Earth Scouts, were then shown. The children who participated enthusiastically recited an Earth Scouts Induction Oath which is taken from the first four principles of the Charter. Dr. Cielito Habito commented: "I thought it was rather heartwarming to see the level of enthusiasm in the school and how well they embraced the concept". Following is The Earth Scouts' Induction Oath:

I, _____, in oneness with Mother Earth, hereby dedicate myself to serve her:

- *To respect her and all the life she holds.*
- *To care for the community of life in all its richness and diversity;*
- *To help build a free, just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful society; and*
- *To secure the Earth s bounty and beauty for all people now and all those yet to come.*

As an Earth Scout, I pledge to live these values, and to work to spread them in my family, my school, my community, my country, and in the entire world.

So help me God.

The hope is to have this type of activity duplicated throughout the world for the education of children on environmental protection and respect for all life forms, as well as toward the adoption of values for a sustainable future.

Singapore

The Singapore Soka Gakkai Association with the support of the Singapore Environment Council, held a seminar-workshop on the Earth Charter in January 2000. The event included the participation of some 80 to 90 representatives from different sectors of society, including grassroots organizations in art and cultural movements, youth and women interest groups, environmental associations, religious groups, and voluntary organizations. The workshop topics included "Civil Society and the Earth Charter", "Spiritual Perspectives on the Earth Charter", and "Youth and the Earth Charter: The Role of Education". Discussions included the exploration of feelings and relationships between the people and government of Singapore, the political and economic situation of the country, and the assessment of Singapore's involvement in issues dealing with sustainable development. Discussions focused on the influence of people on the government. Current plans include the creation of a project entitled "Our Common Future", aimed at educating youth on sustainable development issues.

In addition to this full day workshop, a forum entitled "The Youth and the Earth Charter" was held, and was attended by approximately 600 Singapore Soka Association Youth Division members, with discussions facilitated by Ms. Joan Anderson of Soka Gakkai. The Singapore Environment Council also continues to contribute to and support the initiative.

South Korea

A seminar called "Conceptualization of the Earth Charter and Its Role in Korean Society" was organized by the Earth Charter Research Team. The event was held at the Seoul National University, focusing on ways to use and conceptualize the Charter in Korean terms and the role of the document in civil society.

In January 2000, Ms. Ella Antonio, of the Earth Council, and Ms. Joan Anderson, of Soka Gakkai, facilitated several Earth Charter-related activities, including a dialogue with about 30 members of Soka Gakkai Korea. An Earth Charter seminar was held with approximately 800 people and the media. Discussions during the seminar focused on the next phase of the Initiative and how to internalize the Charter values through self-examination and transformation. Recommendations were made for larger environmental organizations to take an active role in future activities. In both events, commitment and support were obtained from the participants.

On May 17th, 2000, a seminar entitled "The Earth Charter, Agenda 21, and Korean Civil Society", was co-presented by the Korean National Earth Charter facilitator, Sungnok Andy Choi, along with the chairman of Incheon City Agenda, the deputy minister of the Environment and the director of the Korean Committee of Earth Day. The vice-mayor of Hanam delivered the keynote speech and presentations included the following: "The Role and Position of the Earth Charter Campaign in Korean Civil Society" and "Relationships between the Earth Charter Campaign and Local Agenda 21", as well as other international environmental and related issues. Cooperation between the Korean Earth Charter Campaign and the Korean Conference of Local Agenda 21 was suggested, with the possibility to use the Charter as a guiding code for their discussions and activities.

Materials were translated into Korean and Earth Charter t-shirts were printed and broadly distributed together with Earth Charter badges with an image of the Korean character. A campaign was implemented for the naming of the Korean Earth Charter character and some 200 applicants and students from more than 50 schools participated. The name chosen for the character was ZIZI (Zero Infection, Zero Injuries). Traditionally, this term has been used by Koreans to refer to bad behaviors that



must be changed or stopped.

A Korean Earth Charter homepage was made available to the public who needed environmental information and to raise awareness of the Earth Charter on the Internet. The URL of this website is http://www.z9.or.kr. National and international campaign activities are also available in Korean for public access. The endorsement and implementation process is also underway with the campaign having called upon some 150 NGOs and groups from Local Agenda 21 for participation. Currently, there are 20 civil society organizations participating in the Earth Charter Initiative and major endorsements are expected throughout the year 2001.

Sri Lanka

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka (SSM) has been educating village groups about the Earth Charter and encouraging people to implement in a practical way its principles at the local level. On August 27, over 2,000 people got together in a remote and inaccessible village to learn about the Earth Charter, construct a village center, and engage in a mass meditation programme. Dr. Ariyaratne, President of SSM and member of the Earth Charter Commission conducted the Earth Charter work session. Similar workshops are being held in various parts of Sri Lanka.

Thailand

On January 11, 2000 a National Earth Charter consultation illustrated a collaborative effort between the Thai Society of Value Creation and the Japanese Buddhist Society. His Excellency, Mr. Anand Panyarachun, former prime minister of Thailand, opened the event. Also, the Thailand Environment Institute fostered the translation of the Earth Charter, as well as its dissemination through various events and networks, including the following:

On May 26, during the Local Agenda 21 Task Force Orientation Seminar, the Earth Charter was presented as ethical guidelines. The Local Agenda 21 Task Forceis a multi-stakeholder, participatory, public/private sector partnership that gathers experts to mobilize necessary resources to develop sustainable cities, using Local Agenda 21 as a major tool.

In June, as part of the World Environment Day events, the Charter was presented as an ethical guide to hundreds of participants in Chaiyaphum Province. On June 8, a national radio programme on the Earth Charter was transmitted. Also in June, the document was presented during a meeting of the Society for the Conservation of Natural Resources and Environment, and at the International Congress on Environmental Ethics and Education.

On August 16 and 23, at the International Congress on Environmental Ethics and Education, the Earth Charter was presented by Dr. Chamniern Vorratnchaiphan of the Thailand Environment Institute. The presentation was followed by a discussion on environmental ethics in general and the Rio Principles of 1992 in particular. Linkages were drawn to Eastern philosophies and Buddhism, with local Agenda 21 recognized as the means to translate ethical values for sustainable development into action.

The Earth Charter was featured during the ASEAN meeting on Agenda 21 and Eco-Tourism, held in September at World Habitat Day 2000 that took place in October, and during the annual meeting of the Thailand Environment Institute held on November 9.

From December 4 – 6, 2000 on the occasion of the birthday of the King of Thailand and the celebration of the Thai Environmental Day, the Ministry of Science, Technology, and the Environment, with the assistance of various NGOs, organized a series of exhibits, seminars, and group discussions during which the Earth Charter was disseminated. The Thailand Environment Institute, in their capacity as Earth Charter facilitator, presented the document and encouraged individuals to endorse it.

3.3. EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Armenia

Over the course of the year 2000, the Association for Sustainable Human Development (ASHD), active in the Earth Charter Initiative since 1999, carried out a significant number of Earth Charter-related activities. ASHD completed an Earth Charter booklet in Armenian, English, and Russian, 400 copies of which have been distributed in seminars and workshops in rural areas of the country, at national libraries and during a national conference on the Earth Charter. This booklet contains

articles and photographs related to the document. Future plans include a series of art events entitled "Earth and I" intended for secondary schools. In 2001, which is the 1,700 year of Christianity in Armenia, they hope to have the Earth Charter endorsed by religious communities.



On May 19, during an international conference on the protection of the forest's genetic resources, Ms. Karine Danielyan, facilitator of the Earth Charter in Armenia and president of ASHD, offered a speech dedicated to the Initiative. Later that month, the Earth Charter was presented and discussed at the International Conference on Desertification Problems at Yerevan State University. Members of the Association distributed the final Earth Charter document (in English, Russian, and Armenian) to the participants of this conference. Also in May, a press conference devoted to the NCSD Forum and the Earth Charter was held at the National Parliament.

On June 5, the World Environmental Day, ASHD and the youth organization called "Green Planet" organized a ceremonial meeting and a festival of flowers in honor of the Charter. One hundred and fifteen people participated, including professors, students, and representatives of nine NGOs.

On July 15 –16, a seminar was held in Giumri (the second most important city in the country). The event was organized together with the Center of Civil Society and the Giumri Pedagogical Institute, and was held in the building of this institution. During this activity, the text of the Charter was distributed and extensively discussed. The 52 participants included professors and students of the Giumri Pedagogical Institute and teachers from Giumri and the Shirak region.

On August 7, a seminar/training was held in a school in Armenia, organized jointly by the Armenian Women Council and the Municipality of the Erebuni Community of Yerevan. The 70 participants were pupils of 12 schools from the Erebuni Community. During this occasion, the Earth Charter text was distributed and pupils broke up into seven groups to study separate fragments of the Charter. Each group then spoke about their own understanding and interpretation of the text.

From November 6 - 8, a National Earth Charter Forum was held in conjunction with the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD) Preparatory Meeting for Rio+10. The event took place at the Yerevan University and was attended by 280 individuals including parliamentarians, ministers, NGOs and TV/media. Parliamentarians present in the gathering agreed to explore ways to include the Earth Charter in their work. At this forum, a children's play was presented, interpreting environmental history and how to use the Earth Charter to save Earth from destruction.

Ms. Karine Danielyan also participated in three international conferences. The first event, the International Conference of Social-Ecological Union, was held in Kiev in August 2000. In August, the Prague European Conference on Soil Protection took place. Finally, in September, in Kiev, the European Eco-Forum of NGOs was held in preparation for the Environmental Ministers Conference in 2002. She presented the Earth Charter in all these conferences. In addition, the Earth Charter was the theme of various radio and television interviews and programmes throughout the year.



Ms. Danielyan included lectures and seminars on the Charter in the courses on sustainable development taught at the Geographic and Chemical Departments of Yerevan State University. Analysis of the document has also been included in various theses. Prof. Marina Oganezova, member of the National Committee on the Earth Charter, has also incorporated information on the document into her lectures at Slavic University. In addition, the head of the Hrazdan Branch of Association, Ms. Julietta Bubushyan, developed a course of lectures regarding the concept of sustainable development, in which the Earth Charter has been integrated. She will begin delivering these lectures on January 1, 2001, at a College in Hrazdan.

Finally, a section entitled "Human Rights, Rights of the Earth and Community of Life", dedicated to the Earth Charter, was included in the Armenia Human Development Report 2000 (UNDP).

Austria

In the year 2000, the International Institute for Global Ethics, under the leadership of Ms. Jaqueline Wagner, focused on the implementation of "ethics in business". A meeting of the Ethics in Business Council

discussed how the Earth Charter could be implemented. Under this umbrella topic, other activities have followed. One of the national paper industries participating viewed the Charter with potential significance within this field and analyzed how the document may influence a number of decisions. Meetings were held with leaders of technology and ecology companies to discuss "industrial sustainability", with the hope of creating a basis for further action, and developing the concepts of friendly methods of production and fair treatment of human beings.

Belarus

A Belarussian National Earth Charter Roundtable was held in March 2000, with discussions centered on educational Earth Charter activities and the need to have active participation from the national media, NGOs, and educational institutions. Participants expressed their commitment to the Charter and its principles and decided to become part of the Earth Charter global campaign.

As a result, a Belarussian National Earth Charter group was formed. On September 27, a second Earth Charter meeting was held, led by the Division of the International Academy of Ecology jointly with Mr. Eugene Chirokov, president of the Habitat Center and a leading advocate for the creation of a local NCSD.

Czech Republic

The Czech Minister of the Environment, Mr. Kuzvart, attended an Earth Charter presentation during the IUCN Congress in Jordan held in October. As a result, he has been very supportive to the Earth Charter Initiative. For instance, the Ministry translated the Charter into Czech and has disseminated it. In particular, this ministry has used the document for educational purposes and intends to utilize it in preparing national strategic documents.

Estonia

Individuals representing different organizations planned the Estonia Preparatory Workshop for the International NCSD Forum, which took place in April 2000 in New York. The workshop was held on March 18-21, and participants included representatives from the following organizations and officials: the Ministry of Environment, the Estonian Parliament, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, private business, youth and various academic and scientific institutions. An Earth Charter national roundtable was held during the second day of the workshop in partnership with Green Cross Estonia.

France



The Toulouse Earth Charter Committee, led by Actions pour une Charte de la Terre (Actions for an Earth Charter), has disseminated the document in primary schools. In this context and inspired by the Charter, drawings made by children were exhibited at the Regional House of the Environment for two months. In addition, a book of these illustrations and the text of the Earth Charter was produced. The local committee has joint efforts with the French NGO Les Amis de la Terre (Friends of the Earth) which has agreed to introduce the Earth Charter in a federation composed of 750 organizations working for the ecological integrity in France.



A declaration for the formal establishment of the Association Actions pour une Charte de la Terre was published on October 25 in the "Official Journal of the French Republic", stating that this organization was created with the purpose of supporting the Earth Charter through action, promotion, and dissemination of its principles.

Furthermore, the Occitania Foundation confirmed its support to a French National Earth Charter Initiative. This body will work together with the Toulouse Local Earth Charter Committee for the inclusion of the document in the forum titled "Nikkan 2", projected to take place in the year 2002. The focus of this event will be the territorial application of sustainable development.



Germany

The Ecumenical One World Initiative (OeIEW), which focuses on ecology, development, and the promotion of a sustainable way of life, has been involved in the Earth Charter Initiative since 1999 and was supportive throughout the year 2000. OeIEW has successfully included other organizations within the Initiative, such as Friends of the Earth Germany (BUND).

Future plans include the holding of an OeIEW meeting in May/June 2001, which will focus on the Earth Charter. Also, a forum is being planned for late September 2001, which will revolve around "The Earth Charter: Ethics for Sustainable Development on the Way to Rio+10" in Muelheim. This gathering will be coordinated by the Ecumenical One World Initiative and the Christian (Protestant) Academy Muelheim. OeIEW is facilitating the Earth Charter process in Germany as the Initiative focal point for this country. In addition, the International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES) continues to be involved in the Initiative, under the leadership of Dr. Frank Meyberg (also of OeIEW), who has been a long-term supporter of the Charter since it was introduced to him during the 1997 Assisi Conference entitled "Spirituality and Sustainability". This group also helped to translate the text of the document into German.

Italy



Pro Natura, the oldest Italian environmental organization, organized a nationwide dissemination campaign of the Earth Charter, which included ten conferences held in various Italian cities to present the document and promote the Italian Earth Charter's website (www.cartadellaterra.it). This was done with the support of the Italian Ministry of the Environment and the sponsorship of the government of Italy, especially through its 90 local branches. A special issue of the Pro Natura newsletter Natura e Società ("Nature and Society"), with a circulation of 40,000 copies, was dedicated to the Earth Charter, sponsored and funded again by the Ministry of Environment.

The Ministry also financed, together with the Cassa di Risparmio di Torino Foundation (one of the largest Italian banking institutions), the Earth Charter's official website and a special Earth Charter CD-Rom. The CD-Rom, which contains the same themes included in the website, was designed for distribution in schools and was sponsored by the Ministry of Education, which also collaborated in its dissemination. This educational tool presents articles and pictures from all over the world on the issue of sustainable development. It also features Earth Charter-related issues.

A card announcing this new website and the Charter was sent to over 15,000 opinion-makers, journalists, politicians and entrepreneurs, among others, many of whom have shown interest in supporting the Initiative.

The Charter was officially presented to the Ministry of Agriculture, who proposed to expand both the website and the CD-Rom, in order to cover agricultural issues, such as the genetic modification of crops, organic farming and the preservation of rural areas.

Green Cross Italy once again planned and carried out the third international edition of the yearly Youth Art Contest for the Earth Charter, under the theme "Energy – Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiencies". A prize ceremony, held in Villa Manin di Passariano (close to Udine) on September 25, 2000, provided the opportunity to show the work done and congratulate the winner from Burkina Faso. This event was held in conjunction with the opening of the Cooperation for Environmental Education in Europe (CEEE) Conference. Also, the fourth edition of the Youth Art Contest "Images of the Earth" (2000/2001) was launched under the theme "Trash: Wastes and Lifestyles", inviting all students from public and private primary and secondary schools to participate and share their vision on this theme. The deadline for sending their artwork is June 30, 2001. This initiative provides teachers with the opportunity to plan educational multidisciplinary paths and expand those environmental issues included in ministerial programmes.

National prize ceremonies are organized by the national Green Cross offices, while the international prize event, to be held in November 2001, is organized by Green Cross Italy. This contest is carried out in the context of those initiatives supported by Green Cross International for the dissemination of the Charter.

A presentation on the Earth Charter was made on August 22-27, during the 39th meeting of the Centro Educazione alla Mondialita (CEM - Center for Global

Education) entitled "In the Name of the Mother: Earth's Wisdom as Education". Some 300 professors and teachers attended this gathering and Professor Vittorio Falsina, who had previously assisted in the Earth Charter drafting process, offered a keynote speech on the history, and philosophy of the Earth Charter Initiative. During the weeklong workshop, participants developed 14 didactic units based on the Earth Charter's principles. CEM is promoting a two-year programme on ecological education, inspired by these principles.

The Netherlands

Soka Gakkai Netherlands had a fruitful and significant year promoting the Earth Charter. In March 2000, in collaboration with Dr. Patricia Morales of Tilburg University, a presentation on the Earth Charter, including a question/answer session, was made to 100 individuals in the Cultural Center of SGI-Netherlands. Also, throughout the year SGI promoted the Earth Charter among its members and within society at large. SGI Netherlands contributed to the Earth Charter launch in The Hague, held in June, by providing a music band and presenting the children's acts titled "Let Us Try" and "Red, Yellow, and Blue".

Between May and June 2000, an Earth Charter drawing contest took place in Zeist, with the participation of some 30 children. On this occasion, the Earth Charter was discussed and interpreted through drawings and poems. This artwork was evaluated and two prizes were given to the winners.

A series of interviews on the Charter and related documents were carried out and are in the process of being published. These interviews were coordinated by Dr. Patricia Morales and done with several leaders, including Mr. Maurice Strong, Sir Shridath Ramphal, Ms. Maritta Koch-Weser of IUCN and others. More on this can be seen at: www.eolss.net/pr03.htm

Future plans include a human rights exhibition in Zeist, to take place from May 29 - June 11, 2001, which will also feature the Earth Charter. All local elementary and secondary schools will be invited to participate. Activities will include the viewing of a short video on human rights and the Earth Charter, upon which the children will be asked to reflect. These reflections will require a paper to be written by the secondary students and a drawing contest for the primary students.

The National Commission for Development Cooperation (NCDO) has joined the Earth Charter Initiative and is promoting it in the Netherlands. NCDO was instrumental in co-organizing the Earth Charter launch in The Hague, as it was the host organization for this event.

Norway

The Earth Charter has been translated into Norwegian and is available on their national web page: www.earthcharter-norge.com, as well as on the international Earth Charter website. Members of the Norwegian National Earth Charter campaign have participated in several meetings and have given speeches about the document throughout the year. The chairman of the Norwegian Earth Charter Committee was present during the launching of the Earth Charter at The Hague in June, and participated in the panel presentation entitled "Earth Charter in Action". Since then, several Norwegian institutions have incorporated the Charter into their organizational structures and are currently working with the document. The official launch of the Earth Charter in Norway is scheduled to take place in February 2001. All members of the Norwegian government and Parliament will be invited, as well as some of the largest Norwegian organizations.

Russia

Representatives from 104 environmental citizens' organizations (ECOS) based in 33 countries of the Pan-European region met on September 14-16, 2000 in Kiev, Ukraine, to prepare for the next "Environment for Europe" (EfE) Ministerial Conference to be held in 2002. This coalition - European EcoForum – seeks an active and constructive role for ECOS in the preparations for Kiev 2002. The coalition has issued a Kiev Declaration with recommendations on a series of key issues that ECOS considers necessary for the Kiev 2002 Ministerial Agenda. The Earth Charter Group of Armenia participated in this event and helped to have the Earth Charter support as part of the outcomes. The event´s Declaration states that "We call for support to the process of realizing an Earth Charter at the Rio+10 Conference".

Moreover, for the past two years, important work has been carried out in the Republic of Tatarstan with the assistance of Green Cross International and the International Foundation for Survival and Development of Humanity.

During The Hague launch of the Earth Charter, a

special envoy of the President of Tatarstan, M. Shaimiev, announced the readiness of this republic to implement the Earth Charter concept and principles. As a result, a group consisting of scientific and public organizations, government and Parliament members was established to carry out studies of the Earth Charter in practical life. During the last six months of 2000, Tatarstan undertook a comprehensive review of the extent to which its national policies and practices conform to the Earth Charter principles and how to improve its compliance.

The President of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Parliament, the Ministry of the Environment and various public organizations have expressed their full support to the Earth Charter project entitled "Tatarstan -a Territory for a Culture of Peace, Sustainable Development and Tolerance". The Charter was translated into Tatar and has been circulated widely. Acting on instruction of the President, Tatarstan launched a large-scale experiment on implementing the Earth Charter and a Culture of Peace vision and principles. In November, a working meeting on the verification of the Earth Charter in application to this Republic took place. During this meeting, the executive branch of the Republic reviewed progress in implementing the Earth Charter. The document was presented to the Environment Committee of the Parliament, which cleared the way to have the Charter presented to the whole Parliament in April 2001. A number of meetings are planned to be held between April 27-30, 2001 involving the Tatarstan public at large, as well as experts and leaders of state governmental bodies, in order to consider in detail the effective use of the Earth Charter as a guide for sustainable development.

This effort is intended to prepare the way for the Earth Charter principles to be implemented in various systems of the Republic (in constitutional and governmental decisions, at the level of public organizations). It is also a research work on a practical system analysis of the Earth Charter principles at the level of an entire republic and can serve as an important example for other countries.

Spain/Catalonia

During an event held on October 30, 2000, the Earth Charter Catalonian Committee was formally created, with agreement upon a constitutional document endorsing the Charter. The group produced a booklet in Catalonian with an introduction by Professor Joseph Xercavins i Valls, explaining the history, process, and text of the document. Additionally, a website has been developed containing relevant information on the Initiative and the activities in Catalonia: www.unescocat.org/cartaterra.



The Local Committee is made up of representatives from various NGOs and institutions, including Green Alternatives, the United Nations Association and the UNESCO Center of Catalonia. This group translated the Earth Charter into Catalonian, produced informational booklets, and is now disseminating and promoting the Charter among different sectors of society in this region.

Sweden

Green Cross Sweden conducted Earth Charter Empowerment Workshops during the Global Environmental Youth Convention, an event sponsored by the International Institute of Industrial Environmental Economics and Lund University. The gathering was held on June 15-18, 2000, and over 400 youth representatives from all over the world attended the workshops that were combined with a field activity. Basic Earth Charter presentations were made followed by reflections on the state of Earth's environmental degradation. Participants expressed the need for cooperation and exchange of information within the international community. Teachers from developing countries called for the improvement of North-South relationships, with some questioning regarding the concept of "poor" countries. Additionally, an important point was made: when Western countries attempt to implement environmental projects in developing countries, thought should be given to what is an appropriate priority and direction when working in places where, first and foremost, is the greater issue of people who do not even have enough food.

Some of the conclusions of these discussions included the following: through inspiration, creativity and the use of one's talents, environmental work can take on new dimensions. Through a holistic approach and by raising awareness, we can reach out to people and be agents of change in the world, since the most important tool available is oneself.

Some of the suggestions for the launching of the Earth Charter project were made by children,

preparation on Earth Charter information packets to be distributed in libraries and museums; and the celebration of an Earth Charter Day in schools, including ground cleaning and other activities. During the field activity held on June 18, a big circle was formed while the message of the Earth Charter was given. Then, the Indian legend, Rainbow Warrior was told, " ...one day when Earth is sick the warriors of the rainbow come together to heal it". A silent meditation followed.

In addition, Green Cross Sweden, together with the International Institute for Industrial Environment al Economics at Lund University, held a one-day workshop on December 8, 2000 entitled "Ethics, Economy and the Environment". Mrs. Margot Wallström, the Environmental Commissioner for the European Union, spoke about Visions for the European Environment. Commissioner Wallström presented her five environmental priorities and the new environmental strategy for the European Union. Mr. Göran Gennvi, Director of the Nature Academy in Stockholm and representative of Green Cross Sweden, led the workshop discussion on ethical investment. Discussions focused on the need to go beyond corporate "green washing", making the point that the Earth Charter can be used as a tool for sustainable decision-making and management within corporate structures. If the Charter were to be incorporated within "the articles of association", businesses would then align and maintain themselves according to the fundamental ethical principles, whereby ethical investment would be a requirement. Furthermore, if moral or environmental considerations are not expressed in these articles, then management cannot be expected to take such concerns into account in ongoing planning and everyday decision-making. Investment in companies where such provisions are not included in the articles of association cannot, with any degree of credibility, be called ethical.

Additionally, an annual Earth Charter school contest was held under the theme "Biological Diversity: Endangered Plants and Animals in My Home Territory". The prize ceremony took place at the Lund Zoo for Endangered Species and the winner was awarded 1000 Swedish crowns to be used for an environmental project.

Uzbekistan

The Regional Earth Charter Youth Forum of Eastern Europe and Central Asia took place in November 2000 in Tashkent. This gathering was attended by 50 young participants from the Central Asian region, Belarus, and Armenia. Discussions were held to identify ways for the Earth Charter to be introduced into daily activities and within education. The Earth Charter preparations toward Rio+10 were also discussed, and recommendations were made to increase attention at the national and regional levels. In this context, it was suggested that the International Commission on Sustainable Development of Central Asian Countries should hold discussions on the Earth Charter and utilize the potential of non-governmental and youth organizations in the preparatory process for Rio+10. One of the major outcomes of the conference was the agreement reached to continue exchanging experiences and information on the Charter at the regional and international levels.

The Tashkent Youth Forum was memorable regarding its religious diversity: Belarussians, Russians, Armenians and Ukrainians who took part in it were mostly Orthodox Christians, whereas Turkmens, Uzbeks, Tajiks and Kazakhs were Moslems. All of these young people worked together with great enthusiasm and friendship and were firm in continuing with their newfound cooperation. The youth suggested the creation of an Internet education system for international dissemination of educational curriculum materials. They also expressed the desire to create a Youth Earth Charter Network.

Recognizing that the young generation will be the cornerstone for the successful implementation of ethical principles of the Charter, the participants of this workshop agreed on an outline and a timetable to hold an International Forum, "Youth and the Earth Charter", in Tashkent, Uzbekistan to take place in the future.

This regional forum was organized by the National Commission on Sustainable Development of Uzbekistan, ECOSAN International Foundation and the Kamolot Youth Foundation, and supported by UNDP and the Earth Council.

3.4. THE AMERICAS

Brazil

Over 500 individuals attended a seminar entitled "The Earth Charter of Mato Grosso", held on October 30, 2000 at the Federal University of Mato Grosso in Cuiaba. The morning session included a debate of the content of the main principles of the Charter, guided by historical and critical perspectives. As a result, a number of questions arose, such as, "Will the Earth Charter only be a document or does its implementation ensure new perspectives for Earth?" Among the final recommendations, participants stated that:

1) universal values and principles need to be initiated from each individual and through this internalization, people should be able to participate in a collective process and

2) there exists the need to work on the implementation of programmes for environmental education utilizing the Earth Charter

A group of 41 people formed an Earth Charter Committee for the State of Mato Grosso to conduct the reflections and actions necessary for the local adoption of the document. One of their commitments is to produce and distribute 18,000 copies of the Earth Charter text. A Mato Grosso version of the Charter was produced and some universities of this State are exploring ways to include the document in teacher training sessions, as well as in curricula for secondary and higher education. Under the leadership of professor Michele Sato of Federal State University, an Earth Charter book is being prepared. It is expected that this book will increase the presence of this initiative in Brazil. Additionally, the Earth Charter has been presented on several occasions in this State. The Federal University of Mato Grosso and the local office of UNESCO, among others, have been supportive to the Initiative. The Committee has established a Brazilian Earth Charter website:
www.cartadaterra.org.br

The Earth Charter Commissioner and well-known theologian, Leonardo Boff, has also presented the Charter on several occasions. His work has been of great benefit for raising awareness of and generating public interest in the Charter. Also, a professor of science and computer at the Notre Dame School in Campinas, Sao Paulo, Ms. Miriam Salles, initiated a project to educate people of all ages on the Earth Charter through an educational website. This project is particularly designed for its use in primary and secondary schools. Its purpose is to disseminate the Earth Charter and provide space for discussion and reflections upon sustainable development. The project was accepted by the Kidlink network and is already being utilized in some schools. It can be found in the following url: http://venus.rdc.puc-rio.br/kids/kidlink/kidcafe-esc/projetos.htm



An environmental education project entitled "Crianças da Paz" (Children for Peace), which is part of the programme "Crer para Ver" (Believe to See) of the organization Pedra Grande Inter Açao Ecologica, utilized the Earth Charter in their activities. The purpose of the project was to integrate the meaning of values in the daily activities of schools and provide opportunities to transform education. The first phase of this project was developed throughout the year 2000 in a school located in the city of Atibaia, State of Sao Paulo, involving 800 students. The project initially promoted the identification of students with nature, and their reflection about the large human family and our common destiny. Workshops and discussions were held, mobilizing and articulating the participation of students, their parents and the community at large, and engaging them in understanding the principles of the Earth Charter. This project will be extended to three other schools during 2001/2002 and continue working with the Earth Charter concept. For more information please contact Fernando Protta, e-mail: protta@amhanet.com.br

Canada

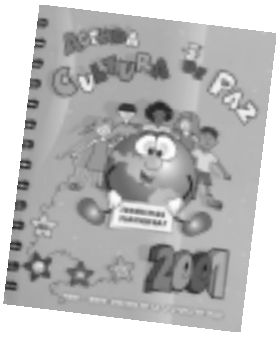
The Convergence Foundation of Canada joined the Earth Charter Initiative in 2000 taking the step to facilitate the promotion of the document in Quebec. Its mission is to create a planetary network for a closer and renewed relationship with nature. The Earth Charter background information and text were published in its April 2000 newsletter, sent to over 5,000 individuals and groups in Canada and Europe. The Convergence Foundation was also involved in the translation of the French Earth Charter document, as well as related materials. The Foundation presented the Earth Charter to the media to secure coverage of the June Earth Charter launch event. Future plans include approaching the government and presenting

the Charter at the celebration of the Grand Paix de Montréal (treaty signed between the French and 30 American Nations on August 4, 1701), which is a celebration of the tri-centenary of one of the largest diplomatic events in the history of the Americas.

The Sierra Club of Canada has endorsed the Earth Charter and has incorporated it into its website to promote it. The United Nations Association in Montreal has also joined the Initiative.

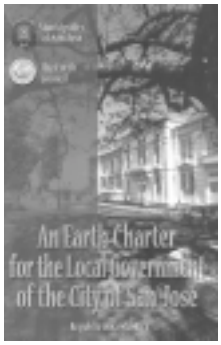
Costa Rica

Radio programmes explaining the Earth Charter began transmission in November 2000. These programmes were created by Radio Netherlands and consisted of 10 radio magazines distributed in weekly 24-minute sessions. They addressed the specific values of the Charter and provided detailed explanation, stories and interviews. Programmes were transmitted to 552 radio stations in Latin America and the Caribbean through Radio Netherlands. Short stories for children are being developed under the same format.



In addition, the Culture for Peace Programme of UNESCO's Regional Office, Radio Netherlands, and the Earth Council produced a children's planner book, the main theme of which focused on values. It features the Earth Charter, as well as a portion of its text on the back of each month's display. Fifty-thousand copies of the planner were produced and distributed to schools throughout Central America as part of UNESCO's Culture for Peace Programme. Also, in support of this initiative, Radio Netherlands produced a storybook for children entitled "Historias de un Planeta Cercano" (Stories of a Neighbor Planet) with an exercise folder enclosed. The storybook uses the Earth Charter values as its main theme.

On March 22, 2000 an event was held at the Municipal Building of San Jose. The Mayor of the Capital city of San Jose, Johnny Araya, and special guests joined staff members to present the results of the project "The Municipality of San José Towards Sustainability". This project involved the training of over 1,800 municipality staff on sustainability in practice, and the incorporation of Earth Charter values within their work activities. In commemoration of the efforts and successes obtained, a mural of the Earth Charter was unveiled and permanently placed in the entrance of the public building of the municipality.

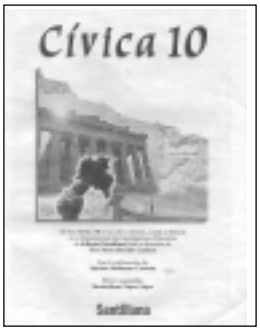


In addition, the county of Atenas has also developed its version of the Earth Charter. On June 8, a first seminar entitled "Sustainable Development and Community" took place in collaboration with the Earth Council. This activity had the purpose of: a) elaborating on the Earth Charter for Atenas; b) working on a local Agenda 21; and, c) forming a local Council for Sustainable Development. The Commission on Education and the Municipality of Atenas organized this workshop and 52 participants from various sectors were gathered. The first Earth Charter for Atenas, as well as their vision about the document represented the major outcomes of this event. The main problems faced by Atenas were also contemplated.

In June, the University for Peace organized a Youth Festival, as part of the activities of the "Costa Rica 2000 Commission: A New Millennium of Peace". Approximately 200 children, grades 5 to 11, from around the country participated. The main objective was the promotion of actions in children that may lend themselves to the transformation from a culture of violence to a culture of peace. The Earth Charter's Preamble was used as the basis for questions to motivate the students to think about global challenges and how they affect their immediate surroundings, as well as their own families, communities and nation.

The National Earth Charter Group –formed as a joint effort of the Museo del Niño (Museum of the Child), the University of Costa Rica, the National University, the Long Distance Learning University (UNED), the Municipality of San Jose, the YMCA and the Earth Charter International Secretariat– held numerous meetings throughout the year 2000. This is an ongoing collaboration aimed at developing activities for the promotion, dissemination and implementation of the Earth Charter in Costa Rica. An example of this collaboration was the Earth Charter workshop "Explorations Inside and Out of the Classroom", held on September 1, during the Second Congress of Science. This event took place in the newly established INBIO Park, developed to educate visitors about the local environment and all the existing flora and fauna within it. The Congress was sponsored by UNED

and the Museo del Niño, and facilitated by the National Earth Charter Group. Specifically designed for educators, the purpose of the Congress was to provide teachers with tools to help children define concrete actions that support Earth Charter values, needed to preserve our planet.



Santillana Publishing house, published the Earth Charter within the school material to be used in grade seven under the subject of Civics 10. This material was elaborated by the Research Department on Education.

The Forum on Our Global Challenges, which took place on November 6-10, used the Earth Charter and the Manifesto 2000 as guiding frameworks for discussions on global issues. The planning of this event was a joint effort made between the Culture for Peace Programme of the University for Peace, the Fundación Milenio (Millennium Foundation), the University of Costa Rica and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Issues addressed included gender equality and equity, human rights, sustainability in the era of globalization, communication and education, non-violence, demilitarization and disarmament. The Earth Charter Group of Costa Rica, and the Earth Council organized the activities held during the first day of the Forum. The morning meetings featured presentations and panel discussions, while the afternoon sessions offered time for small group discussions. Presenters during the morning plenary session included Moacir Gadotti, of the Paulo Freire Institute; Guillermo Vargas, minister of Public Education of Costa Rica; Rodrigo Carazo, former president of Costa Rica and spokesperson for the Culture of Peace Programme; and Maude Barlow, from the International Forum of Globalization. Strong and positive references were made regarding the Earth Charter during this plenary meeting.

On November 6, 2000, the Earth Charter was presented to the president of Costa Rica, Miguel Angel Rodríguez Echeverría. The presentation was made by two young Costa Ricans, Nickol Jiron and Federico Albán, active participants in the Initiative, who encouraged the president to use and implement the Earth Charter. The ceremony was also attended by the vice-president of the Republic and minister of the Environment, Elizabeth Odio, who stated: *"We are here and in receiving this Charter, we commit to these principles".* On this occasion, Maurice Strong, chairman of the Earth Council affirmed that: "The challenges of moving onto this new pathway need to be guided by a set of principles for ecological security based on sustainable development. The Earth Charter, as an ethical guideline, is a vehicle for addressing these challenges and stimulating change". Nitin Desai, under secretary general to the United Nations, and Guillermo Vargas, Minister of Education, also participated in this activity. A moving concert by composer and pianist Manuel Obregón followed, giving the audience a beautiful closing ceremony to this event.



Presentation to the president of Costa Rica

Dominican Republic

The Earth Charter Committee has continued disseminating and promoting the Earth Charter. Several newspaper articles were published on the Charter during the year 2000. An in-depth article on the document and the Dominican process was published in the magazine "Together We Can" in its October 2000 issue. The Poveda Center continued to support the Initiative through its work on education and by raising awareness within schools.

Honduras



The Earth Charter is part of the document of the national commitment for integrity and sustainable development entitled: "Ethics, Transparency and Sustainable Development", prepared in November 1998 during an event held in Tegucigalpa after the catastrophe caused by hurricane Mitch. This document was developed by government and civil society representatives, aimed at stimulating a new set of ethical values based on a sustainable development vision and as a process of change. In this Declaration, the country's commitment to implement Agenda 21 and the Earth Charter is embedded throughout. As examples of the references made about the Charter, article 5.9 states: "Develop

and implement a framework for the Earth Charter values as a declaration of ethical principles for a sustainable future". Under article 9.3 the Declaration highlights the need to "Develop a broad ownership related to the process of elaboration of the Earth Charter based on the values of diverse cultures, religions and social groups".

During 1999 and 2000, the National Council for Sustainable Development (CONADES) organized a series of seminars and workshops in various parts of the country, where the vision for a shared ethical framework, transparency, and sustainable development were incorporated as major themes. As part of these activities, the principles of the Earth Charter have been addressed to foster its implementation at all levels.

In the words of Mr. Mario Rietti, Executive Secretary of CONADES, "in the search of truth, transparency and globalization of solidarity and with the aim to make the future decades a period of accomplishments and fulfilled promises (…) we have incorporated principles of an ethical framework for sustainable development, in the working document 'Sustainable Development and Much More' which was presented during the International Forum of NCSD and the CSD-8 held in April 2000. In the process of implementation of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Honduras, the Earth Charter is expected to be adopted as an instrument for change and utilized as a guide in the strategic planning for sustainable development".

In its National Evaluation Report for Rio+10, CONADES included, as part of their future vision, the need to carry out the objectives and commitments of Agenda 21, the Earth Charter, and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Mexico

The NCSD of Mexico contributed to the dissemination of the Earth Charter within its network at the national level, especially among NCSD members. The State of Michoacan prepared its Environmental Programme, where the Earth Charter was utilized as a basis to shape the document. As a local exercise, the Municipality of Morelia is promoting strong and active participation of civil society for the implementation of the Sustainable Development City Programme. The Earth Charter was incorporated in this programme in order to help groups at this local level to internalize sustainability values.

The change of administration in Mexico also caused the change of NCSD members. It is expected that soon this new team will engage in the Earth Charter process.

Paraguay

The Ecological Movement of Paraguay has been involved in the Earth Charter process since 1996 and continued to be very active throughout the year 2000. Radio interviews contributed to the dissemination of the Earth Charter among a large number of people during this year. In addition, the document was given to high public servants, including the President of the Supreme Court of Justice, the president of the Governing Council (who had it distributed in all 17 provinces that constitute the nation) and the president of the National Commission of Congress for the Defense of Natural Resources.

On September 18, 100 participants gathered in a meeting at the National Commission for the Defense of Natural Resources. The Earth Charter was presented and distributed on this occasion. Moreover, and as a result of various small discussions involving university groups, 300 students gathered on October 8 to share their views on the Charter and how to use and implement it. As a major outcome of this meeting, a written commentary was prepared, highlighting the interconnectedness of all humans and our world responsibility to choose to create. These participants recognized that youth will also determine the destiny of the planet. Artist Carlos Meyer has contributed to the creation of a booklet of drawings to accompany the Earth Charter. This booklet offers a visual story of some of the ideas developed in Paraguay.

Trinidad and Tobago

A National Earth Charter Committee was established on June, 29 2000 during a meeting held at the Normandie Hotel in Port of Spain, through an initiative of the Tropical Re-Leaf Foundation. The Committee is composed of representatives from organizations such as Environment Tobago, the Institute for Future Global Leaders, and the Foundation for Sustainable Community Tourism, among others. It also includes representatives from all major sectors: indigenous peoples, women, youth, farmers, the business community, and academics. The official launch of the National Committee was held on October 28 at the Learning Resource Center of the University of the West Indies (UWI). On this occasion, Sir Shridath Ramphal, member of the International Earth Charter Commission, delivered the keynote address stating

that: "You have a functional, not a cosmetic role in bringing to full realization the principles enshrined in the Charter and the vision of humanity's future that is integrated into them".

Brother Noble Khan, president of the Inter-Religious Organization, was in charge of an opening invocation. Among the speakers were Mary Schorse, who gave a presentation on the process of the Earth Charter and the document itself; Angela Cropper, who outlined the elements of the national campaign; Katija Khan, president of the UWI Guild of Students, who pledged support of the Charter on behalf of the student body; and Professor Bridget Brereton, deputy principal of the UWI St. Augustine Campus, who endorsed the document on behalf of the Campus. The proceedings were chaired by Eden Shand, Chair of the Earth Charter National Committee. During the event, representatives from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine administration, and the UWI Guild of Students endorsed the Earth Charter and its principles, and both organizations received certificates of recognition from the Earth Charter National Committee of Trinidad and Tobago for their commitment to the campaign. During the call to action at the conclusion of the programme, participants were encouraged to join the campaign as volunteers. Most participants expressed an interest in working on the initiative.

Additionally, presentations have been made in the academic field at the University of the West Indies, as well as within the business sector, including the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce, and among youth groups, at the Caribbean Youth Environmental Exposition. Additional youth outreach was achieved when the Earth Charter National Committee placed an information booth at the UWI Orientation Week in September 2000.

These activities initiated with the Earth Charter campaign launch and will conclude with a national workshop scheduled for March 2002. The Committee has planned a number of Earth Charter events that include national workshops, a national forum, several outreach programmes (education, local government, and religious organizations), and sectoral dialogues (business sector, service clubs, women's associations, youth organizations and political parties). It is hoped that, as a result of the national workshop, a mandate will be put forward requesting the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to adopt the Earth Charter as the ethical framework for sustainable development in the country and to endorse the Charter officially at the UN General Assembly in 2002.

The Trinidad and Tobago Earth Charter National Committee also has a School Outreach Programme, intended for primary and secondary schools, as well as for informal education channels. It also aims at creating, where possible, linkages between institutions and organizations that work with different sectors. The purpose of this programme is to encourage the teaching, understanding, adoption and incorporation of the Earth Charter principles by both teachers and students at the primary and secondary school levels. Some of its goals are: 1) Implement environmental education within the curricula in Trinidad and Tobago (EnACT Programme), especially in primary schools and secondary centers through training workshops for teachers, using the EnACT teacher's guide; 2) Establish an informal education programme on the Earth Charter to be held during holidays and vacation periods in the form of Eco-camps for children and the youth; 3) Conduct programmes that utilize creative art to teach the principles of the Earth Charter; 4) Conduct training courses for young people who are volunteering in the Education Outreach Programme on the principles of the Earth Charter and environmental conservation in Trinidad and Tobago; and, 5) Establish a network of student and youth organizations.

In addition to the specified activities and programmes carried out within the national campaign, further opportunities have emerged:

- *Green Hills Campaign:* A government initiative to form public/private partnerships in order to counteract the negative impacts of deforestation (specifically flooding) through a community-based reforestation programme invited Earth Charter representatives to participate. Earth Charter materials and information were distributed in a booth placed at the exhibition hall during the project's launch.
- *Representation at the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders in New York:* A member of the Earth Charter National Committee of Trinidad and Tobago was invited to participate in the Millennium World Peace Summit and represented the Trinidad and Tobago Committee at this important meeting.
- *(Upcoming) UWI Biological Society Week:* The Earth Charter National Committee has been invited to participate in the UWI Biological Society Week, which will include a number of lectures and discussions. This year's theme is "Mutualism: Humans

and Nature Living in Harmony".

The Trinidad and Tobago Earth Charter website can be found at : www.empal.org

United States

On April 20-21, 2000, activists from across the country gathered in the Washington D.C. area to hold the Earth Charter USA National Conference. Leaders of the Earth Charter Initiative in the United States discussed how to implement the Earth Charter guidelines and values in the U.S. and how to engage corporations, non-profit organizations, governments, and educational institutions in the process of applying the Earth Charter principles and values to their operations. Participants included the chair of the Earth Charter International Drafting Committee, Steven Rockefeller; the chairman of Earth Charter USA and former president of The Humane Society of the United States, John Hoyt; Levana Saxon of Youth for Environmental Sanity (YES); April Ambrose of Hendrix College; and Victor Yellow Hawk White, Native American leader and member of the Spiritual Consultative Council. During the last day of this gathering, an intimate concert with David Crosby was offered and broadcast live via the Internet.

Following the Earth Charter USA National Conference, on April 22, 2000, staff and volunteers shared information about the document with thousands of participants during the Earth Day 2000 Fair, held on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Handouts included copies of the Earth Charter and information about the international and U.S. initiatives, as well as on their website.

The Earth Charter USA campaign is now planning to focus its resources on education, outreach and advocacy as well as on influencing the United Nations process of endorsement. Efforts are underway to update their website and other communications tools, develop new educational materials for individuals to use when introducing the Earth Charter in their communities and organizations, prepare and hold workshops for various groups such as teachers, county officials, and other professionals; and perform outreach to a wide range of organizations.

A significant grassroots initiative to help spread the word about the Earth Charter in the U.S. is being undertaken by the Institute for Ethics & Meaning, a grassroots community-building organization, in conjunction with the Earth Charter USA. They will host the first Earth Charter Community Summits, bringing people together to address the principles of the document through the promotion and development of local, state and national initiatives. Summits will be held simultaneously in various cities on September 29, 2001, and will be connected via video downlinks to increase participation. Creativity and enthusiasm among participants will be sparked by the presentation of grassroots initiatives that are turning the Earth Charter principles into actions. For more information on this event please visit the following urls: http://www.transformworld.org or http://www.earthchartersummits.org

Uruguay

The Institute of Ecology of the Uruguay River became engaged in the Earth Charter Initiative when, in celebration of the World Environment Day on June 5, the Charter was featured in some of the day's events. The Institute has successfully proposed to environmental NGOs that Earth Charter presentations be conducted during their meetings. The Institute has also produced an excellent Earth Charter powerpoint presentation that has been utilized on several occasions. Currently, this organization is engaged in using the document in its activities and is contributing to the dissemination of its message.



Venezuela

The Amazonian Parliament officially endorsed the Earth Charter during its July General Assembly meeting, commending the Earth Council for its leadership role in the creation of the Earth Charter and pledging support for the Initiative. In November, the Parliament organized "Earth Charter Week" at the Angel Maria Dalo Foundation, a primary school near Caracas that offers an integrated education, based on the principles of equity, solidarity, and the right of every child to receive education. This children's event consisted of a series of workshops, followed by an exhibition of paintings, poems, drawings, and compositions inspired by the Earth Charter.

4. CALENDAR OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

January 2000

The Earth Charter SGI Asia Tour.

Representatives from the Earth Council and Soka Gakkai International (SGI) conducted an "Earth Charter SGI Asia Tour", visiting seven countries in Asia to promote the Earth Charter. Countries visited included the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong/China, Japan, and South Korea. In each nation, the local SGI organization coordinated with key agencies already involved in the Earth Charter Initiative the holding of lectures, seminars and discussions on the Charter and its application in Asia. During the two-week tour, over 3,000 people participated in these various events. A number of themes were addressed, including the Earth Charter and the environment, youth and the Earth Charter, civil society and the Earth Charter, and spiritual perspectives on the Earth Charter. The Tour was successful in achieving the following objectives:

- Disseminating the Earth Charter and its values in Asian countries;
- Involving SGI members and friends in the consultation process;
- Strengthening the Earth Charter network in each country and establishing links with existing networks;
- Creating an ongoing process whereby the Earth Charter and its values will be discussed and adopted by diverse groups within each country.

March 2000

Earth Charter Commission Meeting at UNESCO;
Paris, France.

The Commission meeting was held at the UNESCO headquarters on March 12-14 with the objectives to: (a) review the progress and results of the Earth Charter Initiative; (b) reach consensus on the Earth Charter document; and (c) consider the future strategy of the Initiative. At the onset of the meeting, the director general of UNESCO, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, eloquently expressed UNESCO's support of the Earth Charter and stressed that the objectives of the Earth Charter are fully in line with the goals and ideals enshrined in the constitution of UNESCO. Mr. Matsuura assured that this body will extend its full moral and intellectual support to this endeavor.



Commission meeting

The Earth Charter Secretariat reported on activities held throughout the past year. The Drafting Committee also reviewed its year and recapped the consultation process. Each Earth Charter commissioner presented their thoughts on the status of the document and, after a series of discussions on the document's evolution, a final agreement was reached for final approval and official release. The motion appropriately stated that "we approve in principle the Earth Charter as presented with an expression of our sincere appreciation to co-chairs, Maurice Strong and Mikhail Gorbachev, the Earth Council Secretariat, and the Drafting Team". It was noted that the release of the final document does not eliminate the possibility of further discussions and modification of the Earth Charter in the future.

After the meeting came to an end, a well-attended press conference was held. On this occasion, Commissioner Steven Rockefeller stated that the Earth Charter "helps frame the dialogue that each nation, culture and society must undertake to promote the transition to a sustainable way of living. The Earth Charter provides an overarching ethical framework that, if widely adopted, would ensure that our environmental, social and economic problems are dealt with in ways that promote integrated solutions". With the completion of the drafting process, the Earth Charter Initiative entered a new phase, having as its primary objectives the circulation of the document worldwide and the implementation of the Earth Charter values within civil society, governments, educational institutions and businesses.

The Higher Education for Sustainability Meeting;
Paris, France - UNESCO.

A meeting sponsored by the University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF), in cooperation with UNESCO, as the task manager for Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, took place on March 15 –16, 2000. Part of

the meeting focused on the relationship and relevance of the Earth Charter to education for sustainability. Initial plans for an Earth Charter Education for Sustainability Initiative was presented and discussed. Some of the highlights of ongoing projects and possible areas for collaboration discussed included: 1) the Earth Charter Education for Sustainability Initiative; 2) UNESCO´s project on teaching materials entitled "Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future"; 3) UNESCO´s project entitled "Reorienting Teacher Education Toward Sustainability", involving a network of educational and teaching institutions; 4) UNESCO´s Sustainable Development Chairs Network; 5) a publication of "Best Practice" case studies in higher education for sustainability; and 6) the review of the progress in higher education since the Rio Earth Summit.

Consensus was reached, especially regarding the following issues:

a. Participants agreed to join efforts to accelerate the inclusion of Education for Sustainability in higher education;

b. The group of participants showed interest in being proactive within the intergovernmental process leading up to and during Rio+10;

c. Participants considered it best to take a "project-based" approach within a number of activities;

d. There was general agreement on the need to create a "model" of a sustainable institution for higher education;

e. There exists the need to create a "university for sustainable development" or some broad-based forum and collaborative process to actualize this "model" and promote further dialogue.

The general consensus was to develop a project and partnerships with regards to the above and other issues.

April 2000

International Forum for National Councils for Sustainable Development, NCSD; New York, USA.

Organized by the Earth Council, in collaboration with the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), an NCSD Forum took place on April 17-19. NCSD representatives from all the regions of the world were brought together with the objectives to:

- Review the progress and effectiveness of NCSDs as mechanisms for making sustainable development operational at national levels;
- Strengthen the role of NCSDs in national sustainable development planning;
- Discuss the Earth Charter as a framework for National Agenda 21.
- Discuss the possible institutionalization of the NCSDs' Global Forum.

During the last day of the Forum, a session was devoted to the Earth Charter to stress the important role of NCSDs in the use and implementation of this document, and to encourage NCSDs to apply the Charter as an ethical framework for national development and sustainability planning.

Participants at the NCSD Forum agreed that National Councils should play a pivotal role to ensure a more informed, participatory assessment for the Rio+10 review. This could be achieved by communicating the key messages of sustainable development, both for better awareness and understanding of this concept among all segments of society, and by providing a structured process for local and national stakeholders to participate in the assessment. The plan formulated included the use of the Earth Charter as part of this process.

May 2000

"We the Peoples"- NGO Millennium Forum;

New York, USA.

The Millennium NGO Forum was held at the United Nations headquarters by invitation of the secretary general. Over 1,000 NGO representatives gathered for several days to prepare recommendations for the Millennium Summit of Heads of State, planned for September. The Earth Charter was presented, discussed and became part of the history of this Forum. "We the Peoples Millennium Forum Declaration" and the "Agenda for Action Strengthening the United Nations for the 21st Century" state that: "We, 1,350 representatives of over 1,000 non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations from more than 100 countries, have gathered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from May 22 – 26, 2000 to build upon a common vision and the work begun at civil society conferences and the UN world conferences of the 1990's, to draw the

attention of governments to the urgency of implementing the commitments they have made, and to channel our collective energies by reclaiming globalization for and by the people".

In the declaration, under the section of Sustainable Development and the Environment, the Forum urged governments, among other things, to:

- Endorse the Earth Charter in the UN General Assembly;
- Establish and strengthen multi-stakeholder mechanisms such as National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) to facilitate the implementation of Earth Summit agreements.

In a similar manner, the Forum encouraged civil society to:

- Actively promote awareness of the fact that once basic needs have been met, human development is about being more, not having more. Fundamental changes in human values are the best means to transform the culture of consumerism;
- Adopt and disseminate the Earth Charter as a tool for promoting values and actions that will implement sustainable development.

After this gathering, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev issued a Statement on the Draft Millennium Forum Declaration, which included passages on the incorporation of the Earth Charter in decision-making processes and reflected upon the great interest in the Charter during this event. The following is an excerpt of his speech:

> "As one of the founders of the Earth Charter Initiative, I was very gratified to discover the emphasis placed on this important document in the Millennium Forum's draft declaration. Green Cross International has been active in the development of the Earth Charter from its inception, when "civil society took up the challenge" abandoned by governments in 1992, and I wish to re-assert the Millennium Forum's call for all governments and individuals to read the document very carefully and join the movement to form a global partnership for the sake of the preservation of the Earth, and all who depend on it. The Earth Charter will be officially unveiled at a ceremony in The Hague in June 2000, in the presence of the original patrons of the movement, Maurice Strong, Ruud Lubbers and myself, and I trust that this event, and the support of the participants of the Millennium Forum, will help achieve the ultimate objective of the Earth Charter - to be discussed and endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations as a global peoples' declaration".

June 2000

International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES) Forum;
Stockholm, Sweden.

The purpose of this conference, held on June 14 -18, was to review the future role of science and engine ering at the turn of a new millennium. During the conference, Dr. Frank Meyberg, of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists and contact point for the Earth Charter in Germany, spoke about the "Spirit and Rationality of Sustainability and the Earth Charter". Dr. Kamla Chowdhry, Earth Charter Commissioner from India, also participated with a presentation on the "Spirit of the Earth Charter and Science".

Connecting Environmental Ethics, Ecological Integrity, and Health in the New Millennium; Costa Rica.

This conference, held on June 24 - 29, was sponsored by the International Society for Environmental Ethics, the Global Integrity Project, Sarah Lawrence College, and Notre Dame University. The event offered an opportunity for participants gathered from various countries to discuss issues pertinent to the Earth Charter. The document was featured on the first day in order to set the tone for the following days of the conference. Fayen D'evie of the Earth Council made a presentation on the "Earth Charter as an Ethical Value Framework for Sustainable Living". Her emphasis was on the realism of our current world issues at this critical moment in time, where we must choose to "form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life". Dr. Abelardo Brenes, of the University for Peace, spoke on the "Earth Charter as a Source for an Ethics of Universal Responsibility".

The Official Launch of the Earth Charter;
Peace Palace, The Hague, Netherlands.

On June 29 at the Peace Palace, the official launching of the new phase of the Earth Charter Initiative took place. The first international Earth Charter workshop was held at the Peace Palace in May 1995, and over the following five years, the Dutch

government continued to be a strong supporter of the Earth Charter. It was, therefore, fitting to return to the Peace Palace for the official Earth Charter document launch and the announcement of its new phase. Approximately 300 people attended this one-day event. Many of them arrived from different parts of the world to celebrate the conclusion of an extensive consultation work and the beginning of the dissemination and implementation phase, in which individuals and groups are invited to utilize the Earth Charter as a framework of values for sustainable development. The document was presented by a young representative, January Juliao, to Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands in a symbolic gesture: the request for the adoption of values for a sustainable future, sought by one of those who will inherit that future.



Presentation to H.M. Queen Beatrix

Among those present were Mikhail Gorbachev, Maurice F. Strong, Kamla Chowdhry, Steven C. Rockefeller, Wangari Maathai, Federico Mayor, Parvez Hassan, Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, and Minister Erna Witoelar. Minister Laurens Jan Brinkhorst of the Netherlands stated that "on behalf of the Dutch Government, I do pledge that we will work in the continued period, towards the changes of production and consumption to which Mikhail Gorbachev referred. The changes of production and consumption where indeed the lifestyles of nations are involved, and if leadership cannot come from the industrialized world, where can it come from? This document of the Earth Charter will be presented at the Rio + 10 Conference in 2002 and we do hope that the world will be moving one step further, beyond 1992, because indeed we have entered a new millennium, a millennium with new hope, with a new generation".

This was an important and symbolic event for the Earth Charter. It represented the conclusion of the consultation process and the commencement of the widespread dissemination and implementation of the Earth Charter principles. The programme and speeches of this event are available on the Earth Charter website.



Children s presentation at the launch.

July 2000

Global Cities 21: The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) World Congress 2000; Sachsen-Anhalt, Germany.

The overall goal of this conference, held on June 28 - July 2, was to address the issue of sustainable development as a transformation process and how that process can be fostered at a local level. Sessions encouraging the exchange of ideas, dialogue, and informal interactions were held. A workshop on the link between the Earth Charter and local sustainable planning and an examination of the strategies toward the incorporation of the document in local governance also took place with the participation of the guest expert Steven Rockefeller, Earth Charter commissioner and co-chair of the Earth Charter Steering Committee. This workshop also offered representatives of the Municipality of San José the opportunity to present their experience on the Earth Charter, in the context of the project "The Municipality of San José towards Sustainable Development", which resulted in the creation of their own version of the Charter. The mayor of Capetown, Alderman Nomaindia Mfeketo, presented a vision on local sustainability and contemplated the future use of the Earth Charter. Maurice Strong, chairman of the Earth Council, also participated with a keynote speech at the opening plenary of the last day. By formal resolution, ICLEI members voted to endorse the Earth Charter: "We, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, endorse the Earth Charter. We commit our organization to the realization of its aims. We will seek to apply its principles in our programs, policies and other activities".

August 2000

The Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders; New York, USA.

The Peace Summit, which took place on August 28-31, brought together about 1,000 religious and spiritual leaders from numerous countries and traditions. The Summit focused on the following issues: conflict transformation, elimination of poverty,

forgiveness and reconciliation, and preservation and restoration of the environment. An Earth Charter roundtable breakfast took place at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and Earth Charter Commissioners Wangari Maathai, Steven Rockefeller, Kamla Chowdhry, Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp and John Hoyt made presentations regarding the document. The Charter was introduced as a declaration of widely shared values at the plenary session and, as a result, many Earth Charter values were incorporated into the Declaration issued by the Summit.

October 2000

IUCN - World Conservation Union Congress;

Amman, Jordan.

A successful Earth Charter luncheon took place at the IUCN World Congress in Jordan on October 5. The main purpose of this event was to present the Earth Charter to key individuals and organizations from the Middle East region as well as to some special. The president of IUCN, Yolanda Kakabadse, the president of the Earth Council, Maurice Strong, and Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, all Earth Charter commissioners, as well as the director general of IUCN, Ms. Maritta Koch Weser offered reflections on the Earth Charter and the need to have IUCN support it. The Minister of the Environment from the Czech Republic, Mr. Kuzvart, also offered words of support and commitment. Outcomes from the meeting included increased support from Jordan participants to the Earth Charter Initiative, as well as greater interest from other attendees, including representatives from Egypt, Iran, and Morocco. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature in Jordan offered its support to the Earth Charter process.

Endorsement of the Earth Charter was discussed among IUCN members during the World Congress. At the opening ceremony of the Congress, Maurice Strong invited IUCN members to embrace the Earth Charter and give it their blessings. However, the endorsement of the Charter by the Congress was not as strong as expected. Careful analysis leads to the conclusion that a few delegates managed to carry an unexpected recommendation to further examine and review the Charter and bring it before the next World Congress. This occurred in spite of the existing and long-term close collaboration with the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, and its significant participation in the Earth Charter drafting process. It is expected that collaboration between the Earth Charter Initiative and IUCN will be strengthened in the near future.

November 2000

The Forum on Our Global Challenges;

San José, Costa Rica.

Fundación Milenio (Millennium Foundation), the University for Peace, and the Costa Rican Ministry of Foreign Affairs organized this forum, with the collaboration of ten other organizations including the Earth Council. The Earth Charter and UNESCO's Manifesto 2000 were the framework for discussion during the weeklong forum, which included topics such as gender equality and equity, human rights, sustainability in the era of globalization, communication and education, non-violence, demilitarization and disarmament. The goal of the forum was to offer "an opportunity for reflection on the path of humanity in relation to global challenges". Guests included Moacir Gadotti, from the Paulo Freire Institute, Rodrigo Carazo, former president of Costa Rica, and Maude Barlow of the International Forum on Globalization, among others. The Costa Rican Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Education made strong references to the Earth Charter in their speeches.

During this occasion, an exhibit titled "A Walk through Time" was displayed on the campus of the University of Costa Rica. This exhibit was created by the Foundation for Global Community and is also available in a book format. It explains the evolutionary process of the Earth and, specifically for this event, a special panel on the Earth Charter was added at the end, as a closing message for the exhibition.

"The Earth Charter is a power-ful invitation to realize "a shared vision of basic values that will provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community" (preamble). This shared means having roots, living with traditions and history and directing ones life towards a meaningful and satisfactory future. Spirituality is about mutual respect between religions, con-victions and peoples all around the globe; it means cherishing diversity. Given the interdepen-dence of mankind and the present state of science, technology and economy the Earth Charter as a people's treaty will cover the vital need to cherish spiritual values".

—Dr. Ruud Lubbers, President of Globus and member of the Earth Charter Commission, The Netherlands

5. THE EARTH CHARTER STRATEGY 2001-2002

5.1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade the international Earth Charter Initiative conducted a worldwide, cross-cultural dialogue on common goals and shared values. Hundreds of organizations and thousands of individuals participated. Guided by this global conversation, the Initiative drafted the Earth Charter as a people's declaration that gives expression to an emerging global consensus on fundamental values and principles for a just and sustainable world.

The Earth Charter seeks to promote awareness of the major challenges and choices facing humanity. It recognizes that in the midst of great diversity we live in an increasingly interdependent world and that a global partnership involving civil society, business, and government is essential. It is an urgent call for the changes in lifestyles, institutional practice, and public policy required to protect the larger living world and to ensure a better future for all.

5.1.1. Mission

The mission of this phase of the Earth Charter Initiative is to establish a sound ethical foundation for the emerging global society and to help build a sustainable world based on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.

5.1.2. Objectives

The objectives of the Earth Charter Initiative are:

1. To disseminate the Earth Charter to individuals and organizations in all sectors of society throughout the world.

2. To promote the educational use of the Earth Charter in schools, universities, faith communities, and a variety of other settings, and to develop and distribute the necessary supporting materials.

3. To encourage and support the use, implementation, and endorsement of the Earth Charter by civil society, business, and government at all levels.

4. To seek endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations General Assembly in 2002, the tenth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit.

5.1.3. Uses of the Earth Charter

The Earth Charter recognizes that humanity's environmental, economic, social, and spiritual challenges are interrelated and require holistic thinking and integrated problem solving. It provides a much-needed fresh, broad conception of a sustainable way of life and of sustainable development. Many organizations and communities are finding that there are a variety of interrelated ways to utilize the Earth Charter and to implement its values. The Earth Charter can be used as:

- an educational tool for developing understanding of the critical choices facing humanity and the urgent need for commitment to a sustainable way of life;
- an invitation to individuals, institutions, and communities for internal reflection on fundamental attitudes and ethical values governing behavior;
- a catalyst for multi-sectoral, cross-cultural, and interfaith dialogue on global ethics and the direction of globalization;
- a call to action and guide to a sustainable way of life that can inspire commitment, cooperation, and change;
- an integrated ethical framework for creating sustainable development policies and plans at all levels;
- a values framework for assessing progress towards sustainability and for designing professional codes of conduct and accountability systems; and,
- a soft law instrument that provides an ethical foundation for the ongoing development of environmental and sustainable development law.

5.2. ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES 2001/2002

5.2.1. Preparation and Dissemination of Materials

Over the next two years, a number of resources will be developed to promote the Earth Charter and to support programmes in areas such as education,

business and professional accountability, religion and spirituality, media outreach, a culture of peace, and governance. The following materials will be developed or refined and disseminated as appropriate:

1. Earth Charter stationery with matching brochures in English, French and Spanish and related Earth Charter posters.

2. An Earth Charter web site, making available education materials online and enabling interactive opportunities such as online forums. The Secretariat has been operating an Earth Charter website for several years.

3. A commentary on the Earth Charter that explains the origin and meaning of the ideas and principles set forth in the Earth Charter and that includes a comparison of the Earth Charter with existing international agreements and declarations.

4. Translations of the Earth Charter into all major languages and as many other languages as possible, with a system in place to ensure that translations are both accurate and well written. To date, the Charter has been translated into over twelve languages.

5. A briefing book that provides background on the history, objectives, leaders, sponsors, and projects of the Earth Charter Initiative for use by organizations and the press.

6. A video presenting the people, goals, and projects of the Earth Charter Initiative and explaining its importance.

7. Regular reports on The Earth Charter in Action, summarizing the accomplishments of national activities worldwide and the uses of the Earth Charter in local communities and different sectors.

8. A book of essays on the legal, scientific, ethical, religious, and other foundations of the Earth Charter. The authors will reflect diverse cultural perspectives and represent key sectors. It will include a comprehensive bibliography of sources relevant to the development of the Earth Charter.

9. A series of interviews will be processed for publication as "Global Proposals for the Third Millennium". This will bring together the views of key leaders with regards to the Earth Charter Initiative and related movements.

10. An Earth Charter bibliography computer programme with which students can easily conduct research on the Earth Charter and related materials. This programme will be available through the Earth Charter web site.

11. A glossary of terms found in the Earth Charter and related international documents.

5.2.2. Education

The Earth Charter is a valuable and timely educational resource and the Earth Charter Initiative is giving top priority to its Education programme. A range of educational materials for all ages will be developed and disseminated in order to promote understanding of fundamental challenges and choices, the values and principles contained in the Earth Charter, and how the Earth Charter can be used to help bring about the transformations needed to attain a more sustainable way of living. Teachers and educational administrators at all levels will be provided with opportunities to learn how to utilize these materials and to train others. A special advisory committee on education has been created.

a) Primary and Secondary School

Curriculum materials, classroom worksheets, and teacher training resources are being developed. In partnership with education organizations, these materials will be disseminated widely. As a first step, an "Earth Charter Resource Booklet for Children's Education" will be completed and published. Earth Charter curricula for children and youth have already been developed and utilized in Costa Rica, Australia, and Italy, and these materials will serve as a resource for the proposed booklet.

b) Higher Education

Resources for college-level curricula on the Earth Charter will be developed and disseminated. Courses related to the Earth Charter and sustainable development are being prepared by University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, working with UNESCO and drawing upon material currently under development by various education partners, including the National University of Costa Rica, the Australian National University, and Hendrix College in Arkansas.

c) Informal Education and Lifelong Learning

An Earth Charter Facilitator's Kit, designed to assist individuals in conducting workshops on the Earth Charter in NGOs, faith communities and other organizations, will be completed and distributed.

5.2.3. Business and Civil Society

Increasing numbers of people and organizations are embracing the Earth Charter as a guide and accountability framework. Endorsements and appropriate implementation plans by sectors will be pursued in a variety of areas including the following:

a) Business and Professional Accountability

This programme will promote use of the Earth Charter by businesses and professions. One aim is to encourage professional groups to revise their codes of conduct to better reflect the values and principles of the Earth Charter, as exemplified by the World Federation of Engineering. Another aim is to promote the Earth Charter as a value framework that can be used to develop a sound ethic of social and ecological responsibility in the business community. In this regard, the Earth Charter principles are directly relevant to current debates about global capitalism and the impact of trade on local communities and the environment. The formation of a business advisory committee is under consideration. Ways to use Earth Charter principles to promote sustainability certification, labeling and programmes for ecologically and socially responsible investing are being explored in Australia and the United States.

b) Religion and Spirituality

The Earth Charter recognizes the powerful influence that spiritual values and organized religions may have on the ethical values and way of life of individuals and communities. Religions are in a position to play a major role in the shift to a sustainable future, and a significant number of religious leaders from all traditions are beginning to speak out and to provide support. Recognizing the importance of religious leadership, the Earth Charter Initiative has endeavored to engage religious and spiritual groups in the worldwide dialogue on global ethics that contributed to the drafting of the Earth Charter. For example, the Earth Charter was featured in a series of Harvard University Conferences on Religion and Ecology that brought together scholars and religious leaders from many cultures and nations. It was presented and received considerable support at the Parliament of the World's Religions in South Africa in 1999. As a result, the Parliament is using the Earth Charter in its new programmes. The Earth Charter was introduced as a declaration of widely shared values at the World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual z of indigenous peoples in connection with environmental justice issues. The Initiative will, therefore, continue to collaborate with indigenous peoples' groups in its efforts to help build a global partnership in support of a just and sustainable world.

5.2.4. Media

The Earth Charter media programme is designed to generate media interest in the document and related activities and to increase coverage of Earth Charter events in the press and on television and radio. As part of this effort, the Initiative has been using the services of Ruder Finn, an international public relations firm. The Initiative will also work with other public relations and media specialists in Latin America, Australia, Russia and elsewhere in an effort to conduct a number of major media events over the next year and a half, leading up to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development. These events will involve world leaders and major performing artists and will endeavor to significantly expand the involvement of people in the Earth Charter Initiative. Each of these events will have an educational and endorsement component.

5.2.5. Government

The focus of this programme is the promotion of the Earth Charter as a value framework and a soft law instrument that can serve as a guide for sustainability planning and assessment at the local, national, and international governmental levels.

a) Local

In partnership with The International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), the Earth Charter Secretariat together with the 53 Earth Charter National Committees and coordinators will assist local governments with the incorporation of the Earth Charter into their educational systems and development planning processes. The tenth World Congress of Local Governments, which was organized by ICLEI and met in Germany in July 2000, endorsed the Earth Charter and committed the members of ICLEI to apply the principles of the Earth Charter in their policies and programmes. The Municipality of San José, Costa Rica, has taken the lead in implementing an Earth Charter-based training programme for municipal workers.

b) National

In collaboration with National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs), the Initiative will

promote the integration of Earth Charter values into policy making, planning, legislation and assessment of the progress towards sustainability. NCSDs are multi-stakeholder mechanisms for the promotion and implementation of sustainability plans, as recommended in Chapter 38 of Agenda 21. In the Rio+10 Assessment being prepared by NCSDs and coordinated by the Earth Council in preparation for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Earth Charter will be utilized to evaluate progress toward achieving sustainable patterns of development. The Earth Charter will be especially helpful in assessing 1) the extent to which national and local sustainable development strategies or development plans reflect an integrated vision of sustainability, and 2) the extent to which education systems are addressing the major challenges of sustainable development.

Certain nations have taken the lead in involving many sectors and stakeholders in utilizing the Earth Charter as a comprehensive framework for development. The Republic of Tatarstan in Russia has undertaken a comprehensive review of the extent to which its national policies and practices are parallel to the Earth Charter principles and of how to improve its compliance. Costa Rica has been at the forefront of promoting peace, democracy and sustainable development, and these efforts increasingly utilize the Earth Charter as an integrated ethical framework. The Philippines, the Netherlands, Australia, and Brazil are also engaged in significant cross-sectoral and governmental use of the Earth Charter. These major national efforts serve as experimental undertakings that are exploring how the Earth Charter can be used as a values framework for building just, sustainable, and peaceful societies. This programme seeks to study, document, and support the full implementation of the Earth Charter in these and other territories.

Commission members and other Earth Charter representatives will continue to present the Earth Charter to heads of State seeking their endorsement and support, accompanied by appropriate ceremonies, seminars and/or public meetings, and media exposure.

c) International

Working with The World Conservation Union (IUCN), the Earth Charter Initiative will promote the adoption of the Union's Draft International Covenant on Environment and Development as a hard law treaty that is designed to achieve implementation of many Earth Charter values.

Briefing sessions on the Earth Charter Initiative will be conducted for diplomatic missions at the United Nations in New York and Geneva.

In partnership with Earth Charter National Committees and NCSDs, the Initiative will organize a global Earth Charter Assembly preceding the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development to help generate a critical mass of support for endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations General Assembly.

5.2.6. Multi-stakeholder Collaboration for a Culture of Peace

The goal of this programme is to use the Earth Charter to help prevent violence and war and to build societies that practice tolerance, solidarity, and cooperation. The Earth Charter Initiative has been collaborating with a range of UN-related "Culture for Peace" initiatives. The next ten years represent the official decade of a Culture for Peace in the UN system. The 16th and culminating major principle of the Earth Charter states, *"Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence, and peace".* A culture of peace, in its deepest sense, is the outcome of implementing all of the Earth Charter principles. This programme area seeks to strengthen and study a range of education and development programmes where the pursuit of peace, democracy, and sustainable development is being significantly guided by Earth Charter principles.

As mentioned above, both the Republic of Tatarstan in the Russian Federation and Costa Rica have taken the lead in pursuing a culture of peace guided by the Earth Charter principles. This programme area will pursue a series of curriculum development initiatives and national projects bringing together these two agendas.

As part of this programme, a peace conference will be conducted. It will bring together representatives from Tatarstan with the aim of declaring this region *"a zone of the culture of peace."* Guided by the Earth Charter vision, this work will be undertaken in collaboration with Green Cross International, the UNESCO's Culture for Peace Process, The Hague Appeal for Peace and the World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders. In addition, the Earth Charter Initiative will also collaborate with the UN University for Peace to develop educational programmes and projects that utilize the Earth Charter and the Culture of Peace Manifesto to show how these declarations can be used to promote education for

sustainability and national strategies for sustainable development.

5.2.7. Earth Charter Endorsements

The Earth Charter Initiative encourages the endorsement of the Charter as well as its use and implementation. Endorsement of the Earth Charter by individuals or organizations signifies a commitment to the spirit and aims of the document. It is an indication that they intend to utilize the Earth Charter in ways that are appropriate given their situation. For example, an organization might use the document to review its operations and modify its activities so that they better reflect the principles of the Earth Charter, and it might integrate the Earth Charter into its educational programmes. Endorsement also means a readiness to cooperate with others in the effort to implement Earth Charter values. There are many other ways that those who endorse the Earth Charter can help to advance the objectives of the Initiative.

Many groups and organizations have endorsed and are making use of the Earth Charter. Endorsements build support for the Earth Charter movement and for social change. A growing number of endorsements increase the possibility that the United Nations General Assembly will also endorse the Earth Charter in 2002.

5.3. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

An Earth Charter Commission was established in early 1997 to oversee the consultation and drafting process and to approve a final version of the Charter, which was released in March 2000, following a Commission meeting in Paris at the UNESCO headquarters. The Commission will meet infrequently in the future and only when decisions are necessary concerning major changes in the goals and governance of the Earth Charter Initiative. Oversight of the operations and programmes of the Earth Charter Initiative is the responsibility of the Earth Charter Steering Committee, which is chaired by members of the Commission.

The Earth Charter Interna-tional Secretariat is based at the Earth Council on the campus of the University for Peace in San José, Costa Rica. The Secretariat, which includes an executive director, two staff, and volunteers, provides support to the Commission and Steering Committee, coordinates major programmes and global undertakings, and works with a global network of 53 Earth Charter National Committees and coordinators, and a number of partner organizations, including National Councils for Sustainable Development. Several members of the international Drafting Committee continue to assist the Secretariat with planning and the preparation of translations and background materials on the Earth Charter.

The Earth Charter National Committees are composed of a broad range of community, educational, business and government representatives. In some countries, National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) serve as the Earth Charter National Committee. In other cases, there is a single person or organization that serves as the Earth Charter coordinator for that country. The Secretariat receives support for its activities with National Committees from the Earth Council staff working with NCSDs.

The following organizations have made a major long-term commitment to working with the Earth Charter Initiative: the Earth Council, Green Cross International, the Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity, the Center for Respect of Life and Environment, the Center for Dignity and Rights/Cedar International, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, the Paulo Freire Institute, the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future, Global Education Associates, and the Inuit Circumpolar Conference.

The Secretariat, National Committees and coordinators, NCSDs, and committed organizations work together to disseminate and promote the Earth Charter at the national level. Diverse groups at the local level organize a wide variety of Earth Charter activities independently.

Grants and gifts in support of the Earth Charter Initiative are made to The Philanthropic Collaborative (TPC)/Earth Charter Fund in New York City. TPC is an innovative 501(c)(3) public charity that was created by the Rockefeller family and is used by diverse groups. It operates like a community foundation and includes within it many donor-advised funds and a variety of special projects. The TPC/Earth Charter Fund provides funding for the international Secretariat, National Committees and coordinators, and collaborating organizations responsible for managing Earth Charter projects. It operates under the oversight of the Earth Charter Steering Committee.

6. HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE

The Earth Charter Initiative is seeking to develop broad public support for the Earth Charter. The Initiative is promoting the use, implementation, and endorsement of the Earth Charter by individuals and organizations in all sectors of society. The following are some ideas about how you can participate in this initiative. Please indicate how you would like to support and become engaged in the Earth Charter Initiative. You and your organization can:

- **Endorse the Earth Charter.**

  If you would like information and assistance with organizational endorsement, please e-mail us.

- **Urge your national government to endorse the Earth Charter** through the UN General Assembly at Rio+10, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002.

- **Urge your local Government to endorse and use the Earth Charter** as a value framework for Governance.

- **Promote and disseminate the Earth Charter and related information.**

- **Use the Earth Charter in educational programmes.**

  The Earth Charter can be an educational tool to promote a sustainable way of life. If you are an educator, we encourage you to share it with your students, colleagues or group. Integrate the Earth Charter into curriculum and activities and use the Earth Charter as a framework for discussing and learning about sustainable development.

- **Use the Earth Charter to promote dialogue in faith communities.**

  The Earth Charter can be used for sermons, study groups, dialogue on shared values or actions.

- **Incorporate the Earth Charter into your business or professional organization s mission statement, codes of conduct, programmes, activities, and literature.**

- **Use the Earth Charter as a framework or guide for local, national or regional planning.** When designing policies and planning at all levels, the Earth Charter can be an instrument that offers an integrated ethical vision guiding our plans towards a more just and sustainable future.

- **Use the Earth Charter to assess progress toward sustainability.**

- **Incorporate the Earth Charter as a theme for workshops, conferences, forums and meetings.**

- **Join an existing Earth Charter campaign, committee or group, or help to form one in your area.**

- **Make financial contribution** in support of the Earth Charter Initiative. Send contributions to the Earth Charter Fund/TPC, attention: Claire Wilson, Post Office Box 648, Middlebury VT 05753, USA.

"The process of change in Indonesia is painful but challenging. The Earth Charter will continue to be our source of hope, inspiration and strength, to move forward in this process".

-Ms. Erna Witoelar, Minister of Settlements and Regional Development, Republic of Indonesia

"The process by which the Earth Charter has been developed is one of dialogue. Truths arrived at through discussion and dialogue are warm living truths. Nothing sparks a more profound and lasting transformation in the human heart than such interactions, bringing together women and men of all backgrounds and walks of life".

-Mr. Daisaku Ikeda, President, Soka Gakkai International, Japan

7. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EARTH CHARTER



The Earth Charter Commission issued a final version of the document in March 2000. An overview of the Charter's historical context and origins helps to explain its purpose and significance. The discussion that follows provides an outline of important developments, with selected examples of the type of activities and events that formed the Earth Charter process.

7.1. Historical Background, 1945-1994

When the United Nations was established in 1945, its agenda for world security emphasized in human rights, peace, and equitable socioeconomic development. No mention was made of the environment as a common concern. Little attention was given to ecological well-being by the United Nations during its first twenty-five years. This, however, changed as a result of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. Since the early seventies, ecological security has emerged as a fourth major concern of the United Nations.

Beginning with the Stockholm Declaration, the nations of the world have adopted over seventy declarations, charters, and treaties that seek to build a global partnership that protects the environment and integrates conservation and development. In addition, a variety of non-governmental organizations have drafted and circulated at least two hundred of their own declarations and people's treaties that address issues related to the environment, development and social justice. Especially in the last decade, some of these documents and related international reports reflect a growing awareness that humanity's environmental, economic, and social challenges are interconnected and require integrated solutions. The Earth Charter builds on all of these developments.

The World Charter for Nature, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1982, is a landmark document in the development of a global environmental ethic. It is the first intergovernmental declaration to affirm respect for nature as the foundation principle of environmental protection, and it contains a progressive vision of the strategies and policies required to achieve ecological well-being. However, it does not articulate fully the links between environmental degradation and issues such as poverty and equitable human development, and it was drafted before the concept of sustainable development was formulated by the UN World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in its report titled Our Common Future (1987).[1]

It was this World Commission, chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, that issued the proposal leading to the early efforts to create an Earth Charter. In Our Common Future, the WCED calls for creation of *"a universal declaration" in the form of "a new charter" that would "consolidate and extend relevant legal principles", creating "new norms . needed to maintain livelihoods and life on our shared planet" and "to guide state behavior in the transition to sustainable development."* The WCED also recommended that the new charter *"be subsequently expanded into a Convention, setting out the sovereign rights and reciprocal responsibilities of all states on environmental protection and sustainable development."*

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, took up the challenge of drafting the Earth Charter. A number of governments submitted recommendations and many non-governmental organizations, including groups representing the major religious faiths, became actively involved. However, the time was not right. An NGO Earth Charter was drafted during this summit, but efforts to create a UN Earth Charter were abandoned. Agreement was reached on the Rio Declaration, which is a valuable document, but it does not contain the ethical vision required for an Earth Charter. While it sets forth a more integrated understanding of the connections between environmental, social, and economic issues than the World Charter for Nature, it fails to reaffirm the strong environmental ethic in the World Charter.

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1. Our Common Future, Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 332-33.

7.2. The Earth Charter Initiative, 1994-2000

A new Earth Charter Initiative was launched in 1994 under the leadership of Maurice Strong, the former Secretary General of both the Stockholm Conference and UNCED and chairman of the newly formed Earth Council; and Mikhail Gorbachev, acting in his capacity as chairman of Green Cross International. The Earth Council was created to pursue the unfinished business of UNCED and to promote implementation of Agenda 21, the Earth Summit's action plan. Jim MacNeill, former Secretary General of the WCED, and Ruud Lubbers, Prime Minister of The Netherlands, were instrumental in facilitating the organization of the new Earth Charter project. Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun of Algeria served as the executive director of the project during its initial phase.

During 1995 and 1996, extensive research was conducted in the fields of international law, science, religion, ethics, environmental conservation, and sustainable development, in preparation for the drafting of the Earth Charter. The Earth Council and a number of partner organizations conducted Earth Charter consultations throughout the world in an effort to promote a global dialogue on common values and to clarify the emerging worldwide consensus regarding principles of environmental protection and sustainable living. The consultation process began with an international conference at the Peace Palace in The Hague, in May of 1995. Representatives from thirty countries and over seventy organizations participated in The Hague meeting. A study of over 50 international law instruments entitled Principles of Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development: Summary and Survey (1996) was prepared and circulated as a resource for those contributing to the consultation process.

As the consultation process progressed, a general agreement was reached on a set of criteria for the proposed Earth Charter. It was established that the Charter should be a declaration of fundamental ethical principles for environmental conservation and sustainable development; composed of principles of enduring significance that are widely shared by people of all races, cultures, religions, and ideological traditions; relatively brief and concise; a document with a holistic perspective and an ethical and spiritual vision; composed in language that is inspiring, clear, and uniquely valid and meaningful in all languages; and, a declaration that adds significant new dimensions of value to what has already been articulated in relevant documents.

Early in 1997, the Earth Council and Green Cross International formed an Earth Charter Commission to give oversight to the process. The five co-chairs (as well as the membership of the Commission) were selected to represent the regions of the world: Kamla Chowdhry, Asia and the Pacific; Mikhail Gorbachev, Europe; Mercedes Sosa, Latin America and the Caribbean; Maurice F. Strong, North America; and Amadou Toumani Touré, Africa and the Middle East. A Secretariat for the Commission was established at the Earth Council in Costa Rica under the leadership of the Council's executive director, Maximo Kalaw from the Philippines. Steven Rockefeller, a professor of religion and ethics at Middlebury College in the United States, who had prepared the 1996 Summary and Survey, was invited to head up the drafting process and an International Drafting Committee was created.

In March 1997, a Benchmark Draft of the Earth Charter was issued by the Commission at the conclusion of the Rio+5 Forum held in Rio de Janeiro. This Forum, organized by the Earth Council as part of a worldwide review of progress toward sustainable development since the Rio Earth Summit, brought together over 500 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSD). Intensive consultations on the text of the Earth Charter were held during the six days of the Forum. The Benchmark Draft, which contained a short preamble, eighteen principles, and a conclusion, provided a new focus for the ongoing international dialogue on the Charter.

During the years 1997 and 1998, numerous conferences and meetings on common values and the text of the Benchmark Draft were held in all regions of the world. An Earth Charter Internet website was created by the Earth Council (www.earthcharter.org). Also, Mikhail Gorbachev hosted a three-day meeting on the Earth Charter for representatives from Russia, Europe, and the Drafting Committee in March 1998. In April, Gorbachev participated in an Earth Charter

Forum for Pacific Rim countries in Kyoto, Japan. This same month, a special conference on the Earth Charter and human rights was held at the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century in the United States. This was followed several months later by a conference on the scientific foundations of the Earth Charter, hosted by the Hastings Center, a US organization specializing in bio-medical and environmental ethics. The Earth Charter was presented and debated during a series of conferences on religion and ecology at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard University. Additionally, National Earth Charter Committees were formed in thirty-five different countries.

In December 1998, representatives from twenty-four National Earth Charter Committees gathered for asix-day Earth Charter Continental Congress of the Americas in Cuiabá, Mato Grosso, Brazil. Some groups drafted national and regional Earth Charters as part of their contribution to the consultation process and the Earth Charter movement. Comments and recommendations on ways to improve the text of the document were forwarded to the Drafting Committee, which circulated revised versions of the Charter for further comment during 1998. Gradually, the Benchmark Draft II took form.

Early in 1999, a special international drafting meeting was held at the Pocantico Conference Center of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, outside New York City, to complete the work on the Benchmark Draft II. This meeting included representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Pakistan, the Philippines, Russia, and the United States, with contributing members in India, Kenya, and the Netherlands. In April, the Earth Charter Commission formally released the Benchmark Draft II. The number of main principles had been reduced to sixteen, but fifty-five supporting principles had been added and the document had grown to over five pages in length. The Commission called for a continuation of the international consultation process throughout 1999.

Over the next eleven months numerous translations of the text were completed and Earth Charter dialogues involving both experts in diverse fields and representatives from grassroots communities were conducted in many countries. During 1999, two online conferences on the new text were organized by the Earth Council in English (April) and Spanish (November). The April online conference was conducted over a two-week period and attracted participants from 78 countries and 300 universities. Multi-stakeholder national fora examining the text were held in a number of countries, including a national forum of 100 delegates held in Canberra, Australia during February. Three regional Earth Charter conferences were also carried out during 1998-99, to provide a synthesis of national level consultations: (1) Latin America – Mato Gross, Brazil, December 1998; (2) Central Asia – Kyrgyzstan, June 1999; and, (3) Africa and the Middle East – Cape Town, December 1999. Presentations and workshops on the Earth Charter were conducted at the Parliament of the World's Religions, which was also meeting at this time in Cape Town.

A team of international lawyers from the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law carefully reviewed the document and made recommendations. The number of national Earth Charter committees grew to forty-five. During October 1999, representatives from these national committees participated with the Drafting Committee in a ten-day online conference that focused on the text of the document.

In January 2000, another special international drafting meeting was held in an effort to finalize the document. Work continued on the text through February. The basic structure of Benchmark Draft II was preserved. However, extensive revisions were made in the wording and the ordering of the principles, in an effort to make the document as concise and coherent as possible. The meeting held at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris in mid-March, provided the Earth Charter Commission with the opportunity to carefully review and refine the text, in the light of the international discussion. The final version of the Earth Charter was issued on March 24. The Commission, however, has reserved the right to make adjustments in the text, if after four or five years there are very compelling reasons to do so.

7.3. Influences Shaping the Earth Charter

In addition to international law instruments and NGO declarations, the ideas and principles in the Earth Charter are drawn from a variety of sources. The document Charter is influenced by the new scientific worldview, including the discoveries of contemporary cosmology, physics, evolutionary biology, and ecology. It draws on the wisdom of the world's religions and philosophical traditions. It also reflects the social movements associated with human rights, democracy,

gender equality, civil society, disarmament, and peace. It builds on the seven UN summit conferences on children, the environment, human rights, population, women, social development and food security, held during the 1990s. The Charter draws on the path-breaking work done in the field of environmental and sustainable development ethics over the past fifty years. The document has also been developed in the light of the practical experience and insights of those groups that have successfully pursued sustainable ways of living and working.

The Earth Charter Initiative is part of the worldwide global ethics movement, which seeks to identify common goals and shared values that transcend cultural, religious, and national boundaries. Its development has been influenced by the growing literature on global ethics. During the last three decades of the twentieth century, the practice of cross-cultural and inter-religious dialogue has spread widely, and there is a growing awareness that peoples from diverse traditions share their beliefs in many fundamental values. The "Declaration toward a Global Ethic" issued by the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1993 is a very good example. In addition, the increasing consciousness of global interdependence and the identification of common problems has intensified the search for and articulation of shared ethical principles. The Earth Charter consultation has promoted the worldwide dialogue on global ethics, and the ethical vision included in the document is an important contribution to the search for a global ethics.

As the broad range of sources upon which the Earth Charter is based suggests, the Charter is not just a document about the relationship between humankind and the environment. It has been constructed with the understanding that humanity's environmental, economic, social, political, cultural, and spiritual challenges are interrelated and can only be effectively addressed with integrated global solutions. All the principles in the Earth Charter are related to environmental issues, but they do not all deal exclusively with them.

The Earth Charter Commission made a decision to draft the Charter first and foremost as a people's treaty rather than as an intergovernmental instrument for two reasons. First, during the 1990s most State governments were concerned about the promotion of economic growth, but they failed to meet the challenge of adopting patterns of sustainable development as defined by Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit. Consequently, they were not prepared to embrace new and stronger ethical commitments. It was clear that an intergovernmental drafting process would not a strong document. Second, the collapse of Russian communism and the end of the Cold War has led to a renewal of civil society in many nations. The result has been the emergence of an increasingly influential global civil society involving a worldwide network of NGOs linked together by the new communication technologies.

This global civil society is playing an increasingly important role in leading the world toward sustainable ways of living. However, in order to be effective in persuading governments and corporate leaders to cooperate, individual citizens and civil society at large need an inspiring, shared vision of fundamental values to guide planning, policy making, and action. With these considerations in mind, the Earth Charter Commission decided to keep the drafting process mostly as a civil society initiative. This decision has not altered the hope that the Earth Charter will be endorsed eventually by the United Nations General Assembly. The year 2002 -the tenth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit- has been set as the year for UN endorsement. The Millennium NGO Forum, which brought together one thousand four hundred NGOs from around the world for a meeting at the UN head-quarters in May 2000, supported this objective and issued a formal call for governments *"to endorse the Earth Charter in the UN General Assembly".*[2] The Charter can serve as an effective people's treaty and instrument for motivating and guiding civil society without such formal UN support. However, if the document is endorsed by the UN General Assembly, it

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2. *"We the Peoples Millennium Forum Declaration" and "Agenda for Action Strengthening the United Nations for the 21st Century," The Millennium NGO Forum, May 2000, Section E. Sustainable Development and the Environment, Government #5. The Millennium Forum Declaration also urged civil society "To adopt and disseminate the Earth Charter as a tool for promotion of values and actions which will create sustainable development." (Section E. Sustainable Development and the Environment, Civil Society #5).*

will enhance the stature of the Charter as a soft law document and increase its influence on governments, business, and international law.[3]

Regarding the connections between the Earth Charter and international law, the document has been drafted in coordination with a hard law treaty that is designed to provide an integrated legal framework for all environmental and sustainable development law and policy. This International Covenant on Environment and Development - which, as the the Earth Charter, was originally proposed in Our Common Future, is being prepared by the Commission on Environmental Law at the World Conservation Union (IUCN). After six years of work, a Draft Covenant was presented at the United Nations in 1995 and is currently being revised in the light of comments received from governments. For three years, members of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, including the past and present chairs of the Commission, Parvez Hassan from Pakistan and Nicholas Robinson from the US, have been actively involved in the drafting of the Earth Charter, which provides an ethical foundation for the Covenant. The revised Covenant will be presented to the United Nations again in the near future in the hope that it will generate the governmental interest and support required to start formal international negotiations on the document.

Many people have favored a very short text with a brief preamble and no more than twelve concise principles. Others have strongly argued for a more substantial document, like a UN declaration, that includes guidelines for its implementation. A very short Charter would be more accessible to people and could be easily memorized. The problem with a short document, however, is with what gets left out. The major challenges humanity faces are complex and interrelated, and the ethical guidelines needed cannot in most cases be reduced to phrases of a few words such as *"think globally, act locally".* In addition, many groups who feel marginalized and excluded from decision-making processes are particularly uncomfortable with the idea of a short Earth Charter with a limited number of very general principles. They believe that those in positions of power will interpret the meaning of such document as they will, and there will be little, if any opportunity, for discussion. These groups want additional language and principles that qualify and clarify.

There exists another important consideration. Although the IUCN Draft Covenant spells out in considerable detail the practical implications of most of the document, it may require many years of negotiation before governments reach agreement on the Covenant. Therefore, the Earth Charter must be a document able to stand on its own.

With all these concerns and considerations in mind, a decision was made by the Drafting Committee to construct the Earth Charter as a layered document with a preamble that describes in general terms the basic challenge, sixteen main principles with supporting principles, and a conclusion that contains a call to commitment and action. This approach makes possible an abbreviated version that includes the preamble and the sixteen main principles only. As the text grew in length, the main principles were divided into four parts in order to make the structure and main themes of the principles easily understood. Part I contains four very broad main principles that can serve as a short summary of the Earth Charter vision. The sixty-one supporting principles that follow the sixteen main principles deal with critical issues and clarify the meaning of the main principles.

The Drafting Committee has remained mindful to keep the Earth Charter as short and concise as possible. It has, therefore, limited the document to fundamental ethical principles and principles that set forth major strategies for achieving a just, sustainable and peaceful world. The Earth Charter does not attempt to identify the mechanisms and instruments required to implement its ethical and strategic vision.

With the drafting process complete, the Earth Charter Initiative has entered a new phase. The goal is now to circulate the document widely and to promote it as an educational tool and guide to responsible action in civil society, business and governments. Partnerships must be forged with many organizations. A new international Steering Committee has been formed by the Earth Charter Commission and charged with planning and overseeing major activities. On June 29, 2000, the Earth Charter Commission, with the support of Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, formally launched this new phase of the Earth Charter Initiative at the Peace Palace in The Hague.

3. *Unlike a hard law treaty, a soft law document such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is regarded as a statement of intentions and aspirations, and it is not considered to be legally binding. However, soft law documents, like the Universal Declaration, frequently evolve into hard law over time. In addition, any declaration of fundamental ethical principles that gains wide acceptance can function as a soft law document that influences the development of international law even if it has not been formally endorsed by the United Nations.*

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EARTH CHARTER COMMISSION AND STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. Earth Charter Commission

Co-Chairs

Kamla Chowdhry, India

Mikhail Gorbachev, Russia

Mercedes Sosa, Argentina

Maurice Strong, Canada

Amadou Toumani Touré, Mali

A.T. Ariyaratne, Sri Lanka

Princess Basma Bint Talal, Jordan

Leonardo Boff, Brazil

Pierre Calame, France

Severn Cullis-Suzuki, Canada

Wakako Hironaka, Japan

John Hoyt, United States of America

Yolanda Kakabadse, Ecuador

Ruud Lubbers, The Netherlands

Wangari Maathai, Kenya

Elizabeth May, Canada

Federico Mayor, Spain

Shridath Ramphal, Guyana

Henriette Rasmussen, Greenland

Steven Rockefeller, United States of America

Mohamed Sahnoun, Algeria

Awraham Soetendorp, The Netherlands

Pauline Tangiora, New Zealand/Aotearoa

Erna Witoelar, Indonesia

2. Steering Committee

Co-Chairs

Kamla Chowdhry, India

Yolanda Kakabadse, Ecuador

Ruud Lubbers, The Netherlands

Steven Rockefeller, United States of America

Severn Cullis-Suzuki, Canada

Wakako Hironaka, Japan

Maximo Kalaw, Philippines

Alexander Likhotal, Russia

Wangari Maathai, Kenya

Mohamed Sahnoun, Algeria

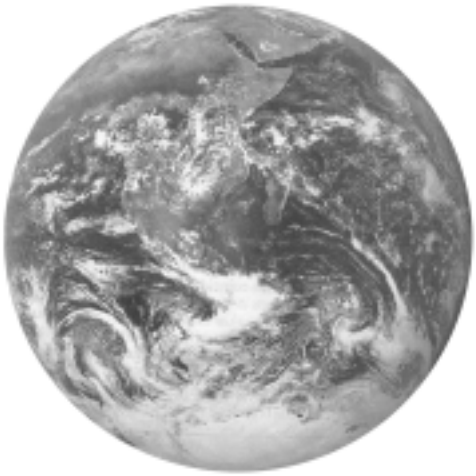
Rick Clugston, United States of America, Chair, Funding Committee

3. Secretariat:

Mirian Vilela, Executive Director

Rustem Khairov, Green Cross International Coordinator

Brendan Mackey, Education Director



"The Earth Charter embodies our shared destiny. By adopting the principles of the Charter, we, the community of Earth in all its diversity, reinforce our commitment to protect our common home".

-Princess Basma Bint Talal of Jordan

"The Earth Charter should be construed especially as an ethical global movement that will lead to a planetary code of ethics, upholding a core of principles and values that strive against the social injustice and inequality that currently prevail in the world. There are five pillars that support that nucleus, namely: a) human rights; b) democracy and participation; c) equality; d) protection of minorities; and e) pacific resolution of conflicts. These pillars are the product of a vision of a solidary world that respects diversity (planetary consciousness)".

-Prof. Moacir Gadotti, Paulo Freire Institute, Brazil

"Inspirational documents have changed the course of events and impacted human societies: the Magna Carta, the American Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all stirred human imagination and changed the quality of life of peoples all over the globe. It has been my unfailing hope that the Earth Charter will, similarly, provide an appropriate vision for nature conservation, environmental protection and sustainable development for the new millennium".

—Dr. Parvez Hassan, Former Chair, IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, Pakistan

"There are enormous thought provoking words in this document and what we should do is instead of just reading through, reflect on what those words mean so that we can be moved to action".

-Prof. Wangari Maathai, Earth Charter Commissioner/President Green Belt Movement, Kenya

"The Earth Charter vision reflects the conviction that caring for people and caring for Earth are two interdependent dimensions of one task. We cannot care for people in a world with collapsing ecosystems, and we cannot care for Earth in a world with widespread poverty, injustice, economic inequity, and violent conflict".

—Prof. Steven C. Rockefeller, Chair, Earth Charter Steering Committee/Earth Charter Commissioner, United States of America

THE EARTH CHARTER ENDORSEMENT STATEMENT

The Earth Charter Initiative is seeking to develop a worldwide base of support. Towards this end, the Initiative is promoting the use, implementation, and endorsement of the Earth Charter by individuals and organizations in all sectors of society. Endorsement of the document by individuals and groups in civil society and by businesses and governments builds support for environmental protection and development of a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. It also helps to advance the effort to secure endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations General Assembly at the World Summit for Sustainable Development (Rio+10) in 2002.

Endorsement of the Earth Charter by individuals or organizations signifies a commitment to the spirit and aims of the document. It is an indication that they intend to utilize the Earth Charter in ways that are appropriate given their situation. For example, an organization might use the document to review its operations and modify its activities so that they better reflect the principles of the Earth Charter, and it might integrate the Earth Charter into its educational programs. Endorsement also means a commitment to work for the Earth Charter implementation of values and a readiness to cooperate with others in this endeavor. There are many other ways that those who endorse the Earth Charter can help to advance the objectives of the Earth Charter Initiative.



EARTH CHARTER ENDORSEMENT STATEMENT

( ) *INDIVIDUAL* ( ) *ORGANIZATION*

We, the undersigned, endorse the Earth Charter. We embrace the spirit and aims of the document. We pledge to join the global partnership for a just, sustainable, and peaceful world and to work for the realization of the values and principles of the Earth Charter.

We urge all state governments to endorse the Earth Charter through the United Nations General Assembly at the World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002.

Print Name: _____ *Signature:* _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Country: _____ *Telephone:* _____

E-mail: _____ *Fax:* _____



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