



## INTERNATIONAL GREEN CROSS

A GLOBAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

15 December 1992

Dr. M.S. Swaminathan  
Chairman, International Commission  
on Peace and Food  
2352 Stonehouse Drive  
Napa, California 94558

President

MIKHAIL S. GORBACHEV

Secretary General

AKIO MATSUMURA

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Board of Trustees  
in formation

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The inaugural meeting of  
the Board of Trustees  
will be held in Kyoto, Japan  
on April 18-19, 1993.

Dear Dr. Swaminathan,

Enclosed you will find a very important personal letter to you from Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the International Green Cross, in which he invites you to be a founding member of the Board of Trustees of this new global organization for the environment.

The Board will have its inaugural meeting in Kyoto, Japan, this coming April 18 and 19. Mr. Gorbachev will preside. You are most cordially requested to attend this historic meeting.

I am writing to you in my capacity as Secretary General of the International Green Cross to add some background to the invitation to you from the President.

The International Green Cross was first proposed by President Gorbachev in his address in the Kremlin to the Global Forum on Environment and Development in January 1990. The International Green Cross was born two and a half years later during the Earth Summit this past June. It was established by a unanimous resolution of the Parliamentary Earth Summit organized in Rio de Janeiro by the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival. The Global Forum is the parent organization of the International Green Cross and will host the first Board meeting at the Kyoto Global Forum, a major conference on critical global issues. I have met with Mr. Gorbachev on several occasions, and we are now moving forward with a small International Working Group to set up the initial structure of the new organization. A founding Charter has also been drafted, and a copy is enclosed for your comments. I would like to note that a Charter is not a programme

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*An Initiative of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival*

proposal as such, but a more philosophical document of a general nature – like a constitution. Let me thus draw your attention especially to the “Principles” which give essential concepts and guiding norms.

It is possible to say at this time, however, that the International Green Cross will be devoted to two main areas of activity: first, value change through environmental education in the broadest sense, through all modes of education and communication, and second, relief of man-made environmental disasters. We engaging McKinsey, one of the world’s most distinguished consulting firms, to undertake a feasibility study for programme development, and to make a report with recommendations to the Trustees at the Kyoto meeting.

One of the first tasks of the Trustees, of whom we so much hope you will be one, will be to set direction for the future work of the International Green Cross. Your counsel will be of great importance.

It is very likely that the headquarters office of the International Green Cross will be in the Netherlands. I have just returned from a trip to the Hague, where I and associates of Mr. Gorbachev met with Prime Minister Lubbers, the Foreign Minister and Minister of Environment, the Mayor of the Hague (who offered us a building across from the Prime Minister’s office), and other key individuals. We are now awaiting the final confirmation of our arrangements, and the conclusion of conversations with two other countries which have also expressed an interest in hosting the headquarters. Mr. Gorbachev will visit the Netherlands in mid-February to sign the formal agreement and at the Opening Ceremony for the headquarters.

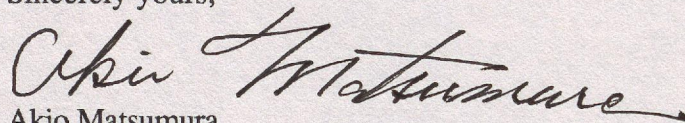
I would like to add that the International Green Cross is envisioned as a unique new planetary community of people from all walks of life. It will have local Chapters all over the world. Each of these Chapters, as well as the Board, will be composed of members from all sectors of society – including elected political leaders, spiritual leaders, business, science, the arts, advocacy groups, and others. The Chapters will be organized in Districts (not national structures) and will eventually govern themselves through their own congress. This grassroots structure will work in cooperation with the international Board and its committees and other commissioned bodies – where your personal contribution will be invaluable.

Much experience and discussion by many people, including Mr. Gorbachev, have gone into the generation of this concept. We believe it is unique, and that it will prove to be immensely effective in the long term.

It is the long term to which we dedicate our efforts. This is just the beginning. The International Green Cross is an initiative for the twenty-first century. Please join in this great venture as one of its founders and first leaders. We need your participation.

I am at your disposal for any questions or discussion which you may wish. President Gorbachev or I will be in touch with you clearly in 1993 concerning your acceptance.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Akio Matsumura". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Akio Matsumura  
Secretary General  
International Green Cross

Executive Director  
Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders



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Esteemed Mr. Swaminathan

President

MIKHAIL S. GORBACHEV

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Board of Trustees  
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on April 18-19, 1993.

I am appealing to you, a person of a high repute in the international community, whose efforts to develop humanism and civilizing principles in society are well known and recognized in the whole world.

I am sure that you, like the majority of the inhabitants of our planet, are concerned with a great aggravation of the ecological situation in the world and are aware of perilous consequences of ecological disasters threatening the very existence of man as biological species.

The situation urges immediate and concrete steps to unite the efforts of the entire world community for the solution of this global task. Some steps were taken last June in Rio de Janeiro where the participants of the Conference on Environment and development decided to establish the Green Cross, an international non-government organization. The forum did me an honour by requesting me to be the Green Cross' President.

The activities of this organization will be aimed at establishing a world system of operative ecological assistance in any place of the planet at implementing global ecological projects and product standards in accordance with ecological norms and requirements. The Green Cross plans to work in a close contact with international and national foundations and ecologically-oriented organizations, using the existing organizational structures, scientific centres, material basis and skilled cadre potential.

The activities of the Green Cross will be guided by the Board of Guardians composed of people of a very high international prestige.

Mr. Swaminathan, I should like to suggest that you accept the invitation to become a member of the Green Cross' Board of Guardians. I am sure that your participation would contribute to a noble course of our planet's ecological rebirth.

The first meeting of the Board of Guardians is planned for April 18-19, 1993 in Kyoto (Japan).

We send you the Green Cross' draft Charter which is to be discussed and adopted in Kioto.

President

M.S. Gorbachev

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**Eugene F. Whelan**

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**Edward L. Williams**

Sen. Assoc., Winrock International, U.S.A.

April 28, 1993

Dr. M. S. Swaminathan  
11 Rathna Nagar  
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Dear Dr. Swaminathan:

Enclosed please find a letter from Gorbachev dated December 15, 1992. I faxed a copy to you at that time and thought I posted the original as well. In cleaning out some files I located the original and felt it was something you would like to have. My sincere apologies for the delay.

I hope you and your family are doing well.

Warmest regards,

Robin La Brie-Jackson  
Managing Administrator



# The International Green Cross

## DRAFT CHARTER

### *Preamble*

Recognizing that:

Life is sacred. All forms of life have their own intrinsic value and share our planetary home in an interdependent community. All parts of this community are essential to the functioning of the whole;

The beauty of the Earth and its life is food for the human spirit, inspiring human consciousness with wonder, joy and creativity;

Human beings are not outside or above the community of life. We have not woven the web of life; we are but a strand in it. We depend on the whole for our very existence;

For the first time in history, human beings have the capacity to damage, knowingly or unknowingly, the ecological balances on which all life depends. We therefore have a special responsibility to avoid destruction and waste for short-term utilitarian reasons and to preserve life in its integrity and diversity;

We have an obligation to maintain our planetary home as a healthy and secure abode for present generations and the generations yet to come;

We, the members of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, hereby create the International Green Cross - the establishment of which was unanimously endorsed by the participants at the Parliamentary Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro on June 5-7, 1992.

### *The Need*

The International Green Cross responds to a clear and present need.

Human civilization is growing with the greatest speed in its history. The impact of human numbers and human activities have combined to alter quickly and radically the conditions for life on earth. The gains in human welfare during this century have been breathtaking, and the potential for future gains is even more promising. But the processes of development that have produced these gains are also provoking major unintended changes in the earth's atmosphere, biosphere and hydrosphere.

Earth's basic life-supporting systems of forests, species and soils are being degraded and destroyed, as are its fresh waters and oceans, and even the ozone shield which protects all life from the sun's more deadly rays. And now we threaten ourselves with a rapid rise in global temperatures and sea-levels - greater, perhaps, in the next fifty years than in the ten thousand years since the last Ice Age.

During the past forty years, we have also witnessed a relentless decade-by-decade growth in the frequency, scale and impact of environmental catastrophes—from Bhopal to Chernobyl, from the Valdez oil spill to the Kuwait oil fires and the slow death of the Aral Sea. In addition, threats to the peace and security of nations stemming from environmental breakdown and from the desire to gain or protect access to scarce resources such as water and oil—have been growing at a frightening pace. We can expect these dangerous trends to continue until societies prove capable of addressing their roots in human activities driven by certain current values and styles of life.

Fortunately, millions of people are now aware that much of what has been created, human beings are now destroying. The processes of decision-making and the public and private policies which now drive unsustainable forms of development can be reversed. But all too often our values and cultures, our political and economic concepts and institutions, and our notions of national sovereignty get in the way. They are out of step with the needs of our planetary home. They no longer provide an adequate basis for action to resolve world problems.

The International Green Cross is therefore brought into being to address this global crisis, through adoption of the following principles and means:

### *The Principles of The International Green Cross*

#### SUSTAINABILITY

1. The International Green Cross exists to protect the natural environment and to ensure a sustainable future for all humanity and all living things.

#### VALUE CHANGE

2. The International Green Cross fosters value change through all its activities, to engender a respectful relationship between people, and between people and the environment.

#### EDUCATION

2. The International Green Cross has a special commitment to education at all levels and to communications through news media and other public channels.

#### BOTH ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN NEEDS

4. The International Green Cross seek to reconcile the protection of the environment with the basic needs and the improvement quality of life of human beings

#### NON-GOVERNMENTAL

5. The International Green Cross is a not-for-profit, voluntary, non-governmental organization.

#### INDEPENDENT

6. The International Green Cross is independent, and is not sponsored or directed, either locally or globally, by any political, religious or environmental group or groups.

#### INDIVIDUALS

7. The International Green Cross is composed of people in their private and individual capacity.

## COOPERATION

8. The International Green Cross serves and collaborates with existing groups in the environmental movement in a spirit of cooperation. It complements, supplements and utilizes the knowledge, networks and functions of others rather than duplicating or competing with them.

## AN OPEN FORUM

9. The International Green Cross is an open forum where people with many different approaches to environmental issues may meet for dialogue, debate, and cooperation for action.

## PEOPLE-BASED

10. The International Green Cross is people-based. Its programmes are based on the needs, capabilities, experience and perceptions of people living in their own habitats.

## MULTI-SECTORAL

11. The International Green Cross is multi-sectoral. At both the local and global levels, its members are from the sectors of government, spiritual communities, science, business, the arts, education, journalism, and issue-focused activism – all participating on an equal basis.

## LOCAL/GLOBAL

12. The International Green Cross is both local and global, since there is nothing more local and nothing more global than the environment.

It is local since it is constituted chiefly by its local Chapters in all parts of the world.

It is global through the activities of its international Board of Trustees and the Board's appointed and commissioned bodies

## INFORMATION

13. The International Green Cross is a source of responsible and current expertise and information on environmental issues for its members and for those who may call on it for assistance.

## COMMUNITY

14. The International Green Cross seeks to become a planetary community of people who respect the Earth.

## *The Means*

The International Green Cross is composed of an international Board of Trustees and local Chapters organized at the sub-national level.

The International Green Cross will facilitate (1) responses to present and impending man-made environmental disasters and (2) the changes in the values, behaviors, processes of decision-making and policies which are needed to effect a transition to more sustainable forms of development.

The International Green Cross will promote awareness and understanding of the issues and, working through its Chapters, it will provide an open forum where people with different approaches to environmental issues may meet for dialogue, debate, and cooperation. It will organize hearings, provide expertise and information on the issues, and sponsor education and communications programs. Throughout all of its activities, it will foster needed changes in human values and behavior.

The International Green Cross will facilitate vigorous, timely and effective responses to man-made environmental disasters in a variety of ways. When alerted by a local Chapter or a