

INFORMATION FOR PRESS RELEASE
ON EARTH CHARTER BOOK BY ELIZABETH FERRERO & JOE HOLLAND

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A new book by Elisabeth M. Ferrero, Ph.D. and Joe Holland, Ph.D., both Professors of Philosophy at St. Thomas University in Miami, Florida, USA is being electronically released today to the whole world on the Internet. Titled THE EARTH CHARTER: A STUDY BOOK OF REFLECTION FOR ACTION, the book is available for viewing and downloading at

www.ECreflection4action.org.

Its writing and publication is a joint project of the Center for Sustainable Living, the Florida Council of Catholic Scholarship, Pax Romana / Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs USA, and the International Consortium on Religion and Ecology. Individual copies intended for non-commercial purposes may be downloaded for free from the website.

As the Earth Charter Initiative notes on its website, "In 1987 the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for creation of a new "charter" that would set forth fundamental principles for sustainable development. The drafting of an Earth Charter was part of the unfinished business of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. In 1994 Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the Earth Summit and Chairman of the Earth Council, and Mikhail Gorbachev, President of Green Cross International, launched a new Earth Charter initiative with support from the Dutch government. An Earth Charter Commission was formed in 1997 to oversee the project and an Earth Charter Secretariat was established at the Earth Council in Costa Rica. The mission of the 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."

The Initiative's website describes the charter as follows: "The Earth Charter itself is an authoritative synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations that are widely shared by growing numbers of men and women in all regions of the world. The principles of the Earth Charter reflect extensive international consultations conducted over a period of many years. These principles are also based upon contemporary science, international law, and the insights of philosophy and religion. Successive drafts of the Earth Charter were circulated around the world for comment and debate by nongovernmental organizations, community groups, professional societies, and international experts in many fields. Present plans are to seek endorsement of the Earth Charter by the United Nations in 2002, the tenth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit." (www.earthcharter.org)

Dr. Ferrero's and Dr. Holland's study book traces the historical development of the Earth Charter and provides an extensive commentary on its principles, as well as a copy of the final draft of the Earth Charter itself. The book also contains letter of greetings from Msgr. Franklyn Casale, President of St. Thomas University in Miami USA and from Miriam Vilela, Executive Director of the Earth Charter Initiative in San José, Costa Rica, plus a Preface by the distinguished ecological visionary, Thomas Berry.

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