

PRESS RELEASE

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EU exchange programme *Youth in Action*, 19 August to 5 September, 2013

Green Cross International's 20-year anniversary musical: "2050: The Future We Want"

As one of the highlights of its 20-year anniversary celebrations, Green Cross International will present the musical "2050: The Future We Want" in the auditorium of Palais des Nations in Geneva on 3 September, 2013. Under the musical direction of David Gordon and featuring songs by legendary musician Yusuf Islam (Cat Stevens), an international line-up including youth from around the world will take the audience on a journey to the year 2050. The characters in the musical "2050: The Future We Want" live in the year 2050, when today's ecological challenges such as climate change, environmental contamination caused by nuclear and industrial technology or water scarcity are overcome and humanity is at peace with itself and nature.

Also involved in the musical programme will be 49 young adults who have been participating in an exchange programme in Vallorbe (Switzerland) from 19 August to 5 September 2013 as part of the EU programme *Youth in Action*, which was initiated by Green Cross Switzerland. These young people come from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova, UK, Italy and Switzerland. 29 of them live in the Chernobyl areas that were contaminated following the nuclear disaster.

The EU programme *Youth in Action* promotes commitment to a livable future. The key objective of the EU exchange programme *Youth in Action* is to encourage the active civic involvement of young people for sustainable development and a clean environment. Young adults from contaminated areas can share their experience with those who grew up in a healthy environment. This will create a common awareness of the need to get involved in protecting an unspoilt environment, regardless of whether one's personal life is affected or not. It will also promote the tolerance and solidarity among young people for the consequences of environmental disasters such as nuclear accidents, water scarcity or even contamination caused by pesticides, mercury and other pollutants.

The musical "2050: The Future We Want" will help achieve these goals for a large group of participants from diverse cultural backgrounds. In the workshops, role-plays and songs about environmental disasters, contamination and health will be developed through informal learning under the artistic direction of actor and theatre director Alexander Grecu.

In addition to these activities, an interactive programme will give the participants of the EU exchange programme *Youth in Action* the opportunity to present their respective countries and living situations as well as to share their personal values in terms of individual, social and civic involvement.

Green Cross Switzerland facilitates overcoming consequential damages caused by industrial and military disasters and the clean-up of contaminated sites from the period of the Cold War. Central issues are the improvement of the living quality of people affected by chemical, radioactive and other types of contamination, as well as the promotion of a sustainable development in the spirit of cooperation instead of confrontation.

The objectives of the ZEWO-certified environmental organization are supported by the Green Cross Parliamentary Group, which is composed of 32 members of the Council of States and 104 members of the National Council across party lines.

Green Cross International (GCI), founded by Mikhail Gorbachev, is an independent non-profit and non-governmental organization that works to address the inter-connected global challenges of security, poverty eradication and environmental degradation through a combination of high level advocacy and local projects. GCI is headquartered in Geneva and has a growing network of national organizations in over 30 countries.

For further information, please contact Maria Vitagliano, Director of the International Social Medicine Programme, Green Cross Switzerland, at telephone 079 799 09 62.

Photo caption:

Young people from Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova, UK, Italy and Switzerland along with Alexander Grecu are participating in the musical "2050: The Future We Want" as part of the EU exchange programme *Youth in Action*.