

# MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

Mikhail Gorbachev served as leader of the Soviet Union from 1985-1991. He is world-renowned and admired for streamlining and decentralizing the oppressive system he inherited. In an effort to secure relations with the West, Gorbachev signed two broad disarmament pacts, and ended Communist rule in Eastern Europe. He taught the world two new words: perestroika (governmental restructuring) and glasnost (political openness). As a result of his extraordinary achievements, Gorbachev was the recipient of the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize, the Orders of Lenin, the Red Banner of Labor, and the Badge of Honor.

In 1992, Gorbachev became President of the Gorbachev Foundation, known as the International Foundation for Socio-Economic and Political Studies. The Gorbachev Foundation is a non-profit, non-partisan educational foundation. Its purpose is to articulate and address the challenges of the post Cold War world, through the revisioning of global priorities.

In 1993, Gorbachev founded the environmental organization, Green Cross International, a non-governmental group with chapters in the United States, Russia, The Netherlands, Japan, and Switzerland. Green Cross International is a three-pronged program with a mission to clean up military toxins, assist in the creation of global ecological law, and foster a value shift on the environment.

After graduating from Moscow State University with a law degree, Gorbachev joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1952, and acted as First Secretary for the Stavropol Komsomol City Committee from 1955 to 1958. He then gained reputation and experience in Stavropol politics. In 1971, he was elected as a member to the Central Committee, Communist Party (CCCP) of the Soviet Union. From 1978 to 1985, he served as Secretary for the CCCP with the responsibility for areas involving agriculture. Gorbachev also served as Deputy of the Supreme Soviet from 1970 to 1990, and acted as Chairman for the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Soviet Union from 1984 to 1985. From 1985 to 1990, he was President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.