

African Development Bank (AfDB)

[*Banque africaine de développement (BAD)*]

The Bank aims to contribute to the economic and social progress of its member countries, individually and jointly, by financing development projects, promoting public and private investment and stimulating economic co-operation between African countries.

Origin and development

The origins of the Bank date back to the Conference of the Peoples of Africa, held in Tunis in 1960, which passed a resolution concerning the creation of an African investment financing institution. Under the aegis of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), an agreement was drawn up between 1962 and 1963 by a Committee of Experts of nine African countries. It was formally adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance on 4 August 1963 in Khartoum. The agreement came into effect on 10 September 1964 and the Bank started operations at its headquarters at Abidjan on 1 July 1966. Unlike other regional development institutions, membership of the Bank was originally limited to independent countries within the region, thereby excluding non-African countries from subscribing to the capital stock. In May 1979 a decision was taken to admit non-regional members in accordance with a set of principles aimed at preserving the African character of the Bank. In December 1982, the capital stock was officially opened to non-African countries.

Membership

The present membership comprises 53 African countries – including Madagascar and other island states that surround the continent – and 24 non-African countries, including several Western European nations, Brazil, Canada, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the US. The founding agreement makes explicit provision for the withdrawal or suspension of member countries.

Objectives

The Bank's basic aims are: to provide loans directly or indirectly for financing national and multinational projects; to encourage public and private investment; to assist member countries to improve the use of their resources; to increase the comple-

mentarities of economic systems and to promote the balanced growth of foreign trade; to extend technical assistance with a view to studying, preparing and implementing development programmes and projects; to co-operate with national, regional and subregional economic institutions in Africa, as well as with any other outside agency that aims to support African development efforts.

Structure

Like other international financing institutions, the Bank is run by the Board of Governors, the Board of Directors and the President. The Board of Governors, meeting at least once a year, is the highest policy-making body and is vested with all the powers, many of which have been delegated to the Board of Directors. Each member country nominates one governor to the Board, usually its Minister of Finance, and one alternate governor. The Board of Governors usually takes its decisions by a majority of the votes cast. Each member is allotted a predetermined number of votes, plus one additional vote for each share of stock held; voting rights are therefore related to the amount of each country's share. Amendments to the agreement, such as the admission of non-regional members, require the approval of two-thirds of members, possessing at least 75 per cent of the total voting power.

The Board of Directors is in charge of the current operations of the Bank and meets weekly. It is composed of 18 members (who are neither governors nor alternate governors); 12 members are elected by the governors of the regional members and 6 by the governors of non-regional members, for a three-year term renewable only once.

The President of the Bank, elected by the Board of Governors, serves for a five-year period (renewable only once) and acts as Chairman of the Board of Directors. According to the new organizational structure, introduced in 2002, the number of Vice-Presidents has been increased from three to five with a view to strengthening strategic planning, policy development and monitoring capabilities.

The Bank is based in Abidjan but headquarters were temporarily relocated to Tunisia, in February 2003, in view of the deteriorating situation in Côte d'Ivoire.

Activities

The Bank uses a unit of account (UA) equivalent to \$1 before the devaluation of 1971 and now

expressed on the basis of the special drawing right (SDR). The size of the authorized capital stock, initially set at UA250 million, has grown substantially as a consequence of five general capital increases. The Bank's authorized capital amounted to UA21.8 billion (\$33 billion) at the end of December 2005. Regional members hold 60 per cent of the total stock of the Bank and non-regional members hold the balance of 40 per cent. Payments of amounts subscribed to the paid-up capital are made in gold or convertible currencies. Loans from ordinary resources are not tied to purchases in any specific country.

The African Development Bank Group of development financing institutions comprises, in addition to the Bank itself, the African Development Fund (ADF) and the Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF), both providing concessional loans.

The African Development Fund was established, as the Bank's soft window, in April 1972 and began operations in 1974. The current membership of the Fund includes 26 countries (the Republic of South Africa joined in 1998) and the Bank. The Fund uses the same UA as the Bank. Subscriptions to the Fund are made by the Bank itself and by capital-exporting countries outside Africa – thus ensuring the financial contribution of non-regional members to the development of the continent. In December 2005, total subscriptions to the Fund amounted to UA13.3 billion. Concessional loans granted by the Fund for development projects are repayable over very long periods (50 years, including a ten-year grace period) and usually carry no interest as such but only an annual service charge around 0.75 per cent. Loans concerning feasibility studies are repayable over 10 years, after a three-year grace period.

Replenishments of the Fund's resources usually take place at three-year intervals. When the seventh replenishment was proposed, in May 1993, donor countries refused to commit further resources until the Bank's policies and administrative procedures were reviewed and streamlined. An agreement was eventually arrived at by mid-1996 with donor countries making pledges for the period 1996–98. Under the tenth replenishment (ADF-X), covering the period 2005–2007, resources in the amount of UA3.7 billion have been committed. Negotiations on ADF-XI are currently going on.

The Nigeria Trust Fund was established by an agreement signed by the Bank and the government of Nigeria on 26 February 1976 and came into effect the following April. The Fund, which is under the

Bank's administration, finances national and multi-national projects, mainly in the infrastructural sector, granting loans for long periods (up to 25 years, including the grace period) and charging interest. The Fund's initial capital of \$80 million was subsequently replenished with \$71 million in 1981. In April 2003, the Board of Governors of the Bank approved a number of measures with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the Fund.

Over the past decades, five associated institutions have been set up, with the participation of the Bank, to channel further public and private resources for the development of Africa.

The associated institutions are specifically intended to support the Bank's finance and development efforts. The oldest among these institutions is the *Société internationale financière pour les investissements et le développement en Afrique* (SIFIDA), with operational headquarters in Switzerland (22 rue François-Perréard, BP 310, 1225 Chêne-Bourg/Geneva). It was created in November 1970 as a holding company for promoting the establishment and growth of productive enterprises in Africa. Besides the Bank its shareholders include the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and several financial, industrial and commercial institutions in Europe, North America, the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific region. The authorized capital stock amounts to \$75 million.

The Africa Reinsurance Corporation (Africa-Re), with headquarters in Nigeria (Reinsurance House, 46 Marina, PMB 12765, Lagos), was established by an agreement signed on 24 February 1976 which came into force in January 1977. The Corporation – whose paid-up capital amounts to \$100 million – aims to stimulate the insurance and reinsurance activities as well as the growth of national and regional underwriting capacities.

The Association of African Development Finance Institutions (AADFII), established in 1975 and based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, promotes co-operation among the development banks of the region with regard to project design and financing.

Shelter-Afrique (*Société pour l'habitat et le logement territorial en Afrique*), with headquarters in Kenya (Longonot Road, Upper Hill, POB 41479, Nairobi), is another associated institution, set up in 1982, whose purpose is to finance housing in the Bank's member countries. Besides the Bank, several African countries, Africa-Re and the Commonwealth Development Corporation participate in its share capital.

The African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), based in Cairo (PO Box 404, Gezira, Cairo 11568), finances exporters and importers, directly and indirectly, with a view to increasing the volume of African exports and expanding intra-African trade. Afrximbank began operations on 30 September 1994 with an authorized capital of \$750 million.

Since the first loan was granted in 1967, the Bank has developed its lending activities progressively, supplemented by the non-commercial loans extended by the ADF. Cumulative approvals of loans and grants by the Bank Group amounted to UA34 billion (\$53 billion) at the end of December 2005. Funded operations were over 3000. Loans concerned agricultural and rural development projects (especially food production), public utilities, transport, education and health, industry, and multi-sector activities (including structural adjustment). A number of multinational infrastructure projects within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) are being financed by the Bank. In addition to lending and grant operations, the Bank Group has continued to provide debt relief. The Bank also provides technical assistance, which is financed to a large extent by bilateral aid funds contributed by developed member countries. Since the late 1980s a major new area of activity for the Bank has been assistance to the private sector by providing advisory services and finance, as well as by encouraging private investment from both within and outside the region.

In the early 1990s serious disagreements emerged among the Bank's key shareholders with regard to financial and management issues. Growing dissatisfaction with the Bank's procedures and practices, and the ensuing loss of confidence by major donor countries, made it impossible to plan the recapitalization of the Bank and the streamlining of its operations until the election of a new President in August 1995. Non-African members – especially donors such as France, Germany, Japan and the US – eventually declared their willingness to increase participation in the Bank's capital. After extensive consultations with all stakeholders, a new Bank 'Vision' was approved by the Board of Governors in 1999 and subsequently carried out by restructuring the Bank's management and lending policies; the Bank's First Strategic Plan for the Period 2003–07 is being implemented. The 42nd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Bank took place, on 16–17 May 2007, in Shanghai,

China, and focused on the development partnership between Africa and Asia.

External relations

The Bank has developed close links with several regional and extra-regional institutions including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the African Union (AU), the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

PRESIDENT: Donald Kaberuka

TEMPORARY HEADQUARTERS: Angle des trois rues: Avenue du Ghana, Rue Pierre de Coubertin, Rue Hedi Nouira, BP 323, 1002 Tunis Belvedere, Tunisia (telephone: +216 71 333511; fax: +216 71 351933)

HEADQUARTERS: Rue Joseph Anoma, 01 BP 1387, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire (telephone: +225 2020 4444; fax: +225 2020 4959)

WEBSITE: <http://www.afdb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *ADB Today* (every two months); *African Development Report* (annual)

REFERENCES: R.K.A. Gardner and J. Pickett, *The African Development Bank 1964–1984: An Experiment in Economic Co-operation and Development* (Abidjan, 1984); K.A. Mingst, *Politics and the African Development Bank* (Lexington, VA, 1990); I. Peprah, *The African Development Bank: Taking Stock and Preparing for the 21st Century* (Ottawa, 1994); E.P. English and H.M. Mule, *The African Development Bank* (London, 1996); O. Kabbaj, *The Challenge of African Development* (Oxford, 2003)

African Groundnut Council (AGC)

[*Conseil africain de l'arachide*]

FOUNDED: June 1964

OBJECTIVES: To ensure remunerative prices for groundnuts and their by-products, to promote consumption, and to organize exchange of information concerning the production, marketing and possible uses of groundnuts

MEMBERS: Gambia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sudan

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Elhadj Mour Mamadou Samb

HEADQUARTERS: Trade Fair Complex, Badagry Expressway Km 15, PO Box 3025, Marina Lagos, Nigeria (telephone: +234 1 880982; fax: +234 1 887811); Headquarters to be relocated to Kano, Nigeria

WEBSITE: <http://www.afgroundnutcouncil.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Groundnut Review; Newsletter*

African Petroleum Producers' Association (APPA)

[*Association des producteurs de pétrole africains*]

FOUNDED: January 1987.

OBJECTIVES: To strengthen co-operation among African petroleum-producing countries and to stabilize prices

MEMBERS: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Congo Democratic Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Libya, Nigeria, South Africa.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Dave Lafiaji

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 1097, Brazzaville, Congo (telephone: +242 6653857; fax: +242 6699913)

WEBSITE: <http://www.appa.int>

PUBLICATION: *APPA Bulletin* (twice a year)

African Timber Organization (ATO)

[*Organisation africaine du bois*]

FOUNDED: January 1993

OBJECTIVES: To study and co-ordinate ways of influencing prices of wood and wood products, to harmonize commercial policies and to conduct industrial and technical research with a view to ensuring the optimum utilization and conservation of forests

MEMBERS: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Congo Democratic Republic,

Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Tanzania

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 1077, Libreville, Gabon (telephone: +241 732928; fax: +241 734030)

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; ATO Information Bulletin* (quarterly)

African Union (AU)

The Union's primary aim is to foster unity, solidarity, cohesion and co-operation among the peoples and countries of the continent. It succeeded in 2002 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) that had been in existence for almost 40 years.

Origin and development

The Constitutive Act of the Union was adopted in Lomé, Togo, on 12 July 2000 and entered into force on 26 May 2001. For a transitional period, between July 2001 and July 2002, the OAU Charter remained in force in order to smooth the progress towards the establishment of the mechanisms of the Union. On 9 July 2002 the Union was officially inaugurated in Durban, South Africa, immediately after the last summit of the OAU. The Union groups all African countries apart from Morocco which had withdrawn from the OAU, with effect from November 1985, in protest against the admission to the Organization of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), proclaimed by Polisario.

Membership

The present membership of the Organization comprises 53 African countries, with the exception of Morocco; however, delegates from Morocco participate in some of the Union's activities.

Objectives

The Union's main aims are: to achieve unity and solidarity among African countries; to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of member countries; to accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent; to promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels; to advocate and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent; to foster international co-operation having due regard to the

Charter of the UN and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; to co-ordinate and harmonize policies between the existing and future regional economic communities.

The Union's basic principles are the equality of members, non-interference in internal affairs, respect for territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes, unconditional condemnation of political subversion and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government.

Structure

The main organs of the Union are the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, the Executive Council, the Permanent Representatives Committee and the Commission acting as the Secretariat of the Union.

The Assembly, which is the supreme organ, meets in ordinary sessions once a year to consider matters of common concern to Africa, to co-ordinate and harmonize the Union's general policy and, when required, to change the structure, functions and activities of the organs and specialized institutions. The Assembly's resolutions are taken by a two-thirds majority, each member having one vote, with the exception of procedural matters, for which a simple majority is sufficient. The Executive Council, formed in principle by the Foreign Ministers of the member countries, is responsible for the implementation, in conformity with the policies laid down by the Assembly, of inter-African co-operation; it meets at least twice a year and decides by simple majority. The Commission is the permanent secretariat, consisting of the Chairperson (appointed for a four-year term by the Assembly), the Deputy Chairperson, eight Commissioners and staff members. The Permanent Representatives Committee, comprising the ambassadors of the member countries accredited to the Union, is charged with the responsibility of preparing the work of the Executive Council.

The Pan-African Parliament (PAP) was inaugurated on 18 March 2004 in Addis Ababa and had the first sitting in its permanent host city, Johannesburg, on 16 September 2004. The Peace and Security Council (PSC) had its 15 members elected by the Executive Council in Addis Ababa on 16 March 2004 and was solemnly inaugurated on 25 May 2004. Several other bodies are in the process of being established such as a Court of Justice and an Economic, Social and Cultural

Council (ECOSOCC). Specialized Technical Committees, at ministerial level, are aimed at addressing sectoral issues.

The Union shall have its own financial institutions: the African Central Bank; the African Monetary Fund; the African Investment Bank.

Activities

Progress is being made in the implementation at the various levels of the Union's Constitutive Act. However, the mediation in African conflicts and tensions and the promotion of regional integration continue to remain difficult tasks as had been the case for the OAU, often confronted with situations of escalating violence and instability throughout the continent. The Union has inherited from the OAU substantial budgetary problems because of the failure of several member countries to pay their assessed contributions.

The summit held in 2002 endorsed the Initial Action Plan of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and encouraged member countries to adopt the Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance and to accede to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The mandate of the APRM is to support participating countries in their efforts to conform to political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards that have been approved. The first military intervention of the Union's forces occurred in May 2003 with the deployment of a peacekeeping force to Burundi. Other interventions are taking place or are expected to take place in Sudan (in relation to the Darfur conflict), Somalia and other African countries. Diverging views on the continent's political integration and the reform of the Union's institutional structures with a view to establishing a 'Union government' continue to affect to a considerable extent the prospects for an effective role of the Organization within and outside the African continent.

External relations

The Union co-operates with global and regional bodies from the UN and its specialized agencies to African, Arab and Islamic institutions.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Arabic, Portuguese, Swahili and if possible other African languages

CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION: Alpha Oumar Konare

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 3243, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (telephone: +251 1 517700; fax: +251 1 510430)

WEBSITE: <http://www.africa-union.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *AU Commission News*; *African Economic Integration Review* (twice a year)

REFERENCES: M. Wolfers, *Politics in the Organization of African Unity* (London, 1976); Z. Cervenka, *The Unfinished Quest for Unity in Africa and the OAU* (New York, 1977); A. Sesay, O. Ojo and O. Fasehun, *The OAU after Twenty Years* (Boulder, CO, 1985); Y. El-Ayouty (ed), *The Organization of African Unity after Thirty Years* (New York, 1994); G. Harris, *The Organization of African Unity – Bibliography* (Oxford and New Brunswick, 1994); T. Murithi, *The African Union: Pan-Africanism, Peacebuilding and Development* (Burlington, VT, 2005)

Africa Rice Center (WARDA)

FOUNDED: 1970 as West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA) and known under that name until January 2003 when the present denomination was adopted but the old acronym was retained

OBJECTIVES: To foster research, development and partnership activities with a view to increasing the quantity and quality of rice produced in West Africa and making the area self-sufficient. The Association maintains research stations in certain member countries and provides training and consulting services.

MEMBERS: 7 West and Central African countries

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Papa Abdoulaye Seck

TEMPORARY HEADQUARTERS (SINCE JANUARY 2005): 01 B.P. 2031, Cotonou, Benin (telephone: +229 21350188; fax: +229 21350556)

WEBSITE: <http://www.warda.org>

PUBLICATION: *Annual Report*

REFERENCE: J.R. Walsh, *Wide Crossing: The West Africa Rice Development Association in Transition, 1985–2000* (Burlington, VT, 2001)

Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean

[*Organismo para la Proscripción de las Armas Nucleares en la América Latina y el Caribe*] (OPANAL)

The Agency provides the institutional framework for the fulfilment of the obligations set out in the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (signed at Tlatelolco, a section of Mexico City).

Origin and development

The signing of the Tlatelolco Treaty on 14 February 1967 by 14 countries followed a number of preparatory meetings on the denuclearization of Latin America relevant to resolutions of the UN General Assembly. The Treaty, open for signature by all other sovereign states situated in their entirety south of latitude 35° North in the western hemisphere, has been in force since 22 April 1969. The original contracting parties were joined subsequently by other Latin American and Caribbean nations, which decided to apply the Treaty among them, thereby waiving the provision which requires that all regional countries must join before the Treaty enters into effect. Amendments to the Treaty were approved in July 1990, in May 1991 and in August 1992. The last set of amendments was adopted, *inter alia*, with a view to facilitating the full incorporation of Argentina, Brazil and Chile which became full OPANAL members in the first half of 1994.

The Treaty contains two Additional Protocols: Protocol I, open to the signature of countries which, *de jure* or *de facto*, are responsible internationally for territories lying within the geographical zone defined in the Treaty; and Protocol II, open to the signature of countries possessing nuclear weapons and officially recognized by the international community as nuclear weapon states. Protocol I has been signed and ratified by France, the Netherlands, the UK and the US; Protocol II has been signed and ratified by China, France, Russia, the UK and the US.

Membership

Full contracting parties total 33, including Cuba.

Objectives

To attain the objectives of the Treaty, the Agency aims to ensure the absence of all nuclear weapons in the area under the jurisdiction of the contracting parties, without prejudice to peaceful uses of atomic energy; to prohibit all testing, use, production, deployment and any form of possession of nuclear weapons; and to provide protection against possible nuclear attacks.

Structure

The principal organs of the Agency are the General Conference, the Council, and the Secretariat. The General Conference, consisting of representatives of all member countries, meets in ordinary sessions every two years to lay down policy guidelines and to approve the budget; extraordinary sessions have been held to deal with urgent problems. The Council is the executive body and is composed of five members elected for a four-year term by the General Conference, taking into account the necessity of an equitable geographic representation; the Council holds regular sessions every two months. The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary General elected by the General Conference for a four-year term renewable only once.

There are two subsidiary bodies: the Good Offices Committee; and the Committee on Contributions, Administrative and Budgetary Matters.

Activities

The Agency has made an important contribution by restraining the proliferation of nuclear weapons and by establishing Latin America and the Caribbean as a denuclearized zone under the guarantee of the nuclear powers, which signed and ratified Protocol II to the Tlatelolco Treaty.

As well as furthering the objectives of the Treaty, the Agency has promoted the development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy through research and fellowship programmes.

External relations

The Agency keeps the UN and the Organization of American States (OAS) informed about the results of on-site inspections and eventual violations of the Tlatelolco Treaty. A co-operation agreement between OPANAL and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was concluded in September 1972. According to the August 1992 amendments to the Treaty, the IAEA has the sole authority to carry out special inspections of contracting parties.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE TLATELOLCO TREATY: Chinese, English, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGE: Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Edmundo Vargas Carreño

HEADQUARTERS: Schiller 326, 5°, Col.

Chapultepec Morales, Mexico City, 11570, Mexico (telephone: +52 55 5255 2914; fax: +52 55 5255 3748)

WEBSITE: <http://www.opanal.org>

Amnesty International (AI)

Amnesty is a worldwide independent movement that works to promote all the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted within the UN framework in 1948) and other international standards.

Origin and development

The movement originated in 1961 when Peter Benenson, a London lawyer, launched a one-year campaign, 'Appeal for Amnesty 1961', in a newspaper. The appeal called for the release of all 'prisoners of conscience', that is people imprisoned because they had peacefully expressed their political or religious beliefs or because of their race, colour or ethnic origin. The campaign, based on encouraging people to write letters to government officials asking for the release of prisoners of conscience, developed rapidly and spread to other countries. Amnesty was therefore established as an impartial and independent organization whose mandate was based on the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Membership

Amnesty has near two million members, supporters and subscribers in more than 140 countries and territories in every region of the world and is financed mostly by donations and subscriptions. Amnesty has offices in more than 80 countries worldwide.

Objectives

Amnesty campaigns to free all prisoners of conscience; to ensure fair and prompt trials for political prisoners; to abolish the death penalty, torture and other cruel treatment of prisoners; and to end 'disappearances' and politically motivated killings. Amnesty also fights against human rights

abuses such as hostage-taking and arbitrary killings perpetrated by opposition groups. The focus is on individuals, not countries or particular political systems.

Structure

The International Secretariat, based in London, coordinates activities and research work. There are about 7500 locally organized groups in more than 100 countries and nationally organized sections in 56 countries. Major policy decisions are taken by an International Council consisting of representatives from all national sections.

Activities

Activities range from letter-writing (according to the original strategy) to public demonstrations, from individual appeals on a given case to global or country campaigns on specific issues, from human rights education to collection and circulation of accurate information about prisoners of conscience. Amnesty has gradually established itself as an impartial and credible source of information and has contributed to a considerable extent to influence events in its own sphere of activities. In order to ensure full impartiality, members of the organization only work on cases outside their own countries. The only exception to this rule is represented by refugees or cases of capital punishment. In 1977 Amnesty was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its activities.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Irene Zubaida Khan

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT: 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK (telephone: +44 20 7413 5500; fax: +44 20 7956 1157)

WEBSITE: <http://www.amnesty.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *International Newsletter* (every two months); country reports

REFERENCES: J. Power, *Amnesty International: The Human Rights Story* (New York, 1981); A.M. Clark, *Diplomacy of Conscience: Amnesty International and Changing Human Rights Norms* (Princeton, NJ, 2001)

Andean Community

[Comunidad Andina (CAN)]

The Community, which superseded in 1996 the Andean Group (or Andean Pact), promotes

economic co-operation and integration as well as political co-ordination among member countries.

Origin and development

At present, the Community consists of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru and of the organs and institutions of the Andean Integration System as established by the Sucre Protocol modifying the Andean Subregional Integration Agreement (Cartagena Agreement). The Sucre Protocol – adopted on 25 June 1997 and entered into force on 14 April 2003 – has introduced major amendments into the text of the Cartagena Agreement establishing new mechanisms with a view to furthering integration in a number of areas.

The Agreement on Subregional Integration creating the Andean Group had been formally signed on 26 May 1969 in Bogotá by the representatives of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. While being signed in Bogotá, the instrument establishing the Group was officially designated as the Cartagena Agreement in honour of the city where the conclusive negotiations had taken place. The Cartagena Agreement entered into force on 16 October 1969. Before the Sucre Protocol, the text of the Cartagena Agreement had already been revised and supplemented in 1973, and subsequently on 30 October 1976 (Protocol of Lima), on 21 April 1978 (Protocol of Arequipa), on 12 May 1987 (Protocol of Quito) and on 10 March 1996 (Protocol of Trujillo).

In spite of its active involvement at the initial stage of the negotiations, Venezuela did not join the Andean Group until 13 February 1973. Chile withdrew on 30 October 1976 after a dispute on the common rules governing foreign investment. Peru requested a suspension of its active participation on 27 August 1992 and resumed full membership in January 1995. Venezuela formally denounced the Cartagena Agreement on 22 April 2006. The future participation of Panama in the Andean Community is expressly welcomed by the Act of Trujillo.

Membership

Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay have become associate members on 7 July 2005. On 20 September 2006 Chile was granted the status of associate member, thus paving the way for its reinsertion in the integration process.

Objectives

The Community's basic aims are to foster closer ties among member countries through the strengthening of democracy, the elimination of poverty, the promotion of balanced and harmonious development and environmental protection, market liberalization, and co-ordination of national policies in multilateral negotiating forums. The intensification of integration with the other regional economic blocs and of political, social, economic and commercial relations with extra-regional systems is among the Community's major goals.

Structure

The principal organs through which the Community accomplishes its purposes are: the Andean Presidential Council; the Andean Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers; the Andean Community Commission; the Andean Community General Secretariat; the Andean Parliament; and the Court of Justice. Consultative institutions are envisaged to ensure representation of employers and workers respectively. The two financial institutions already existing – the Andean Development Corporation (Corporación Andina de Fomento) based in Caracas and the Latin American Reserve Fund (Fondo Latinoamericano de Reservas) based in Bogotá – are incorporated into the Andean Integration System through co-ordination with the General Secretariat of the Community.

The Andean Presidential Council, consisting of the Heads of State of the member countries, is the highest decision-making body issuing directives concerning the various aspects of Andean subregional integration. Ordinary sessions are held once a year under a rotating presidency lasting one calendar year. The Andean Council of Foreign Affairs Ministers meets twice a year to implement the directives of the Presidential Council, to co-ordinate the process of integration, and to formulate a common external policy; it issues declarations (non-binding) and decisions (legally binding) adopted by consensus.

The Commission, consisting of a plenipotentiary representative from each country and meeting on a regular basis three times a year, shares its legislative role, expressed through the adoption of decisions, with the Council of Foreign Ministers. The Commission implements and evaluates subregional integration policy in the areas of trade and investment, adopts the necessary measures to implement the guidelines of the Andean Presidential Council

and co-ordinates, within its area of responsibility, the position of member countries in international bodies and negotiations.

The General Secretariat, whose seat is in Lima, is an executive and technical body acting in the general interest of the Andean subregion under the direction of the Secretary-General assisted by Directors-General and the necessary staff. The Secretary-General is appointed by consensus, for a five-year term renewable only once, by the Council of Foreign Ministers. The General Secretariat is empowered to prepare draft decisions for submission to the Council of Foreign Ministers and the Commission.

The Andean Parliament, whose permanent seat is in Bogotá, represents the peoples of the Community. It presently consists of representatives of the national parliaments but all members are expected to be elected by direct and universal vote, in accordance with the relevant Additional Protocol signed in April 1997. Representatives of Ecuador and Peru are now being elected directly by their peoples.

The Court of Justice of the Andean Community, based in Quito, is the judicial body comprising four judges, one for each member country, appointed for a renewable six-year term. The Court ensures the legality of Community provisions and the uniform interpretation and application of Community legislation and is responsible for settling disputes. Additional functions have been given to the Court by a Protocol adopted on 28 May 1996 and entered into force on 25 August 1999. Updated regulations concerning the procedures of the Court were approved by the Andean Council of Foreign Ministers on 22 June 2001.

Activities

The activities of the Community are affected both by the political will of the participating countries and by the prevailing political and economic situation in the whole of Latin America, including the evolution of the other subregional integration groupings. The objective of establishing a common market is being gradually implemented through reductions of customs duties and the setting up of a common external tariff covering part of the region's imports. The Andean Free Trade Area was completed by January 2006. Industry, transport infrastructure and telecommunications have also been the object of the Community's activities and programmes. Collaboration is also being developed

in combating national and transnational crime. An Andean Charter for Peace and Security was approved on 17 June 2002 with a view to strengthening subregional security, reducing external defence spending, controlling conventional weapons and co-ordinating efforts to counter terrorist activities. In the human rights field, the Andean Charter for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights was adopted on 26 July 2002.

External relations

The relationship with regional and extraregional integration groupings, notably the European Union (EU), is of great importance for the Community's prospects. A joint declaration on the political dialogue between the newly created Community and the EU was adopted in June 1996; a number of trade benefits have been extended by the EU to Community member countries. The Community has developed a fruitful relationship with Mercosur, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Freddy Ehlers Zurita

HEADQUARTERS: Av. Paseo de la República 3895, San Isidro, Lima, Peru (telephone: +51 1 411 1400; fax: +51 1 221 3329)

WEBSITE: <http://www.comunidadandina.org>

PUBLICATION: *Convergencia Macroeconómica Andina* (annual)

ANZUS Pact

[Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the US]

The Pact, which is no longer in full operation, was devised to co-ordinate the defence of the three contracting parties in order to preserve peace and security in the Pacific.

Origin and development

The Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand and the US (usually known as the ANZUS Pact from the initials of its signatory countries) was signed in San Francisco on 1 September 1951 and entered into force on 29 April 1952. It was intended to be the first step towards the development of a comprehensive system of regional security in the Pacific, within the

framework of the defensive alliance systems of the Western world. This system was further developed by the creation of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) under the Southeast Asia Collective Defence Treaty signed in Manila on 8 September 1954; the Treaty aimed also to protect non-signatory countries belonging to the region such as South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

Membership

Australia, New Zealand, US. The security relationship between New Zealand and the US is suspended.

Objectives

The parties to the Pact uphold the principles set forth in the UN Charter and affirm their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments. The purposes of the parties are to strengthen the fabric of peace in the Pacific; to declare publicly and formally their sense of unity against any potential aggressor; to further their efforts for collective defence and to co-ordinate their policies. Threats to the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of the parties in the Pacific give rise to the obligation to consult together. In case of aggression by means of armed attack, each party is bound to act according to its constitutional processes since attack against any party constitutes a danger to the peace and safety of the others. According to the Pact, an armed attack includes aggression on the metropolitan territory of any of the parties or on the island territories under its jurisdiction in the Pacific or on its forces, vessels or aircraft in the Pacific. The UN Security Council is to be informed immediately of any armed attack and of all measures adopted to resist it. Such measures are to be terminated when the Security Council has taken appropriate action to restore and maintain peace and security. On the whole, the functions and powers arising out of the Pact are dealt with in general terms, in accordance with the largely declaratory character of the document. The duration of the Pact is unlimited although any party may withdraw upon one year's notice.

Co-operation to be carried out under the Pact embraces the exchange of strategic intelligence, scientific and technical assistance in defence matters, supply of defence equipment, training programmes, combined ground, air and naval exercises and visits by military aircraft and naval vessels.

Structure

The main consultative organ of the Pact is the Council, which consists of Foreign Ministers or their deputies. Closed meetings were held annually, rotating between the capitals of the three contracting parties, until the mid-1980s. Decisions were taken unanimously. The Council meetings were also attended by military representatives giving advice on matters related to military co-operation; these representatives also met separately, between sessions of the Council. Officials involved in other forms of practical co-operation held meetings whenever the governments deemed it necessary. The Pact is not endowed with any permanent staff or secretariat; costs are borne by the government in whose territory the meeting takes place.

Activities

The Pact has no formal or informal relationship with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), although both are intended to provide for collective self-defence. The activities carried out under the Pact are limited, as its weak structure suggests. Unlike NATO, the obligation to assist the attacked party is subordinated to compliance with 'constitutional processes'. The influence of the Pact decreased as SEATO developed its activities in Southeast Asia and Australasia. After the dissolution of SEATO on 30 June 1977, the Pact regained importance. Major issues of common concern to contracting parties were reviewed at the annual sessions of the Council, such as events in Afghanistan and Cambodia and the spread of nuclear weapons on a world scale.

Following the election of a Labour Government in July 1984, New Zealand decided not to allow US warships to enter its ports unless assurance was given that they were not carrying nuclear arms, information that the US did not disclose as a matter of policy. Because of the New Zealand ban on visits by nuclear warships, joint naval exercises planned for March and October 1985 were cancelled; on 11 August 1986 the US formally announced the suspension of its security commitment to New Zealand and therefore the Pact ceased to be in full operation. The prospects of the Pact were also affected by the Treaty of Rarotonga, signed on 8 August 1985 within the framework of the South Pacific Forum (SPF) – now renamed Pacific Islands Forum – providing for the establishment of a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone.

Instead of the annual trilateral meetings of the

Council, bilateral talks are held every year between Australia and the US. The Pact still governs security relations between Australia and the US as well as between Australia and New Zealand since the suspension of obligations affects only the relationship between New Zealand and the US.

The removal of all nuclear weapons from US vessels decided in the wake of the end of the Cold War prompted in 1992 the government of New Zealand to express an interest in resuming ANZUS co-operation. The continuing importance of the Pact was stressed also by the US in the early 1990s and high-level contacts between the US and New Zealand were resumed in 1994, although no joint military exercises were scheduled and activity under the Pact remained suspended. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the US, Australia officially invoked for the first time the Pact's provisions for assistance when a member comes under threat. The conviction has been recently expressed in some quarters that the US and New Zealand should resume joint military exercises.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

HEADQUARTERS: c/o Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Queen Victoria Terrace, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia (telephone: +61 2 6261 9111; fax: +61 2 6273 3577)

WEBSITE: <http://www.dfat.gov.au> (site established by the government of Australia)

REFERENCES: J.G. Starke, *The ANZUS Treaty Alliance* (London, 1965); J. Bercovitch (ed.), *ANZUS in Crisis: Alliance Management in International Relations* (London, 1987); R.W. Baker (ed.), *The ANZUS States and their Region: Regional Policies of Australia, New Zealand and the United States* (Westport, CT, 1994); W.D. McIntyre, *Background to the ANZUS Pact* (Basingstoke, UK, 1994)

Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa

[*Banque arabe pour le développement économique en Afrique*] (BADEA)

The Bank contributes to the economic development of Africa by financing infrastructural, industrial and agricultural projects and by providing technical assistance.

Origin and development

The decision to establish the Bank was taken in November 1973 in Algiers at the Sixth Summit Conference of the League of Arab States. The founding agreement was signed in Cairo on 18 February 1974 and subsequently amended on 1 April 1988. The Bank started operations in March 1975 with headquarters in Khartoum, Sudan. Egypt's membership was suspended in April 1979 and subsequently restored in April 1988. Recipient countries may be all members of the African Union (AU), except those African countries that belong to the League of Arab States. Over 40 countries are eligible for the Bank's aid.

Membership

The Bank's subscribers include all countries participating in the League of Arab States, with the exception of the Comoros, Djibouti, Somalia and Yemen.

Objectives

The Bank's basic aims are: to provide loans to national and regional institutions for financing national and multinational projects; to supply expertise and to promote technical co-operation; and, generally, to co-ordinate aid provided by Arab financial institutions to Africa.

Structure

The structure of the Bank is similar to that of other international financing institutions. The Board of Governors, composed of the Finance Ministers of the member countries of the League of Arab States, is the supreme authority and meets at least once a year to set the general guidelines. The Board of Directors, composed of 11 members and meeting every four months, performs executive functions and supervises the implementation of decisions adopted by the Board of Governors. The nine countries which are major subscribers to the capital stock have a permanent seat on the Board; appointments to the remaining two seats are made by the Governors for a four-year term. The Board of Directors elects from among its members a Chairman for a two-year renewable term.

Activities

Besides loans on concessional terms for development projects the Bank provides technical assistance, mainly in the form of grants for project feasibility studies, and generally stimulates the contribution of Arab capital to African development.

The Bank carries on operations through its ordinary capital resources. These were integrated in November 1976 with the capital stock of the Special Arab Assistance Fund for Africa (SAAFA) which had been created in January 1972, under the name of Arab Loan Fund for Africa, by Arab oil ministers, in order to provide urgent aid to African countries. Saudi Arabia was by far the largest subscriber, followed by Libya, Kuwait, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Algeria. According to the five-year plan for 2005–2009, approved in April 2004, the paid-up capital of the Bank has been increased to \$2200 million. Total net assets of the Bank amounted to \$2971.5 million at the end of 2005.

The Bank has been playing an active albeit modest role in promoting Arab investment in Africa and co-ordinating Arab aid for development projects. Between 1975 and 2005 total loans and grants approved reached \$2790.3 million. Among the recipients were nearly all non-Arab members of OAU. In regional terms, West African countries received a very large proportion of total aid. Among the leading recipients of project aid have been Ghana, Senegal, Madagascar, Guinea and Rwanda. The largest share (over 50 per cent) of total lending went to infrastructural projects, followed by agriculture and rural development; energy, the social, private and industrial sectors accounted for the balance. Over the past few years emphasis on agriculture has grown remarkably.

External relations

The links of the Bank with other Arab and African financial institutions have a special relevance in order to ensure co-ordination in channelling public and private resources for Africa's economic development: particularly close relations exist with the African Development Bank (AfDB), subregional banks in Central and West Africa and Arab development agencies. The Bank's five-year plan for 2005–2009 takes into account the objectives of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

BASIC WORKING LANGUAGE: Arabic; use of English and French permitted

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Abdelaziz Khelef

HEADQUARTERS: Abdel Rahman El Mahdi Street, PO Box 2640, Khartoum, Sudan (telephone: +249 1 83773646; fax: +249 1 83770600)

WEBSITE: <http://www.badea.org>

PUBLICATIONS: Annual Report; Co-operation for Development (quarterly)

Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD)

[Fonds arabe de développement économique et social]

The Fund intends to contribute to the progress of the Arab countries by financing economic and social development projects, encouraging, directly or indirectly, public and private investment in Arab projects and providing technical assistance.

Origin and development

The Agreement establishing the Fund was signed on 16 May 1968 by the representatives of 17 Arab countries and entered into force on 18 December 1971. The first meeting of the Board of Governors was convened on 6 February 1972 and the Fund began operations in early 1974. The founder members were subsequently joined by other Arab countries. In response to the signing of a bilateral peace treaty with Israel, Egypt's participation was suspended in April 1979 but funds granted for projects already under way were not discontinued. The full reintegration of Egypt into the Fund took place in April 1988. In 1997 the Agreement establishing the Fund was amended to adapt to the new needs of member countries.

Membership

The present membership consists of all 21 Arab countries, including Palestine, belonging to the League of Arab States.

Objectives

The purposes of the Fund are: to finance economic development projects by granting loans on concessional terms to governments and public enterprises and corporations; to finance private sector projects by providing loans and guarantees to corporations and enterprises and participating in their equity capital, including the provision and financing of technical, advisory and financial services; to establish and administer special funds with resources provided by the Fund or other sources.

Structure

The structure of the Fund comprises: the Board of Governors, which is the supreme decision-making

organ, consisting of one governor and one alternate governor appointed by each member country; the Board of Directors, composed of eight members nominated by the Board of Governors for a renewable two-year term, which is charged with the general operation of the Fund and exercises the powers delegated to it by the Board of Governors; and the Director-General who serves as Chairman of the Board of Directors and is elected by the Board of Governors for a five-year period.

Activities

The Fund participates in the financing of investment projects by: granting loans on concessional terms to governments and public and private institutions of member countries, giving special regard to projects that interest specifically Arab peoples and to joint Arab projects; stimulating the flow of public and private capital resources for the growth of the Arab economy; and supplying technical expertise and assistance.

The size of the authorized capital stock of the Fund, expressed in Kuwaiti dinars (KD), was initially set at KD100 million and increased in 1975 to KD400 million and in 1982 to KD800 million, comprising 80,000 shares, each of them equivalent to KD10,000. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are by far the largest subscribers, followed by Algeria and Libya. At the end of 2004 paid-up capital amounted to KD663 million. The Fund may borrow twice the amount of its capital; additional borrowing must be authorized by the Board of Governors.

Between 1974 and 2005, the Fund had granted over 400 loans, totalling KD5105 million, to finance projects in about 20 Arab countries. The largest share (31.5 per cent) went to the energy and electricity sectors, followed by transport and telecommunications and agriculture and rural development. During the same period, technical assistance grants had been 788 for a total amount of about KD110 million. The geographic distribution is biased toward the least developed countries in the Arab world. The Fund's headquarters were moved temporarily to Bahrain after the Iraqi invasion in August 1990, and later relocated to Kuwait.

External relations

The Fund maintains close working relations with the League of Arab States and Arab economic and financial institutions such as the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). Moreover, the Fund acts as the

secretariat of the Co-ordination Group of Arab National and Regional Development Institutions which meets periodically to review development projects with a view to streamlining operational procedures among members.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Abdulatif Yousef al-Hamad

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 21923, Safat, 13080
Kuwait (telephone: +965 495 9000; fax: +965 48 15750)

WEBSITE: <http://www.arabfund.org>

Arab League

See *League of Arab States*.

Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

[*Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)*]

The Union represents an attempt at organizing co-operation among Maghreb countries and presenting a common front vis-à-vis third countries, especially those belonging to the European Union (EU).

Origin and development

At a meeting at Algiers, on 10 June 1988, the leaders of Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia decided to prepare a treaty encompassing the 'Greater Arab Maghreb' and strengthening political, economic and cultural bonds. The Treaty establishing the Union was eventually signed on 17 February 1989 at Marrakesh, Morocco, by the Heads of State of the five countries, and entered into force on 1 July 1989. Membership remains open to other countries 'belonging to the Arab nation or the African group'.

Membership

Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

Objectives

The Union's purposes are to create a customs union and later a 'North African Common Market' and to encourage joint ventures and projects in the industrial, agricultural, commercial and social sectors.

Structure

The Presidential Council, comprising the Heads of State of the member countries, is the supreme

decision-making body, with a chairmanship rotating annually. Agendas of the Presidential Council are prepared by the Council of Foreign Ministers. A Consultative Council, consisting of 30 representatives from each member country, meets yearly in ordinary sessions to prepare draft resolutions and recommendations to be submitted to the Presidential Council. The Secretary-General supervises the activities of a small staff dealing with mainly administrative tasks.

Activities

Meetings of the Presidential Council – which have suffered several postponements over the past few years – have been unable thus far to chart a definite course for the Union. Initially conceived as a regional response of the Maghreb countries to the then European Economic Community's effort to create a single unified market, the Union soon met with major political and economic difficulties which hampered any significant progress towards the basic goals stated in the founding Treaty and subsequent documents.

Diverging views and conflicts of interest openly emerged on the occasion of the Gulf crisis when Morocco supplied troops to the US-led coalition to liberate Kuwait while the other member countries firmly opposed American presence in the Gulf. The imposition in 1992 of UN sanctions against Libya represented another severe setback for co-operation efforts in both the political and the economic fields; the other members of the Union in fact implemented sanctions against Libya. Despite occasional declarations on continuing commitment to the Union's aims and the conclusion of a number of agreements in various areas, no major progress seems to be in sight.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Habib Ben Yahia

HEADQUARTERS: 14 rue Zelagh, Agdal, Rabat, Morocco (telephone: +212 37 671274; fax: +212 37 671253)

WEBSITE: <http://www.maghrebarabe.org>

PUBLICATION: *Lettre d'informations* (monthly)

REFERENCE: D.E. Guechi, *Union du Maghreb arabe: intégration régionale et développement économique* (Algiers, 2002)

Arab Monetary Fund (AMF)

The Fund assists member countries with balance of payments difficulties and more generally promotes Arab monetary co-operation and integration.

Origin and development

The agreement establishing the Fund was drawn up under the auspices of the Economic Council, operating within the framework of the League of Arab States, which gave its approval during a meeting held in Rabat, Morocco, on 24 April 1976; it entered into force on 2 February 1977. Loans to Iraq, Somalia and Sudan have been suspended since July 1993 because of their failure to repay debts to the Fund. Sudan was readmitted in April 2000 following settlement of arrears but failed to repay further loans; a debt restructuring agreement was concluded with the Fund in March 2004. Egypt's membership was suspended for political reasons between April 1979 and April 1988.

Membership

Membership consists of 22 Arab countries including Palestine.

Objectives

The Fund's basic aims are: to correct disequilibria in the balance of payments of member countries; to promote stability of exchange rates among Arab currencies, the attainment of their mutual convertibility and the elimination of restrictions on current payments; to encourage the use of the Arab dinar as a unit of account, thus paving the way for the creation of a unified Arab currency; to co-ordinate policies of member countries with regard to international monetary problems; and to provide a mechanism for the settlement of current payments between members with a view to promoting trade among them.

The Fund, which functions both as a fund and as a bank, is empowered: to provide short- and medium-term loans to finance balance-of-payments deficits; to issue guarantees to members with a view to strengthening their borrowing capabilities; to act as intermediary in the issuance of loans in Arab and international markets for the account and under the guarantee of members; to manage funds placed under its charge by members; to consult periodically with members on the situation of their economies; and to extend technical assistance to banking and monetary institutions in member countries.

Structure

The structure of the Fund comprises the Board of Governors, the Board of Executive Directors, and the Director-General. The Board of Governors, composed of one governor and one deputy appointed by each member country for a five-year term, is the supreme policy-making body and meets at least once a year; extraordinary meetings may be convened at the request of half the members or of members possessing at least 50 per cent of the total voting power. The Board of Governors, which has delegated many of its powers to the Board of Executive Directors, takes its decisions by simple majority, with certain exceptions where a larger majority is required. Each member country has a fixed number of votes plus one additional vote for each share of stock held. The Board of Executive Directors, responsible for the general operation of the Fund, consists of seven members, nominated for a renewable three-year term, plus the Director-General of the Fund who serves as Chairman. The Director-General is appointed by the Board of Governors for a renewable five-year term.

Activities

Operations are carried out by the Fund through its ordinary capital resources. The establishment of a general reserve fund and, if necessary, of special reserve funds is envisaged by the agreement. The Fund uses its own unit of account, that is the Arab Accounting Dinar (AAD), which is expressed on the basis of special drawing rights (SDRs); more precisely $AAD1 = SDR3$. The size of the authorized capital stock of the Fund was initially set at AAD263 million (SDR789 million), comprising 5260 shares, each of them equivalent to AAD50,000. In July 1981, members were obliged to pay the balance of their subscribed capital. In April 1983, the authorized capital was increased to AAD600 million, comprising 12,000 shares, each having the value of AAD50,000. In April 2005, the subscribed capital was raised from AAD326.5 million to AAD600 million, that is to the full extent of the authorized capital.

Between 1978 and 2006 the Fund approved 135 loans to 14 member countries amounting to AAD1071.9 million, equivalent to \$5 billion. With a view to encouraging trade among member countries, the Fund introduced in 1981 an Inter-Arab Trade Facility which was discontinued in 1989. The creation of the Arab Trade Financing Program (ATFP) was decided by Arab financial institutions

in March 1989 in order to foster liberalization of trade in goods and services (excluding petroleum) between Arab countries and to increase the competitive edge of their exporters. The ATRF, based in Abu Dhabi, is responsible for extending lines of credit to Arab exporters and importers through designated national agencies whose increasing number has led to the expansion of ATRF scope of activity. By the end of 2006 there were 174 agencies based in 19 Arab countries and four non-Arab countries.

External relations

The Fund maintains working relations with other economic and financial groupings of Arab countries but is far from achieving its wider political objectives such as the promotion of Arab economic integration and the introduction of a unified Arab currency. A memorandum of understanding was concluded by the Fund with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in early 1999 for the organization of a joint regional training programme.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Jassim Abdullah Al-Mannai

HEADQUARTERS: Arab Monetary Fund Building, Corniche Street, PO Box 2818, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (telephone: +971 2 6171400; fax: +971 2 6326454)

WEBSITE: <http://www.amf.org.ae>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Arab Countries: Economic Indicators* (annual); *Foreign Trade of Arab Countries* (annual)

Arctic Council

The Council represents a high-level intergovernmental forum providing a mechanism to address the common concerns and challenges faced by the Arctic governments and the people of the Arctic.

Origin and development

Growing concern for the preservation of the cultural and environmental conditions of the Arctic region faced with the pressures of modern development induced Canada to suggest, in 1989, the creation of a Council specifically responsible for the Arctic. The proposal was discussed by the Canadian government with other partners in the early 1990s and

eventually materialized in the Declaration on the Establishment of the Arctic Council, signed in Ottawa, Canada, on 19 September 1996.

Membership

The Council is made up of eight circumpolar countries: Canada, Denmark (including Greenland and the Faroe Islands), Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the US. The status of permanent participant has been granted to: the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North; the Inuit Circumpolar Conference; the Saami Council; the Aleutian International Association; the Arctic Athabaskan Council; and the Gwich'in Council International. Several non-Arctic countries, inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary organizations as well as non-governmental agencies participate as observers.

Objectives

The Council's basic objective is the improvement of the economic, social and cultural well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic through sustainable development and the protection of the Arctic environment.

Structure

The Council ordinarily meets at the ministerial level every other year. The Chair and the Secretariat of the Council rotate at two-year intervals among the eight member countries, beginning with Canada in 1996. The US served for 1998–2000, followed by Finland until 2002 and Iceland until 2004. Russia served for the period 2004–2006 and was succeeded by Norway on 26 October 2006. The existing working groups and programmes of the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy (AEPS) were integrated within the Council in 1997. The Indigenous Peoples Secretariat, based in Copenhagen, helps indigenous bodies to work together through the Council.

Activities

Activities developed by the Council include several programmes and working groups: Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP); Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Response (EPPR); Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment (PAME); Sustainable Development Working Group (SDWG); Arctic Contaminants Action Programme (ACAP).

External relations

The Council co-operates with several institutions including the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the Nordic Council, and the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

ARCTIC COUNCIL SECRETARIAT: c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, P.O. Box 8114 Dep., N-0032 Oslo (telephone: +47 22 24 32 43; fax: +47 22 24 95 80)

WEBSITE: <http://www.arctic-council.org>

REFERENCE: M. Tennberg, *The Arctic Council: A Study in Governmentality* (Rovaniemi, 1998)

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

The ARF provides a framework for discussion of political and security issues and for the eventual adoption of co-operative measures with a view to maintaining peace and security and avoiding conflict in the Asia-Pacific region.

Origin and development

The gradual involvement of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in security matters made a substantive step forward in July 1993 when the ministers of foreign affairs decided on the establishment of an ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). The first formal meeting of the ARF took place on 25 July 1994, following the ASEAN ministerial session held in Bangkok, and comprised, in addition to the then six ASEAN members, the 'dialogue partners' – Australia, Canada, the Presidency of the European Union (EU), Japan, South Korea, New Zealand and the US – plus China, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Russia and Vietnam. Several matters were discussed concerning regional peacekeeping, nuclear non-proliferation, confidence-building measures and conflicting claims to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea. It was decided that ARF meetings would be convened on an annual basis, after the ASEAN ministerial session. ARF remains to date the only regional security mechanism in the Asia-Pacific where countries can discuss and work together to address a wide range of political and security concerns.

Membership

Membership of ARF consists of 27 countries, with the inclusion of Cambodia in 1995, India and Myanmar in 1996, Mongolia in 1999, North Korea in 2000, Pakistan in 2004, Timor-Leste in 2005, Bangladesh in 2006 and Sri Lanka in 2007. All members have an impact on, or are involved in, the security of the Asia-Pacific region.

Objectives

The ARF has progressively become a key instrument for dialogue on political and security concerns with a view to establishing a strong foundation of trust and confidence among its participants. The achievement of a greater sense of collective commitment to regional peace and stability through open and frank discussions remains one of the main objectives of ARF. The habit of co-operation has already fostered greater transparency and mutual understanding in the Asia-Pacific.

Structure

One of the main features of the ARF is its minimal institutionalization. Meetings are held annually at the level of Foreign Ministers, usually in July/August, in conjunction with the post-ministerial conference of ASEAN, and decisions are arrived at through consensus. At the conclusion of every ARF ministerial meeting a Chairman's Statement is issued providing an overview of the main topics discussed. An important role of support is played by the Senior Officials Meeting taking place in May/June every year.

Activities

The second ARF meeting took place in Brunei on 1 August 1995. The participating ministers institutionalized the ARF Senior Officials Meeting to ensure adequate follow-up actions. ARF itself was to evolve in three stages: promotion of confidence-building (including disaster relief and peacekeeping activities); development of preventive diplomacy; and, in the longer term, elaboration of approaches to conflict resolution.

Another ARF meeting (ARF3) was held on 23 July 1996 in Jakarta to deliberate on several issues, including criteria to be followed for future expansion of the forum.

ARF4 took place in Kuala Lumpur on 27 July 1997 and considered progress on the first two 'tracks' of its work programme. The 'first track' regards the official intersessional working groups

and expert level meetings, while the 'second track' (non-official) is connected with seminars and workshops on regional security matters involving academics and officials in their personal capacity. The issue of membership was discussed again at ARF5, convened in Manila on 27 July 1998. The meeting confirmed the criteria of commitment to ARF's key goals and previous decisions and statements and of geographic relevance as the basis for the admission of new participants. After the entry of Mongolia, the ARF was to consolidate as a group and to further improve its process of co-operation. ASEAN's continuing role as the primary driving force of the ARF was again emphasized. At ARF6, held in Singapore on 26 July 1999, with Mongolia as a new participant, the Ministers also welcomed Cambodia as a member of ASEAN, thereby realizing the vision of ASEAN-10. North Korea participated for the first time at ARF7, convened in Bangkok on 27 July 2000. The Ministers remarked the contribution of the ARF process to the enhancement of political and security dialogue within the Asia-Pacific region and stressed its key features based on decision-making by consensus and confidence-building measures. A paper on the 'Enhanced Role of the ARF Chair' was adopted at ARF8, convened in Hanoi on 25 July 2001, as a means of improving the effectiveness of the consultation and co-operation mechanism. On 31 July 2002, in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, ARF9 emphasized the importance of active participation of defence and military officials in the ARF process. ARF10, held on 18 June 2003 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, commemorated the 10 years of ARF as an important venue for multilateral and bilateral dialogue and consultations. At ARF11, held in Jakarta on 2 July 2004, Pakistan was admitted. The admission of Timor-Leste was decided at ARF12 that took place in Vientiane on 29 July 2005. ARF12 discussed, *inter alia*, issues concerning information sharing and intelligence exchange in the fight against terrorism and transnational crimes. Bangladesh was admitted at ARF13, convened on 28 July 2006 in Kuala Lumpur. Participants in ARF13 recognized once more the paramount importance of ASEAN's role in promoting and supporting their efforts. Developments in the Korean Peninsula, the Middle East and Myanmar were mentioned as a cause of special preoccupation for ARF members. ARF14, convened in Manila on 2 August 2007, admitted Sri Lanka, thereby bringing the total number of member countries to 27. At ARF14, concern was expressed over the pace of the process

of national reconciliation and peaceful transition to democracy in Myanmar. Ministers reiterated their calls for the 'early release of those placed under detection and for effective dialogue with all parties concerned'.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

WEBSITE: <http://www.aseansec.org/arf> (site established by the ASEAN Secretariat with section on ARF); <http://www.dfat.gov.au/arf> (site established by the government of Australia)

PUBLICATION: *Annual Security Outlook*

REFERENCES: M. Leifer, *The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Model for Cooperative Security* (Canberra, 1998); R. Emmers, *Cooperative Security and the Balance of Power in ASEAN and ARF* (New York, 2003)

Asia Co-operation Dialogue (ACD)

FOUNDED: June 2002

OBJECTIVES: To provide an informal forum to policy-makers for promoting Asian co-operation at a continental level in order to strengthen, supplement and complement the various regional organizations and frameworks fostering political and economic partnership

MEMBERS: Thirty countries, including all ten members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Russia and most Asian countries such as the Gulf countries, China, India, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka

WEBSITE: <http://aric.adb.org>

Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

The ASEM process provides a mechanism for partnership and dialogue between the European Union (EU) and selected Asian countries with a view to gradually moving from an 'aid and trade' framework towards a more balanced and multi-dimensional relationship.

Origin and development

The recognition in both Asia and Europe of the need to broaden and strengthen mutual relations led leaders in the two regions to accept the proposal for the creation of some kind of permanent forum

launched by the Prime Minister of Singapore Goh Chok Tong during a visit to France in October 1994. This would have provided the 'missing Euro-Asian link' in the triangular relationship between Europe, Asia and the US, albeit without any attempt to imitate the well-known model of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum.

The ASEM process started in earnest with the Summit of European and Asian leaders on 1–2 March 1996 in Bangkok which brought together the Heads of State and Government of the EU members and of ten Asian countries as well as the President of the European Commission. A number of important topics were discussed in the political, economic, trade, social and cultural fields.

The inaugural ASEM 1 involved, on the Asian side, seven members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) – Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam – plus China, Japan and South Korea. Although participation in ASEM may be expanded in the future on both the European and the Asian sides, efforts by other Asia-Pacific countries (notably Australia, India, New Zealand, Pakistan and Taiwan) to join have thus far been unsuccessful. The question of enlargement was again discussed at ASEM 2 and at ASEM 3. It was agreed that the enlargement process would be conducted in progressive stages. A final decision on new participants is made by consensus among all current members only after a candidate has at first gained the support of partners within its region.

Membership

The 27 EU members and the European Commission, the ten countries of ASEAN, plus China, India, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Pakistan and the ASEAN Secretariat.

Objectives

The main purposes of ASEM relate to a variety of fields which may be grouped under three main headings: political dialogue; economic co-operation; co-operation in other areas. With regard to political topics, dialogue has focused on regional and global security issues of common interest such as terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the reform of the UN and different European and Asian perspectives on human rights. The intensification of trade, investment and science and technology flows between the two regions is another pillar of the ASEM process. The promotion of

mutual exchanges in the intellectual, social and cultural fields is another important goal of ASEM.

Structure

Although ASEM fundamentally remains an informal process operating on the basis of a consensual approach, an institutional framework has gradually materialized. The ASEM process involves summit-level meetings every other year, ministerial meetings (Foreign Affairs, Economics, Trade and Industry) in each intervening year and numerous meetings at the senior-official and expert levels. As an informal process, ASEM has no secretariat for the time being. However, a group of four Co-ordinators (two representatives from Asian countries, and two representatives from the EU Presidency and the European Commission respectively) assists in the preparation of the meetings.

The Asia-Europe Business Forum (AEBF) provides an opportunity for the business community to discuss regularly issues concerning trade and investment matters. Meetings of Customs Directors-General take place at two-year intervals. The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) was set up in February 1997 to promote intellectual, cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two regions and has already made a significant contribution to the expansion of contacts and networking. ASEF is based in Singapore and reports to a board of governors.

Besides governments and international organizations, the wide-ranging partnership developed within the ASEM framework is intended to involve the business community and civil society. As a result, outside the official 'structure' an unofficial framework has emerged that involves a substantial number of Asian and European non-governmental organizations.

Activities

After ASEM 1, several follow-up political and economic meetings took place in 1996 and 1997, at ministerial and other levels, while initiatives were launched in various areas such as the establishment of ASEF.

The second ASEM Summit took place on 3–4 April 1998 in London against the background of a deep financial and economic crisis in most East Asian economies. Not only trade liberalization, investment and development assistance flows were at stake but also long-term commitments to each other's future. The ASEM Trade Facilitation Action

Plan (TFAP) was adopted in London with a view to promoting trade opportunities between the two regions and reducing non-tariff barriers and transaction costs. Following a proposal launched in London, the ASEM Trust Fund, implemented by the World Bank, was established in June 1998 in order to finance technical assistance and training in both the financial and social sectors for Asian countries affected by the financial crisis.

The third ASEM Summit was held in Seoul on 20–21 October 2000. Participants decided to intensify efforts to increase trade and investment flows between the two regions and stated their appreciation of the progress made in relation to the TFAP. New ASEM initiatives were endorsed in several fields, including information technology. The conclusions of ASEM 3 were summarized in a 'Chairman's Statement' and in 'The Asia-Europe Co-operation Framework (AECF) 2000'. In a separate document, the 'Seoul Declaration for Peace on the Korean Peninsula' stressed the links between inter-Korean relations and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the world as a whole.

The fourth Summit was convened in Copenhagen on 22–24 September 2002. Co-operation in the fight against international terrorism, in the aftermath of the 11 September 2001 attacks, and the need to support negotiations within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) were among the most important topics considered. The fifth Summit, held in Hanoi on 8–9 October 2004, discussed proposals concerning ways to revitalize and substantiate the Asia-Europe partnership also in view of the admission into ASEM of 13 countries, ten from the EU and three from ASEAN. The sixth Summit, convened in Helsinki on 10–11 September 2006, celebrated the tenth anniversary of the ASEM co-operation process and dealt with the new global and regional security threats, energy and climate change and the intercultural dialogue. The seventh Summit is scheduled to take place in Beijing on 24–25 October 2008.

The major challenge in the years ahead remains the constant reinforcement of the ASEM process itself, maintaining its momentum, while preserving at the same time its distinctive features of flexibility and informality.

External relations

ASEM works together with other inter-regional groups, notably the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) and the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Co-

operation (FEALAC). Co-operation is also going on with a number of global institutions such as the WTO with regard to regional trade agreements and trade facilitation.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

ADDRESS: Asia-Europe Foundation, 31 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Singapore 119595 (telephone: +65 6874 9728; fax: +65 6872 1207)

WEBSITE: <http://www.aseminfoboard.org>

REFERENCES: J. Gilson, *Asia Meets Europe: Inter-Regionalism and the Asia-Europe Meeting* (Cheltenham, UK, 2002); Yeo Lay Hwee, *Asia and Europe: The Development and Different Dimensions of ASEM* (London, 2003)

Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC)

FOUNDED: 1968 as Asian Coconut Community; present name adopted in 1975

OBJECTIVES: To promote, co-ordinate and harmonize all activities of the coconut industry towards better production, processing, marketing and research

MEMBERS: Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vanuatu, Vietnam. Members account for over 90 per cent of world coconut production and exports of coconut products

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Romulo N. Arancon, Jr

HEADQUARTERS: 3rd floor, Lina Bldg, Jalan H.R. Rasuna Said Kav-B7, Kuningan, Jakarta 12920, Indonesia (telephone: +62 21 522 1712; fax: +62 21 522 1714)

WEBSITE: <http://www.apccsec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *The Cocomunity* (monthly newsletter); *Cocoinfo International* (semi-annual); *Coconut Statistical Yearbook*

Asian Development Bank (AsDB)

The Bank is a multilateral development financing institution which fosters economic growth and co-operation in the Asian and Pacific region and

contributes to the progress of its developing member countries, collectively and individually, by lending funds, promoting investment and providing technical assistance.

Origin and development

The agreement establishing the Bank was drawn up under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), a regional body of the UN later succeeded by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). It was formally adopted at the Ministerial Conference on Economic Co-operation in Asia on 4 December 1965 in Manila; the agreement entered into effect on 22 August 1966 and the Bank started operations at its headquarters in Manila in December of the same year.

Membership

Membership of the Bank currently includes 48 countries and territories within the ESCAP region – most of them developing except Australia, Japan, New Zealand and a few newly industrialized economies – plus 19 developed countries outside the region such as Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the UK and the US. Among the Bank's developing members are also 'socialist' countries such as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, which succeeded the former Republic of Vietnam as a regional member in September 1976, and Laos. Cambodia, which had not sent delegations to meetings for several years, resumed participation in 1992. China joined the Bank in March 1986; Taiwan, one of the Bank's founder members, maintained its membership but its title was changed from 'Republic of China' to 'Taipei, China'. After gaining independence, all five former Soviet republics of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) became members between 1994 and 2000. Azerbaijan, another former Soviet republic, joined in 1999 followed by Armenia in 2005. Timor-Leste was granted membership in 2002 upon becoming an independent country. Brunei joined in 2006 followed by Georgia in 2007.

Objectives

The basic aims of the Bank are: to raise funds from both public and private sources for development purposes, taking into special consideration projects of regional and subregional scope and the needs of the lesser developed member countries; to assist members with regard to co-ordination of

development, trade and general economic policies; to extend technical assistance, including the formulation of specific proposals and the preparation and implementation of projects; and to cooperate with the UN and its specialized agencies and with other international and national institutions concerned with investment of development funds in the ESCAP region. Priority must be given to projects and programmes which contribute to the harmonious economic growth of the region as a whole.

Structure

The Bank's structure, which is similar to that of other international financing institutions, consists of the Board of Governors, the Board of Directors, and the President. All the powers are vested in the Board of Governors which is composed of one governor and one alternate governor appointed by each member country and meets at least once a year. Many of its powers may be and actually are delegated to the Board of Directors, with important exceptions concerning the admission of new members, changes in the capital stock, amendments of the Charter and election of Directors and President. The Board of Governors normally adopts its decisions by a majority of the votes cast; the voting power of each country is related to the amount of its quota in the Bank's authorized capital stock. At present the Board of Directors, responsible for the general direction of the Bank's operations, is composed of twelve members, eight representing countries within the ESCAP region (with about two-thirds of the total voting power) and four representing the remaining countries. Each director serves for a two-year term and may be re-elected. The President of the Bank serves for a five-year period, with the possibility of re-election, and acts as Chairman of the Board of Directors. The four Vice-Presidents are nominated by the Board of Directors on the President's recommendation.

A new organizational structure was implemented in 2002 with regional departments aimed at formulating and putting into operation more country-focused programmes and enhancing subregional co-operation. The Bank has 19 resident missions in Asia, three subregional offices in the Pacific, representative offices in Frankfurt for Europe, Tokyo for Japan, and Washington DC for North America, and a special liaison office in Timor-Leste.

Activities

The Bank operates with its ordinary capital resources (OCR), composed of subscribed capital, funds raised through borrowings and reserves, to carry out lending on commercial terms and with the resources of Special Funds to grant concessional loans. Loans from OCR, which have accounted for over two-thirds of lending since the Bank started operations, are generally made to the more advanced developing member countries, while loans from Special Funds are made almost exclusively to the poorest countries.

The size of the capital stock, initially authorized at \$1.1 billion, has been growing substantially. As of 31 December 2006, the authorized capital amounted to \$53.2 billion, all of which had been subscribed; of the subscribed capital, \$3.8 billion was paid-in. Japan and the US are the two largest shareholders, each accounting for 15.78 per cent of total subscribed capital. Regional members account for 63.2 per cent of total shareholding, the remaining 36.8 per cent being contributed by non-regional members.

The Bank has been borrowing funds from world capital markets since 1969. Loans from OCR, that is hard loans made on commercial terms, are not tied to the purchase of goods and services in any specific country and are repayable over a period usually ranging from 15 to 25 years, including the grace period. The system of fixed lending rates was abolished in July 1986 and replaced by a system of periodically adjusted rates.

In replacement of the existing Special Funds, a new mechanism, the Asian Development Fund (ADF), was established in 1973 for the administration of resources available for concessional loans. The ADF is the oldest and largest of the Bank's existing special funds. The initial mobilization of ADF resources (known as ADF I), intended to finance concessional lending up to the end of 1975, was followed by seven replenishments; a replenishment period typically lasts four years. ADF VII covered the period 1997–2000 and amounted to \$6.3 billion; ADF VIII became effective in June 2001 and totalled \$5.7 billion. ADF IX covers the period 2005–2008 totalling \$7 billion, including the introduction of grants. As of December 2006, cumulative disbursements from ADF resources amounted to \$23.5 billion.

The Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF) extends grants with a view to helping developing member countries improve their capabilities to

formulate, design and implement projects. By December 2006, the total resources of TASF amounted to \$1.35 billion, of which \$1.13 billion had been committed.

The Japan Special Fund (JSF) was set up in 1988 in order to provide financing, in both public and private sectors, for technical assistance and equity investment. As of December 2006, a cumulative total of \$928.7 million of regular and supplementary resources had been committed to JSF. The Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) was set up in 2000 to provide additional assistance in the fight against poverty; at present the Fund stands at over \$326 million, of which \$149 million has been committed.

An Asian Development Bank Institute was established in December 1997 in Tokyo through the joint efforts of the Bank and of the government of Japan. The Institute's major objectives are the identification of appropriate long-term strategies for developing member countries and the improvement of the capacity for sound management of agencies and other bodies engaged in development activities. Besides special programmes, the Institute's activity concentrates on applied research, policy seminars and a variety of capacity building and training initiatives.

The Bank assists developing member countries not only through lending but also through technical assistance. Special emphasis is being placed on policy reforms, fiscal strengthening, good governance, private sector development, improvement of the status of women, environmental protection, natural resource management and promotion of financial and capital markets. Technical assistance is provided through loans, grants or a combination of both.

Over the past decades the Bank has had a remarkable impact on the progress of its borrowing members but new and unforeseen challenges emerged in the late 1990s. The massive crisis, which erupted in mid-1997 affecting the newly industrialized economies and Southeast Asia's currencies and stock markets, caused a severe shock throughout the region. Since the beginning of the crisis the Bank co-operated closely with major international financial institutions and bilateral donors, intervening mainly through programme loans to Thailand and South Korea. The \$4 billion loan to South Korea, the first since 1988, was the largest in the Bank's history.

The crisis brought to the fore the widespread poverty of several Asian countries and contributed

to make poverty reduction the Bank's primary goal. Sustainable economic growth, inclusive social development and good governance are the essential components of the Bank's new strategy. An Enhanced Poverty Reduction Strategy is being accorded paramount priority by the Bank. In 2001, the Bank undertook an in-depth review of its organization and operational business processes and implemented the relevant recommendations in 2002. The major objectives include balanced country and sector considerations, strengthened safeguard compliance, clearer accountability and stronger emphasis on regional co-operation and knowledge management. Under its Long-Term Strategic Framework (2001–2015), the Bank has to take into account in its activities three crosscutting themes: private sector development, regional co-operation, and environmental sustainability.

External relations

The Bank acts as executing agency for projects financed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and maintains close working relations with regional and extraregional bodies – from the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) to the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – to co-ordinate technical and financial development assistance efforts within the ESCAP region.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Haruhiko Kuroda

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 789, 0980 Manila, Philippines; 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, 1550 Metro Manila, Philippines (telephone: +632 6324444; fax: +632 636 2444)

WEBSITE: <http://www.adb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *ADB Review* (six times a year); *Asian Development Outlook* (annual); *Asian Development Review* (twice a year); *Key Indicators of Developing Asian and Pacific Countries*

REFERENCES: P.W. Huang, *The Asian Development Bank: Diplomacy and Development in Asia* (New York, 1975); D. Wilson, *A Bank for Half the World: The Story of the Asian Development Bank 1966–1986* (Manila, 1987); N. Kappagoda, *The Asian Development Bank* (London, 1995); M. Wesley (ed.), *The Regional Organizations of the Asia Pacific: Exploring Institutional Change* (Basingstoke, UK, 2003)

Asian Productivity Organization (APO)

The Organization aims to increase productivity in Asia and the Pacific region through mutual co-operation.

Origin and development

Established by a convention signed on 14 April 1961 in Manila with a view to increasing productivity in the region, the Organization has become the umbrella agency for several countries to co-ordinate and assist their individual activities in the field of productivity. Membership is open to all members of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP); non-regional countries may become associate members.

Membership

20 countries and territories including China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Objectives

The Organization assists member countries through human resources development, promotion of productivity awareness and dissemination of modern productivity knowledge, techniques and experience in agriculture, industry and service sectors.

Structure

The supreme organ is the Governing Body consisting of one Director for each member country designated by the government. The Governing Body meets once a year to determine policies and strategies, approve the budget and decide on matters related to membership.

The Secretariat, based in Tokyo and headed by the Secretary-General, executes the policy directives of the Governing Body using as focal points of contact the National Productivity Organizations (NPOs) of member countries. NPOs act as national change agents for productivity promotion and as implementing agencies for the Organization's programmes.

The Workshop Meeting of Heads of NPOs is convened annually to formulate programmes and exchange information with a view to improving productivity at national and regional levels.

Activities

Programmes under way cover the industry, agriculture and service sectors. Special emphasis is placed on socio-economic development, human resources management, productivity measurement and analysis, biotechnology, information technology, small and medium-scale industries, agricultural marketing and institutions. An active publication programme has been undertaken to disseminate information on the productivity concept and the techniques for its enhancement.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Shigeo Takenaka

HEADQUARTERS: Hirakawa-cho Dai-ichi Seimei Bldg. 2F, 1-2-10 Hirakawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-0093, Japan (telephone: +81 3 5226 3920; fax: +81 3 5226 3950)

WEBSITE: <http://www.apo-tokyo.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *APO News* (monthly); *APO Books on Productivity*; *APO Monograph Series on Productivity*

Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC)

APEC has rapidly evolved from an informal dialogue group with limited participation to the leading intergovernmental forum for promoting economic growth, open trade and investment and co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Origin and development

A remarkable part was played by Australia in developing the concept of a regional economic consultative forum since the speech made by then Prime Minister Bob Hawke in Seoul in January 1989 suggesting the creation of an Asian version of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). At the meeting held in Canberra, Australia, on 5–7 November 1989, an Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum was set up with the participation of the five Pacific industrial powers (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the US), the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and South Korea. The forum was originally conceived as an informal and unstructured arrangement for 'dialogue' among participating countries, partly because of

the unwillingness of ASEAN members to commit themselves to another and more powerful regional organization.

The consultation process further developed at the following meeting, which took place in Singapore in July 1990, and made a qualitative step forward at the ministerial session held in Seoul on 12–14 November 1991. The admission of the 'three Chinas' – that is China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan (under the name of Chinese Taipei) – and the adoption of the 'Seoul Declaration' setting out aims and methods of operation marked a new stage in inter-governmental co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region. The ministerial meeting held in Bangkok on 10–11 September 1992 adopted a declaration on institutional arrangements and decided, *inter alia*, the establishment of a permanent Secretariat. The enlargement of APEC continued in November 1993 with the admission of Mexico and Papua New Guinea. Chile was admitted in November 1994 but a moratorium was decided for a three-year period on any further membership application. In November 1997 the status of 'member-designate', effective from January 1998, was granted to Peru, Russia and Vietnam; the three countries became full members in November 1998. According to a decision taken in 1997, no new membership requests were to be considered for at least ten years.

Membership

APEC currently includes 21 countries as full members, accounting for around 40 per cent of the world's population, over 55 per cent of world GDP and nearly 50 per cent of the world's total merchandise trade. The ASEAN Secretariat, the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC) enjoy observer status at APEC Ministerial and Senior Officials Meetings.

Objectives

According to the 1991 'Seoul Declaration', the objectives of APEC were defined as follows: to sustain the growth and development of the region; to enhance the positive gains resulting from increasing economic interdependence, including by encouraging the flow of goods, services, capital and technology; to develop and strengthen an open multilateral trading system; and to reduce barriers to trade in goods and services and investment among participants, without detriment to other economies. APEC encourages private-sector participation and supports 'open regionalism', promoting

trade liberalization throughout the world as well as among its members.

During the 1990s APEC has gradually evolved to become a forum of greater substance and broader purpose with the ambitious vision of a dynamic community of Asia-Pacific countries. Current priorities are to advance APEC's agenda with regard to trade and investment liberalization, to develop human resources with special emphasis on capacity-building, to enhance APEC's relevance to small and medium enterprises and to expand co-operation in the areas of information and communication technology.

Structure

Activities and work programmes are decided by consensus on the basis of dialogue and equal respect for the position of each member country. The direction and nature of APEC actions are determined, at the level of Heads of Government, by meetings of the Economic Leaders which have taken place since 1993 at the end of each year. Economic Leaders receive advice and proposals of practical solutions from the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC), a permanent body which started functioning in June 1996 in Manila and consists of up to three senior representatives of the private sector from each APEC member.

Meetings of Foreign and Economic Ministers are held annually and are hosted by the rotating APEC Chair; every alternate ministerial meeting is held in an ASEAN country. Responsibility for developing the APEC process in accord with the decisions of the ministerial meetings lies with Senior Officials representing each participating country (usually at the level of head or deputy head of government department). Senior Officials oversee and co-ordinate the activities of the Committees and Working and Other Groups.

Besides the Committee on Trade and Investment, which has undertaken initiatives to improve the flow of goods, services and technology in the region, there are an Economic Committee and a Budget and Management Committee. A Sub-Committee on Economic and Technical Co-operation has also been established. Working Groups promote practical co-operation and are currently active in trade promotion, industrial science and technology, human resources development, energy, marine resources conservation, telecommunications and information, transportation, tourism and fisheries. A temporary Ad Hoc Policy Level Group on

Small and Medium Enterprises has been subsequently upgraded to the status of permanent Working Group.

The Secretariat, a permanent body operational since February 1993 and based in Singapore, is headed by an Executive Director who used to be seconded from the member country in the APEC Chair to serve for one year and is now to be appointed for a longer fixed term.

Activities

In the initial years APEC activities concentrated mainly on project-based initiatives and exchanges of views among member countries with a view, *inter alia*, to smoothing the progress of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. Economic Leaders met for the first time at the level of heads of state at Blake Island, near Seattle, Washington, on 20 November 1993 to conduct informal discussions on a future community of Asia-Pacific economies. Several initiatives were agreed upon, including the establishment of a Pacific Business Forum (PBF), the convocation of ministerial meetings on financial issues and on small and medium business enterprises and the development of policy dialogue and action plans for energy security, economic growth and environmental protection.

At the meeting held on 15 November 1994 in Bogor, Indonesia, the Blake Island vision began to translate into action. Economic Leaders adopted the Bogor Declaration of Common Resolve 'on the basis of equal partnership, shared responsibility, mutual respect, common interest and common benefit'. A timetable was approved for the achievement of free trade and investment (no later than 2010 for the industrialized members and no later than 2020 for developing members). The Leaders also called for the strengthening of the global trading system through the World Trade Organization (WTO).

APEC Leaders met again at Osaka, Japan, on 19 November 1995 and set out a detailed 'Action Agenda' establishing the three pillars of APEC activities: trade and investment liberalization, business facilitation, and economic and technical co-operation.

The Manila Action Plan for APEC (MAPA), agreed upon by Economic Leaders on 25 November 1996, dealt with six major subjects: greater market access for goods; enhanced market access in services; an open investment regime; reduced business costs; an open and efficient infrastructure sector; and strengthened economic and technical

co-operation. MAPA included individual and collective action plans and progress reports on joint activities of all members.

On 25 November 1997, in Vancouver, the Leaders addressed the questions concerning the Asian economic and financial crisis. The Leaders confirmed the intention to update annually the Individual Action Plans containing the commitments of APEC members. Moreover, the Leaders endorsed an agreement, reached at ministerial level, in order to implement 'early voluntary sectoral liberalization' in 15 sectors. Efforts to carry on voluntary liberalization would have a positive impact on trade, investment and economic growth in individual countries and throughout the Asia-Pacific.

Prospects for recovery in the region were welcomed by the Leaders meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 18 November 1998. The need was recognized to combine efforts to strengthen social safety nets, financial systems, trade and investment flows, economic infrastructure and business and commercial links. The necessity to reduce economic and social disparities aggravated by the financial crisis led to the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Action Program on Skills Development.

At their Auckland meeting, on 13 September 1999, Economic Leaders stressed the improvement in the performance and prospects of the member economies and renewed their pledge to strengthen markets and improve the international framework governing trade and investment flows. The Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Bogor goals of free and open trade and investment by 2010/2020 and decided to start work on the development of a set of banking standards for consideration and possible adoption by member economies.

Meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, on 16 November 2000, Leaders mapped out ways of strengthening and further opening markets as well as addressing the challenges of the New Economy. The slow-down in the world's major economies and the threat represented by international terrorism to APEC's vision of free, open and prosperous economies were among the most important topics dealt with at the Leaders' meeting on 21 October 2001 in Shanghai. At the following meeting, held in Los Cabos, Mexico, on 27 October 2002, Leaders focused on the means to expand the 'benefits of co-operation for economic growth and development' and stressed again the importance of fully implementing APEC standards of transparency in trade and investment liberalization and facilitation. At the

eleventh Economic Leaders' meeting, convened in Bangkok on 21 October 2003, the commitment was reaffirmed not only to liberalize and facilitate regional trade and investment but also to protect peoples and societies of member countries against threats to their security. The twelfth meeting took place in Santiago, Chile, on 20–21 November 2004 and restressed the goal of advancing development through trade and investment liberalization on a global scale. At Busan, Korea, Economic Leaders met on 18–19 November 2005 and endorsed the Busan Roadmap to the Bogor goals based on support for the multilateral trade system, the advancement of economic and technical co-operation, the promotion of high-quality regional trade agreements and a stronger response to the specific concerns of the business community. The fourteenth meeting of Economic Leaders took place on 18–19 November 2006 in Hanoi and reaffirmed, *inter alia*, the support for the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) as a top priority for advancing free trade and investment, the condemnation of terrorism in every form and manifestation and the necessity to advance economic and technical co-operation to ensure equitable and shared prosperity. Economic Leaders met for their fifteenth Summit in Sydney on 8–9 September 2007 and addressed again the challenges of climate change, energy security and clean development (dealt with in a separate statement), the primacy of the multilateral trade system and of the DDA and the improvement of economic efficiency and the business environment.

The institutionalization of economic co-operation among APEC countries represents a major trend, which is likely to strengthen over the next few years. Important negotiations have already been carried out and the pledge to liberalize has gradually moved from the political to the legal plane, despite repeated references to 'voluntary' and 'non-binding' commitments. Increased openness to trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific will not only contribute to the economic growth of the region but also strengthen the multilateral trading system. On the other hand, the diverse political and cultural traditions of the member countries (including different attitudes to human rights issues), recurrent trade tensions between major partners, the difficulties of implementing a free trade area among countries with uneven tariff levels and the risks of other financial crises could represent significant obstacles to the development of the overall APEC process.

External relations

APEC draws upon research, analysis and policy ideas contributed by participants as well as by other relevant organizations and observers. The delicate interrelationships between APEC and the existing subregional trading arrangements are of special importance. The commitment to facilitating business and bringing the private sector into a wide range of its institutional activities is a characteristic feature of APEC. The relationship between APEC and PECC is thus particularly relevant. In fact, PECC's less formal character and wider membership allow for the discussion of specific issues and proposals without committing governments to specific actions. On the other hand, the maturing of APEC will stimulate PECC's work programmes. Substantial input for APEC also comes from private sector bodies, notably the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

HEADQUARTERS: 35 Heng Mui Keng Terrace, Singapore 119616 (telephone: +65 6775 6012; fax: +65 6775 6013)

WEBSITE: <http://www.apec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *APEC E-Newsletter*; *APEC Economic Outlook* (annual); *ABAC Report to APEC Leaders* (annual); *APEC Energy Handbook* (annual); *APEC Energy Statistics* (annual)

REFERENCES: W. Bodde Jr., *View from the 19th Floor: Reflections of the First APEC Executive Director* (Singapore, 1994); Chia Siow Yue (ed.), *APEC: Challenges and Opportunities* (Singapore, 1994); I. Yamazawa (ed.), *Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC): Challenges and Tasks for the Twenty-first Century* (London, 2000); J. Ravenhill, *APEC and the Construction of Pacific Rim Regionalism* (Cambridge, UK, 2002); J. Rüländ, E. Manske and W. Draguhn (eds), *Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC): The First Decade* (London, 2002); C.M. Dent (ed.), *Asia-Pacific Economic and Security Cooperation: New Regional Agendas* (New York, 2003); S.L. Downing (ed.), *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation: Current Issues and Background* (New York, 2003); R.E. Feinberg (ed.), *APEC as an Institution: Multilateral Governance in the Asia-Pacific* (Singapore, 2003)

Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission (APFIC)

The Commission acts as a consultative forum working in partnership with other regional bodies to provide advice and co-ordinate activities in the fields of fisheries and aquaculture.

Origin and development

The Commission was founded on 9 November 1948 by an international Agreement concluded under the aegis of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO); the founding Agreement has been amended in 1952, 1955, 1958, 1961, 1977, 1993 and 1996. The present title of the Commission was adopted in 1993; it was originally known as the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council and later as the Indo-Pacific Fishery Commission (IPFC) until 1993. The Asia-Pacific area, including inland waters, falls within the competence of the Commission.

Membership

Membership includes 20 countries, among them Australia, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan, Thailand, the UK and the US.

Objectives

The Commission promotes the full and proper utilization of living aquatic resources by the development and management of fishing and culture operations and of related processing and marketing activities.

Activities

Priority is currently being given by the Commission to marine fishery resources in the South China Sea and adjacent waters, and to inland fisheries and aquaculture in mainland Asia.

HEADQUARTERS: Maliwan Mansion, Phra Atit Road, Bangkok 10200, Thailand (telephone: +66 2 697 4000; fax: +66 2 697 4445)

WEBSITE: <http://www.apfic.org>

PUBLICATIONS: Proceedings and occasional papers

Association of Caribbean States (ACS)

The Association aims to promote economic co-operation and integration among all countries in the Greater Caribbean.

Origin and development

The Association's founding agreement was signed in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, on 24 July 1994 by the representatives of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the members of the Group of Three (G-3) and nine other countries in the region, that is Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Suriname.

Membership

Full membership is enjoyed by 25 countries. Associate membership has been granted to: Aruba; France on behalf of French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique; and the Netherlands Antilles. A number of other non-independent Caribbean countries are eligible for associate membership. Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands refused to join because of Cuba's participation in the Association.

Objectives

The Association aims to promote economic co-operation and integration in the region, to co-ordinate participation in multilateral forums, to undertake concerted action to protect the environment, especially the Caribbean Sea, and to co-operate in the fields of trade, energy, transport, science and technology, sustainable tourism, natural disasters and education and culture.

Structure

The permanent organs are the Ministerial Council, which is in charge of policy-making and direction of the Association, and the Secretariat. The Ministerial Council, consisting of a Minister and an alternate designated by each member country, holds an annual regular meeting and decides by consensus on all substantive matters. Special Committees have been established by the Ministerial Council to deal with: Trade Development and External Economic Relations; Sustainable Tourism; Transport; Natural Disasters; and Budget and Administration.

The Secretariat, headed by a Secretary-General appointed by the Ministerial Council on the basis of rotation for a four-year term, is charged with administrative tasks.

Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries and associate members have been held from time to time with a view to giving new political impetus to the Association.

Activities

The first summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Association took place in Port of Spain, Trinidad, on 17–18 August 1995 and was mainly concerned with tourism, trade and transport issues in the regional context; the negative effects of the US economic blockade on Cuba were also discussed. The second summit was held in Santo Domingo on 16–17 April 1999 and adopted a Declaration and a Plan of Action dealing with issues concerning tourism, trade and investment, transport, environment and natural resources, science and technology, information and communication, health, education and culture. Tourism was expressly recognized in the Declaration as the area in which the Association had achieved the most significant progress. Trade agreements and tariff preferences were being considered within the framework of the initiative to establish the Caribbean Preferential Tariff (CPT).

The third summit was held on 11–12 December 2001 on Margarita Island, Venezuela, and focused on sustainable tourism, trade, transport, and natural disasters relief. The fourth summit was held in Panama City on 29 July 2005 to celebrate the Association's tenth anniversary. The Declaration of Panama stressed the need for greater consultation and co-operation among members and for a more profound and effective international role, particularly at the regional and subregional levels.

External relations

The Association has established links with other subregional and regional institutions, particularly CARICOM, the Central American Integration System (SICA) and the Latin American Economic System (SELA), as well as with extraregional agencies, notably the European Union (EU).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

SECRETARY GENERAL: Rubén Arturo Silié Valdez

HEADQUARTERS: 5–7 Sweet Briar Road, St Clair, P.O. Box 660, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago (telephone: +868 622 9575; fax: +868 622 1653)

WEBSITE: <http://www.acs-aec.org>

REFERENCE: A. Serbin, *Sunset over the Islands: The Caribbean in an Age of Global and Regional Challenges* (New York, 1998)

Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC)

FOUNDED: October 1970

OBJECTIVES: To co-ordinate the production and marketing of natural rubber, to ensure fair and stable prices, and to promote technical co-operation among member countries

MEMBERS: India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Suchada Varaphorn

HEADQUARTERS: Natural Rubber Building, 7th Floor, Bangunan Getah Asli (Menara), 148 Jalan Ampang, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (telephone: +603 2161 1900; fax: +603 2161 3014)

WEBSITE: <http://www.anrpc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *ANRPC Newsletter*; *ANRPC Quarterly Natural Rubber Statistical Bulletin*

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

The Association is the major body organizing co-operation in Southeast Asia and plays a leading role in facilitating economic, social and cultural development, promoting active co-ordination and mutual assistance in matters of common interest and ensuring regional peace and stability.

Origin and development

The Association originated on 8 August 1967 in Bangkok when a document, consisting of just five articles and destined to be known as the ASEAN Declaration, was signed by representatives of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The Declaration set out the aims and features of the new organization, which was intended to replace the Association of Southeast Asia (ASA), formed by Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand in the early 1960s to deal with political and economic matters. Brunei joined on 8 January 1984 the five founder members of the Association. Vietnam, formerly an observer, became a full member on 28 July 1995. Laos and Myanmar (formerly Burma) graduated from observer status to full membership on 23 July 1997. Cambodia, granted observer status in July 1996, joined the

Association as full member on 30 April 1999, thereby ensuring for the organization the representation of the region as a whole.

Membership

Members of the Association include all countries of Southeast Asia with a total population of about 500 million and a combined GDP of almost \$700 billion.

Objectives

The basic goals of the Association are rather widely phrased in the founding Declaration. They include: acceleration of economic growth, social progress and cultural development through joint efforts in the spirit of equality and partnership; provision of mutual assistance in training and research facilities in the educational, professional, technical and administrative fields; promotion of peace and political stability in Southeast Asia and the development of close links with other international and regional organizations with similar aims. Within the framework of economic co-operation and development, provision is made for greater utilization of the agriculture and industries of member countries, intensification of trade within the region and with the rest of the world including study of the problems of international commodity trade, improvement of transportation and communications, and adoption of joint research and technological programmes and projects.

In 1995, the Heads of State and Government stressed that 'cooperative peace and shared prosperity shall be the fundamental goals of ASEAN'.

Structure

The functions and powers of the Association, in conformity with its basic features, are subject to the principle of consensus.

The meeting of the Heads of State and Government is the highest decision-making body. Summits of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries have emerged as a key element of the Association's institutional machinery.

The ASEAN Ministerial Meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers takes place annually. It is empowered to establish major policies and to set the guidelines for the development of regional co-ordination and co-operation in areas of common interest. Annual ministerial sessions are followed by 'post-ministerial conferences' where the Association's Foreign Ministers meet their counterparts from the 'dialogue partners'.

Numerous other ministerial meetings are held with regard to specific sectors: agriculture and forestry, economics, energy, environment, finance, information, investment, labour, law, regional haze, rural development and poverty alleviation, science and technology, social welfare, transnational crime, transportation, tourism and youth. Around 30 committees of senior officials and over 120 technical working groups support the activities of the ministerial bodies.

A permanent central Secretariat was established in 1976 in Jakarta, to perform administrative functions and keep contact with member countries through specially appointed National Secretariats. The Secretariat was restructured and strengthened in 1992, with staff openly recruited and no longer appointed on the basis of national nomination. The Secretary-General has been vested with an expanded mandate and responsibilities. The post of Secretary-General revolves among member countries in alphabetical order at five-year intervals.

The Association has a number of specialized bodies and arrangements promoting intergovernmental co-operation in a variety of fields, including the following: ASEAN University Network, ASEAN-EC Management Centre, ASEAN Centre for Energy, ASEAN Agricultural Development Planning Centre, ASEAN Earthquake Information Centre, ASEAN Specialized Meteorological Centre.

Activities

Despite recurring tensions in the region, the Association has prevented, through political dialogue and confidence building, open confrontation among its members. Besides fostering co-operation in basic economic and non-economic sectors, the Association has succeeded in forging an 'ASEAN identity', taking common stands on regional as well as global issues from Cambodia to Afghanistan.

In fact, the ASEAN experience started with a legacy of tense and volatile relations among its founder members and in the early stages the peaceful resolution of intra-ASEAN conflicts as well as the resistance to a perceived communist threat were the overriding concerns. Only in the late 1970s did economic issues become a key aspect of ASEAN co-operation both among members and with regard to third countries and international organizations.

ASEAN's first Summit meeting was held at Denpasar, Bali, on 23–24 February 1976 and concluded with the signature of two important

documents. The Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia (TAC) established the principles of mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations; non-interference in the internal affairs; peaceful settlement of disputes; renunciation of the threat or use of force; and effective co-operation. TAC was first amended on 15 December 1987 by a Protocol allowing the accession of other countries within and outside Southeast Asia. Laos and Vietnam became signatories to TAC in July 1992, followed by Myanmar in July 1995. The Declaration of ASEAN Concord – the other document signed on 24 February 1976 at the Bali Summit – provided guidelines with regard to economic, social and cultural relations and reaffirmed the commitment of the signatories to the creation of a Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Southeast Asia. The original Declaration on ZOPFAN had been approved in Kuala Lumpur on 27 November 1971.

The second Summit meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, on 4–5 August 1977. The intention to develop peaceful relations with other countries of Southeast Asia was reaffirmed; in particular ASEAN supported the right of the people of Cambodia to self-determination.

A Basic Agreement on the Establishment of Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA), concluded in January 1977, provided the framework for gradual tariff cuts and other concessions on a wide range of items. However, only a fraction of the value of intra-ASEAN trade was actually accounted for by preferentially-traded items. The need to further increase intra-ASEAN trade was addressed by the third Summit of Heads of State and Government which took place in Manila on 14–15 December 1987. The Summit approved an Enhanced PTA Programme establishing a new set of priorities for national and regional development. A Protocol amending TAC was also adopted in order to open the Treaty for accession by other countries within as well as outside the region.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the end of the East–West confrontation and the eventual solution of the Cambodian crisis offered ASEAN countries a major opportunity to move forward with economic co-operation programmes in an environment no longer characterized by severe security threats. The fourth Summit was held in Singapore on 27–28 January 1992; participants decided to allow their foreign ministers to discuss security issues at future

meetings, although without giving the Association competences in the military sphere, and recommended the establishment of ZOPFAN and of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. One of the major decisions of the Summit, partly as a response to increasing economic integration in Europe and North America, was the creation of an ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) within 15 years. A 'Framework Agreement on Enhancing ASEAN Economic Co-operation' was adopted with a view to promoting the conclusion of more detailed implementing arrangements and a Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) scheme came into effect in January 1993. Subsequent meetings of economic and trade ministers between 1993 and 1995 enlarged the number of products to be affected by the tariff-reduction process and set stricter deadlines for the implementation of AFTA.

The growing relevance for the Association of political and security issues led to the establishment of a specific mechanism for dialogue, the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which formally met for the first time in July 1994.

The fifth Summit took place in Bangkok on 14–15 December 1995; the Bangkok Declaration contained an Agenda for Greater Economic Integration with a view to accelerating the timetable for AFTA from the original 15 to 10 years. The Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) was signed at the Bangkok Summit on 15 December in order to prohibit the manufacture, station, transport or use of nuclear weapons within the territories of the parties, including their respective continental shelves and Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ).

The First Informal ASEAN Summit was convened in Jakarta on 30 November 1996; participants reaffirmed their strong commitment to the objective of an Association comprising all ten countries of Southeast Asia.

Thirty years after the birth of the Association, the Heads of State and Government met in Kuala Lumpur for their Second Informal Summit and adopted, on 15 December 1997, the ASEAN Vision 2020, calling for a 'partnership in dynamic development' aimed at forging closer economic integration within the region.

The Second Protocol amending the 1976 Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia, adopted in Manila on 25 July 1998, explicitly requested 'the consent of all the states in Southeast Asia' for the accession of non-regional parties to the Treaty.

The Hanoi Plan of Action, adopted by the sixth Summit on 16 December 1998 and covering the period 1999–2004, was the first in a series of plans of action leading up to the fulfilment of the ASEAN Vision. Several measures were contemplated in order to hasten economic recovery in the region, to narrow the gap in the level of development among member countries and to alleviate the social repercussions of the economic and financial crisis. The further development of growth areas and growth triangles in the subregion was also considered. Despite temporary exceptions granted to countries (such as Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar) facing severe problems in meeting their CEPT obligations, the commitment was stressed to achieve AFTA goals by the year 2002, six years ahead of the original schedule of 2008. AFTA has now been virtually realized among the six original signatories with tariffs reduced to 0–5 per cent on most products. Tariffs will be completely abolished by 2010 for ASEAN-6 and by 2015 for the newer members, with flexibility on some sensitive products until 2018.

The Third Informal Summit was convened on 27–28 November 1999 in Manila to deal with major outstanding issues. The necessity to integrate into ASEAN the newer member countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam or CLMV) led to the launch of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI), on the occasion of the Fourth Informal Summit which took place in Singapore on 22–25 November 2000. Following the decision on IAI, the Foreign Ministers, meeting in Hanoi on 23 July 2001, adopted a Declaration on Narrowing the Development Gap for Closer ASEAN Integration. According to the Declaration, 'special efforts and resources' shall be devoted to promoting the development of the CLMV, giving priority to infrastructure, human resource development and information and communication technology. In the aftermath of the attacks of 11 September 2001, the seventh Summit took place in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, on 5–6 November 2001 and adopted a Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism. The eighth Summit, held in Phnom-Penh, Cambodia, on 3–5 November 2002, was characterized, inter alia, by the conclusion of a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Co-operation with China and by a Joint ASEAN-Japan Declaration on Comprehensive Economic Partnership. At the subsequent (ninth) Bali Summit, on 7–8 October 2003, the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) was adopted in view of the realization

of an open, cohesive, dynamic and resilient ASEAN Community founded on three major components: political and security; economic; and socio-cultural co-operation. The envisaged creation of the ASEAN Community will also involve a streamlining of the Secretariat in order to make it a more effective and efficient instrument. The tenth Summit, held in Vientiane on 29–30 November 2004, saw further steps towards the establishment of the ASEAN Community based on three pillars: the Security Community, the Economic Community and the Socio-Cultural Community. In Kuala Lumpur, on 12–14 December 2005, the eleventh Summit approved a Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Charter to be drafted with the assistance of an Eminent Persons Group (EPG). The Charter is expected to incorporate the Association's fundamental principles, goals and structures and to enhance the credibility, transparency and solidarity of the organization as a whole. The twelfth Summit was held in Cebu, Philippines, on 9–15 January 2007. The Cebu Declaration on the Blueprint of the ASEAN Charter endorsed previous directives to the EPG in view of completing the drafting of the Charter. The ASEAN Charter was eventually signed at the thirteenth Summit held in November 2007 in Singapore.

External relations

Special committees, at the level of heads of diplomatic missions, have been set up in a number of foreign countries in order to promote policy coordination and support the conduct of the Association's external relations.

The Association has developed relations with major countries, especially the 'dialogue partners' whose Foreign Ministers participate in ASEAN's post-ministerial conferences. Besides the European Union (EU), these partners currently include Australia, Canada, China, India, Japan, South Korea, New Zealand, Russia, the US and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). The Association co-operates with Pakistan in certain sectors. China and India acceded to TAC in 2003 followed by Japan and Pakistan in 2004 and more recently by Australia, Mongolia and New Zealand.

The Association's links with China, Japan and South Korea (ASEAN+3) are gradually being strengthened within a new framework through the holding of regular meetings as decided in Hanoi in December 1998, on the occasion of the sixth ASEAN Summit. The Joint Statement on East Asia

Co-operation, adopted on 28 November 1999 by the heads of state or government, confirmed the commitment of the participants to build upon existing consultative and co-operative processes through the ASEAN+3 Framework, in particular in economic and social fields. East Asian economic ministers held the first session of their regular meetings in May 2000. An agreement to operate a currency swap network between the central banks of the ASEAN+3 was signed in May 2001; despite its limited relevance, the agreement could represent the first step towards the creation of an Asian Monetary Fund. The importance of the ASEAN+3 process and its further development was reaffirmed in the Bali Concord II document.

A promising area of co-operation is represented by the Association's ties with the EU. After informal relations started in 1972, a renewable five-year co-operation agreement, strengthening trade relations and increasing joint action in scientific and agricultural spheres, was signed between the Association and the then European Economic Community (EEC) in 1980. Several initiatives have been launched by the two organizations in order, *inter alia*, to encourage European investment in Southeast Asia, to identify joint industrial projects and to facilitate access to ASEAN markets. Since the early 1990s the Association and the EU have undertaken efforts to increase trade and investment, to co-operate against drug trafficking and to promote greater participation of the private sector. However, in the last few years serious differences regarding the democratic and human rights record of some of the Association's member countries (especially Myanmar) have led to the postponement or the cancellation of meetings of the EC-ASEAN Joint Committee. The launch of the new Asia strategy by the EU in 1994 and the declaration on the importance of ASEAN as the cornerstone of the EU's dialogue with Asia laid the foundation for the convening of the first Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in Bangkok in 1996.

The Association participates actively in the efforts for furthering economic co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region – especially through the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) and the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC) – and with Latin America through the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Co-operation (FEALAC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Ong Keng Yong

HEADQUARTERS: Jalan Sisingamangaraja 70A,
Jakarta 12110, Indonesia (telephone: +62 21
7262991; fax: +62 21 7398234)

WEBSITE: <http://www.aseansec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *ASEAN Annual Report*; *ASEAN
Statistical Yearbook*; *ASEAN Investment Report*;
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Economic Development and Cooperation* (Singapore,
3rd edn, 2003); D.M. Jones and M.L.R. Smith,
*ASEAN and East Asian International Relations:
Regional Delusion* (Cheltenham, UK, 2006)

Bank for International Settlements (BIS)

The Bank, one of the oldest multilateral financial institutions in the world, promotes monetary and financial co-operation among national central banks; it also fulfils the function of a central banks' bank.

Origin and development

Although the first proposals to organize co-operation among central banks date back to the late nineteenth century, the creation of the Bank resulted from conferences held in The Hague, the Netherlands, in 1929 and 1930 to settle the question of German reparations. Negotiations over the revision of the Dawes Plan led to the signing of an international agreement on the Young Plan in January 1930 in The Hague. As a result, the burdens of reparations and war debts were considerably eased and a Bank for International Settlements was established and empowered to act as trustee. Another agreement was signed between the governments of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the UK and the government of Switzerland for the constitution of the Bank as a limited company with its seat at Basel, Switzerland. The Bank was granted immunities from taxation as well as guarantees against expropriation.

The Statutes of the Bank were signed on 20 January 1930 and operations began on 17 May 1930 at Basel. The central banks of other European countries, such as Austria, Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, joined the founder members shortly afterwards. The aggravation of the economic crisis in Europe prevented other prospective members from participating in the newly created institution. The Bank's membership substantially increased after World War II. The central banks of nearly all European countries have become members. Japan, which had withdrawn in 1953, resumed participation in 1969. Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Israel, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa and Thailand have also joined, thereby increasing the importance of non-European members. New shares have been issued to the central banks of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Slovenia. The participation of Serbia and Montenegro is under review.

The original text of the Statutes of the Bank has been amended several times by Extraordinary General Meetings, the most recent one taking place on 27 June 2005.

Membership

A total of 55 central banks or monetary authorities have rights of voting and representation at the Bank's General Meetings. The European Central Bank (ECB) became a shareholder in December 1999.

Objectives

The Bank aims to promote co-operation among national central banks, to provide additional facilities for international financial operations and to act as trustee or agent in regard to international financial settlements entrusted to it under agreements with the parties concerned.

In order to fulfil its basic aims, the Bank is empowered to: buy and sell gold coin or bullion for its own account or for central banks; hold gold for its own account under earmark in central banks, and accept the custody of gold for these banks; make advances to or borrow from central banks against gold and short-term obligations of prime liquidity or other approved securities; discount, rediscount, purchase or sell short-term obligations of prime liquidity, including Treasury bills and other government short-term securities; buy and sell exchange and negotiable securities other than shares; open current or deposit accounts with central banks and accept deposits from them as well as deposits in connection with trustee agreements; act as trustee or agent with regard to international settlements; conclude special agreements with central banks to facilitate the settlement of international transactions.

Structure

The organizational structure of the Bank includes the General Meeting of member central banks, the Board of Directors, and the Management of the Bank. The General Meeting, attended by representatives of the central banks voting in proportion to the number of shares subscribed, normally takes place every year in June to approve the budget and the annual report, to decide the distribution of the net income and to set down the general guidelines for the Bank's activities.

Administration is carried out by the Board of Directors, which at present consists of 20 members.

Governors of the central banks of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the UK and the Chairman of the Board of Governors of the US Federal Reserve system are *ex-officio* Directors. Six persons representative of finance, industry or commerce are appointed one each by the *ex-officio* Directors; each representative has the same nationality as the Director who appoints him or her. As a founding member, the US had been entitled to two seats since the beginning of the Bank's activities but did not take them until September 1994. According to the Statutes, the governors of not more than nine other central banks may be elected to the Board; the governors of the central banks of the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland, already serving, have been joined by the governors of Canada, China, Japan, Mexico and the President of the European Central Bank (ECB). The Board meets at least six times a year and is assisted in its work by the Consultative Committee and the Audit Committee. The Board elects a Chairman from among its members for a three-year term. The chief executive officer of the Bank is the General Manager who carries out the policy determined by the Board and is in charge of the management of the Bank with the assistance of several executive officers and the necessary staff. Besides the head office in Basel the Bank has representative offices in Hong Kong and Mexico City.

Activities

The Bank is obliged to maintain its liquidity and therefore has to retain assets appropriate to the maturity and character of its liabilities. The Bank's short-term liquid assets may include bank notes, cheques payable on sight drawn on first class banks, claims in course of collection, deposits at sight or at short notice and prime bills of exchange. All operations undertaken by the Bank must conform to the monetary policies of the central banks of the countries concerned.

The size of the authorized capital stock, initially set at 500 million gold francs, currently amounts to SDR3 billion, divided into 600,000 shares of equal nominal value, consisting of three tranches of 200,000 shares each. Only 25 per cent of the value of each share is paid-up; the balance may be called up at a later date. Shares may be subscribed or acquired only by central banks or by financial institutions appointed by the Board.

According to amendments to the Statutes adopted on 8 January 2001, all shares registered in the name of a shareholder other than a central bank (that is a

'private shareholder') had to be repurchased by the Bank, against payment of compensation.

Since its establishment, the Bank has performed a significant role in a variety of fields and has effectively managed to maintain its liquidity. At the very beginning of its operations, the Bank had to face the consequences of the Great Depression in almost all the countries of Europe, with the ensuing suspension, in July 1931, of the implementation of the Young Plan and of its activities as trustee. The Bank's role was further reduced when many countries modified or went off the gold standard in the first half of the 1930s. Its difficulties were aggravated by the outbreak of World War II. Nearly all the participating banks represented belligerent countries and the Bank decided to pursue a policy of strict neutrality and therefore to abstain from any operation amounting to a breach of such neutrality. The UN Monetary and Financial Conference held at Bretton Woods in 1944 recommended the liquidation of the Bank because of the alleged illegitimacy of its custody of gold for the account of the Reichsbank. Moreover, the functions of the Bank appeared to a very large extent to overlap those of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). However, the peculiar role performed by the Bank through the provision of a framework for co-operation of central banks was eventually recognized and operations were fully resumed. Since the 1950s the Bank has substantially developed its activities on international financial markets, acted as an important forum for consultation and collaboration among central banks and has provided a helpful and informative analysis of the major features of the world economy through its annual reports. The oil shocks and the critical debt situation of several Latin American countries in the 1970s and 1980s led the Bank to concentrate on the management of cross-border capital flows. The need of a regulatory supervision of internationally active banks eventually resulted in the 1988 Basel Capital Accord and the following revision 'Basel II' for 2001–06. Issues concerning financial stability as a consequence of the challenges of globalization and economic integration are becoming increasingly relevant.

External relations

The Bank has developed close co-operative links with economic and financial institutions within the UN system and with regional or national bodies. The Bank provides the secretariat for several committees

and groups of experts, in particular the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision that was established by the December 1974 agreement of the governors of the central banks of the Group of Ten (G-10) and Switzerland and is responsible for co-ordinating banking supervisory regulations and surveillance systems at the international level. Other important G-10 committees are the Markets Committee (established in 1962), the Committee on the Global Financial System (1971), and the Committee on Payment and Settlement Systems (1990).

The Bank acted as a clearing agency for the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in connection with the agreements on intra-European payments and compensation, and the European Payments Union (EPU), replaced by the European Monetary Agreement (EMA) in December 1958. The EMA system was retained in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which succeeded the OEEC in 1960. The Bank acted as depositary under an Act of Pledge concluded with the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and as agent, between June 1973 and December 1993, for the European Monetary Co-operation Fund (EMCF), set up by the member countries of the then European Economic Community (EEC). In the 1990s the Bank undertook new tasks as a collateral agent under rescheduling agreements of the external debt of a number of developing countries. The Bank has hosted the Secretariat of the International Association of Insurance Supervisors since 1998.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, German, Italian

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Jean-Pierre Roth

HEADQUARTERS: Centralbahnplatz 2, 4002 Basel, Switzerland (telephone +41 61 280 8080; fax: +41 61 280 9100)

WEBSITE: <http://www.bis.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *BIS Quarterly Review*; *Papers and Working Papers*

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Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC)

The Council is the forum for intergovernmental co-operation on issues concerning the Barents region where around six million people live.

Origin and development

The intergovernmental co-operation in the Barents region was officially endorsed on 11 January 1993 when the Foreign Ministers of the Nordic countries, Russia and a representative of the European Commission, meeting in Kirkenes, Norway, adopted a Declaration establishing the Council. On the same day, representatives of the region's county governors and their equivalents, together with a representative of the indigenous people, signed a co-operation protocol establishing the Barents Euro-Arctic Regional Council with similar objectives as the BEAC. Intergovernmental co-operation was thus supplemented by mutual support and interaction among county administrations and direct people-to-people collaboration.

Membership

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the European Commission. The following countries have observer status: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Poland, the UK and the US.

Objectives

The basic goal of the Council is to encourage sustainable economic and social development in the Barents region and thus contribute to the peaceful development of the northernmost part of Europe. In particular, the Council aims to stimulate trade and promote economic co-operation and the clean-up of pollution and radiation contamination in the area around the Barents Sea.

Structure

The Foreign Ministers of the member countries of the Council meet in the country of the Chair at the end of the term of office. The Chair rotates every other year, in the autumn, between Finland, Norway, Russia and Sweden. Finland took over the Chair from Norway in November 2005 for the period 2005–07, and will be followed by Russia in 2007–09. Between ministerial meetings, work is organized by the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) consisting of civil servants representing the governments of the member countries and the

European Commission; representatives of observer countries may be given the possibility of participating in the meetings. Meetings of the CSO take place four to five times a year, usually in the country holding the Chair. The CSO has established a number of Working Groups such as those dealing with: economic co-operation (with task forces for customs co-operation and forestry issues); environment, health and related social issues; youth; transport; Northern Sea Route; rescue and emergency services; and trafficking in human beings. The Working Groups report to the CSO every year.

Activities

The Council's activities over the past decade have focused on a number of issues including the need to give a multilateral response to contamination, pollution, spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste problems affecting North West Russia. Conditions for transport and travel in the eastern and western directions within the region are being improved while, at the same time, co-operation is being reinforced among customs, police, immigration and border authorities to combat crime and stop trafficking in human beings. On 11 January 2003, the Heads of Government of member countries, the Presidency of the European Union (EU) and the European Commission meeting in Kirkenes to celebrate the tenth anniversary of mutual co-operation adopted a Summit Declaration stressing the importance of close interaction in the high north of Europe. The Northern Dimension has become a common policy of the EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland after the entry into force of a joint political Declaration and a Northern Dimension Framework Document adopted on the occasion of the EU-Russia Summit held in Helsinki on 24 November 2006.

External relations

Co-ordination and co-operation links are expanding between the Council and other regional intergovernmental institutions such as the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS), the Arctic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers.

CHAIR (FOR THE PERIOD 2005–2007): Finland

CONTACT: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Merikasarmi, P.O. Box 176, 00161 Helsinki, Finland (telephone: +358 9 160 05 or 578 15; fax: +358 9 629 840)

WEBSITE: <http://www.beac.st>

PUBLICATION: *Newsletter*

REFERENCE: O. Schram Stokke and O. Tunander (eds), *The Barents Region: Regional Co-operation in Arctic Europe* (London, 1994)

Benelux Economic Union

The economic union between Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands represents a successful example of co-ordination among the member countries in forging closer and more effective economic links.

Origin and development

The Treaty establishing the Union was signed in The Hague, the Netherlands, on 3 February 1958 and entered into force on 1 November 1960 for a 50-year period. It represented the result of several moves initiated in the early 1930s towards closer economic co-operation between the three Benelux countries. An economic union had been formed between Belgium and Luxembourg by the convention concluded in Brussels in July 1921 and entered into force the following year. Dissolved in August 1940, the union was re-established in May 1945. After an unsuccessful attempt through the Ouchy Agreement (1932), the governments in exile of the Benelux countries made a fresh effort to advance mutual economic co-operation by a Customs Convention signed in London on 5 September 1944 and entered into force on 16 November 1944. This Convention was further defined and interpreted in a Protocol for the establishment of a customs union; it was signed in The Hague in March 1947 and came into force on 1 January 1948. The customs tariffs of the Belgium-Luxembourg Economic Union and of the Netherlands were thus superseded by the joint external tariff of the Benelux customs union. Further protocols (1947, 1950, 1953 and 1954) gradually expanded the scope of economic co-operation between the Benelux countries.

On 5 November 1955, a Convention for the establishment of a Benelux Interparliamentary Consultative Council, consisting of members of the three national parliaments, was signed in Brussels. In 1958, the Benelux countries decided to set up a full economic union (as envisaged by the Customs Convention of 1944 and the Protocol of 1947), and concluded the present Treaty. In the Preamble to the Treaty, the signatory countries expressly noted that the Rome Treaties of 1957 do not prevent particular

member countries from creating an economic union *inter se*.

In March 1965, in Brussels, the Benelux countries signed a Treaty creating the Benelux Court of Justice with both a contentious and advisory jurisdiction; the Court was established in Brussels on 11 May 1974.

Membership

Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands.

Objectives

With respect to their relations with third countries, the member countries: accept and pursue a joint policy in the field of foreign trade and of payments related thereto; jointly conclude treaties and conventions regarding foreign trade and the customs tariff; and conclude, either jointly or concurrently, treaties and conventions relating to payments in connection with foreign trade.

The provisions of the Treaty do not affect the existence and development of the economic union between Belgium and Luxembourg insofar as the objectives of such union are not attained by the application of the Treaty itself.

Structure

The organizational structure of the Union is rather elaborate and consists of the following institutions: the Committee of Ministers; the Council of Economic Union; the Committees and the Special Committees; the General Secretariat; Common Services; the Interparliamentary Consultative Council; the College of Arbitrators; the Court of Justice; and the Economic and Social Consultative Council.

The real executive power lies with the Committee of Ministers which is convened, under a six-month rotating presidency, about two times a year in a formal meeting in order to supervise the application of the Treaty and ensure the realization of its aims. Each member country appoints at least three government members (generally among the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Economic Affairs, Agriculture, Finance and Social Affairs). All decisions are taken unanimously, each country having one vote, but the abstention of one country does not prevent a decision being taken.

The Council of Economic Union, consisting of one chairman from each member country and of the presidents of the Committees, is the highest administrative body responsible for: co-ordinating the

activities of the Committees and Special Committees; putting into effect the relevant decisions of the Committee of Ministers; and submitting proposals to the Committee of Ministers.

The numerous Committees and the Special Committees, each within the limits of its competence, implement the relevant decisions of the Committee of Ministers, submit proposals and monitor the execution by national administrations of resolutions adopted.

The General Secretariat, located in Brussels, is headed by a Secretary-General of Dutch nationality, assisted by two deputies, one from Belgium and one from Luxembourg; all three are appointed and dismissed by the Committee of Ministers. The Secretariat services the Committee of Ministers, the Council of Economic Union and the Committees. Since 1985 it has also been servicing the Schengen Agreement concerning the movement of people across frontiers (including external border controls, asylum and immigration) for most member countries of the European Union (EU).

Common Services, including the Benelux Trademarks Office and the Benelux Designs Office, have executive powers in their respective fields.

The Interparliamentary Consultative Council, created by the Convention of 1955, is entrusted with advisory functions. This 'Benelux Parliament' – consisting of 49 members, 21 each from the Netherlands States-General and the Belgian Parliament and 7 from the Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies – holds three plenary sessions per year.

The College of Arbitrators, entrusted with the task of settling any disputes that may arise between member countries from the working of the Union, consists of six members (two from each member country) appointed by the Committee of Ministers. To date, no dispute has been brought before the College of Arbitrators.

The Court of Justice, composed of senior judges from the member countries, is designed to ensure uniformity in the interpretation of the legal rules common to the three members which are specified either in conventions or decisions of the Committee of Ministers. The College of Arbitrators suspends its function in any case where a matter of interpretation of such rules arises, pending a decision of the Court of Justice.

The Economic and Social Consultative Council consists of 27 members and 27 deputy members from representative economic and social organizations, each country supplying one third of the

number. It offers advice on its own initiative or upon specific request of the Committee of Ministers.

Activities

According to the basic provisions of the Treaty establishing the Union, nationals of each member country may freely enter and leave the territory of any other member country and are entitled to the same treatment as nationals of that country as regards: freedom of movement, sojourn and settlement; freedom to carry on a trade or occupation; capital transactions; conditions of employment; social security benefits; taxes and charges of any kind; exercise of civil rights as well as legal and judicial protection of their person, individual rights and interests.

Importation or exportation of goods between the territories of the member countries, irrespective of origin or destination, are freed of import, excise and any other duties, charges or dues of any kind as well as of prohibitions or restrictions of an economic or financial nature, such as quotas or currency restrictions. A common tariff with identical rates applies to goods coming from or destined for third countries. Restrictions concerning transfers of capital between the member countries are abolished; the rendering of services is also freed of taxes and charges of any kind. The member countries are bound to pursue a co-ordinated policy in the economic, financial and social fields.

The Union entails the free movement of persons, goods, capital and services between Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands and implies the co-ordination of economic, financial and social policies as well as the pursuit of a joint policy in economic and financial relations with third countries. The Benelux countries are therefore in a position to play a stronger role in the furthering of the process of wider European integration as pursued by the EU. The Union has brought substantial benefits to the economies of the member countries and enhanced their full participation in broader European institutions and initiatives.

The Committee of Ministers, meeting in November 1995, decided to refocus the activities of the Union in order to adjust to the progress being made in European integration and to the ethnic-linguistic reorganization of Belgium with the creation of three self-governing regions (Dutch-speaking Flanders, French-speaking Wallonia, and

bilingual Brussels). The Union's new priorities involve political co-operation, the internal market and economic co-operation, trans-frontier co-operation, and co-operation in police and judicial matters. The importance of the Benelux experience for an expanding EU and the need to address the new challenges adapting Benelux structures are the object of ongoing negotiations in view of the termination in 2010 of the founding Treaty.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Dutch, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: J.P.R.M. van Laarhoven

GENERAL-SECRETARIAT: 39 rue de la Régence,
1000 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 519 3811;
fax: +32 2 513 4206)

WEBSITE: <http://www.benelux.be>

PUBLICATIONS: *Benelux Newsletter*; *Benelux in the World* (statistical data)

REFERENCE: J. Meade, *Negotiations for Benelux* (Princeton, NJ, 1957)

Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC)

See **Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC)**.

Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB)

The Bank is intended to finance and promote regional projects and to provide other banking services to public and private sectors in the member countries.

Origin and development

The Bank, although legally and financially independent, is related to the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC) and contributes to the achievement of its basic goals. The Agreement establishing the Bank was signed in Tbilisi, Georgia on 30 June 1994 by countries participating in BSEC and entered into force on 24 January 1997. Following a resolution adopted by the first meeting of the Board of Governors on 6 April 1999, the Bank started operations on 1 June 1999. The initial authorized and subscribed capital of the Bank is SDR1 billion.

Membership

Member countries are Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Ukraine. The three largest shareholders are Greece, Russia and Turkey, each with 16.5 per cent of the total subscribed capital and the corresponding voting power. Participation is open to other multilateral banks and financial institutions. Observer status, intended for both countries and international institutions, has been established in June 2003.

Objectives

The purpose of the Bank is to contribute effectively to the transition process of member countries towards the economic prosperity of their peoples and to finance and promote regional economic and social infrastructure projects. The Bank is empowered to finance productive projects and enterprises in member countries and to assist in the promotion of intra-regional trade and investment. The Bank may enter co-financing with other financial institutions, invest in equity capital, make or participate in loans and provide technical assistance for the reconstruction or development of infrastructure, including environmental programmes.

Structure

All powers are vested in the Board of Governors composed of 11 members, one from each country. The general operations of the Bank are conducted

by the 11-member Board of Directors to which the Board of Governors delegates many of its powers. Each Director holds office for a renewable three-year term. The Bank's President is appointed for a four-year term by the Board of Governors deciding by simple majority that however must include a majority of the total voting power. The President is assisted by three Vice-Presidents. The Secretary General performs administrative functions.

Activities

A number of important projects in several member countries have already been financed by the Bank during its first period of operation.

External relations

The Bank has established co-operative links with other organizations of the Black Sea region. It was granted observer status by the World Bank in May 2000.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Hayrettin Kaplan

HEADQUARTERS: 1, Komnion Street,
Thessaloniki 54624, Greece (telephone: +30 2310
290400; fax: +30 2310 286590)

WEBSITE: <http://www.bstdb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Black Sea
Newsletter*

Cairns Group

The Group represents an alliance of major agricultural exporting countries – accounting for about one-third of the world's agricultural exports – with a view to promoting the liberalization of international agricultural trade.

Origin and development

The Group's inaugural meeting took place in August 1986 in Cairns, northern Queensland, Australia, with the participation of representatives from 14 countries. The coalition originated from the need to present a common front of agricultural exporters in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations held under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) – a body later succeeded by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The effectiveness of the role played during the negotiations of the Uruguay Round and the importance of the joint action subsequently carried on by the Group have induced participating countries, developed as well as developing, to continue and strengthen their co-operation in the effort to liberalize world agricultural trade.

Membership

The Group's varied membership – cutting across language, cultural and geographic barriers – currently includes 19 agricultural exporting countries: Argentina, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Thailand, Uruguay.

Objectives

The essential purpose of the Group is to bring about reforms in international agricultural trade with a view to achieving a fair and market-oriented agricultural trading system. More precisely the Group's objectives comprise the reduction of all tariffs (including tariff peaks), the elimination of all trade-distorting domestic subsidies and the introduction of clear rules to prevent circumvention of export subsidy commitments. The Group supports the principle of special and differential treatment for developing and small countries (including the least developed ones).

Structure

Ministerial meetings are the key decision-making body, operating on the basis of consensus.

Government officials at different levels prepare the agenda for the Ministers. Governments regularly consult farmer organizations in the individual member countries in order to frame the Group's policies and positions.

Activities

Since the conclusion of the Uruguay Round in 1994, the Group has contributed to the implementation of the agreements relating to agriculture within the framework of the WTO. Co-ordination among Group members has focused on a number of important issues including accession negotiations of new countries to WTO (in particular China and Taiwan and, more recently, Russia), the reform of the common agricultural policy of the European Community (EC) and the gradual elimination of agricultural export subsidies. The Group is actively working to ensure that agriculture negotiations within the WTO framework will ultimately place trade in agricultural goods on the same basis as trade in other goods.

CONTACT ADDRESS: c/o Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, R.G. Casey Bldg, John McEwen Crescent, Barton, ACT 2600, Australia

WEBSITE: <http://www.cairnsgroup.org>

Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

The Community aims to foster unity among peoples of the Caribbean through common or co-ordinated regional actions in spheres ranging from foreign policy to health, education and culture, communications, labour matters, transport, and economic, financial and trade relations. The main areas of activity of the Community are: economic co-operation through the Caribbean Single Market and Economy; functional co-operation in specific sectors and operation of certain common services; and co-ordination of foreign policies.

Origin and development

The basic legal instrument of the Community is the Treaty signed on 4 July 1973 at Chaguaramas, Trinidad, by the Prime Ministers of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago; the Treaty entered into effect on 1 August 1973. Eight other Commonwealth Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada,

Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) acceded to full membership during 1974. The Treaty was amended in 1976 to facilitate the admission of the Bahamas that took place in July 1983. A series of nine Protocols amending the Chaguaramas Treaty was adopted in the late 1990s in order to strengthen regional integration. The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas establishing the Caribbean Community including the Caricom single market and economy was signed on 5 July 2001 and entered into force on 1 January 2006.

During the 1950s efforts had been made to promote Commonwealth Caribbean regionalism, resulting in the establishment of the short-lived Federation of the West Indies (January 1958); proposals for a customs union were also put forward. An agreement establishing a regional institution, the Caribbean Organization, was signed in June 1960 in Washington. During the 1960s self-government was introduced and/or gradually extended until many of the former British colonies acquired full independence within the Commonwealth. The West Indies Federation was dissolved in February 1962 after the withdrawal of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. This substantially weakened the Caribbean Organization and its founding agreement was formally ended in 1965. Under the West Indies Act 1967, new constitutional arrangements raised Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent to the rank of Associated States of the UK.

Initiatives for freeing trade among Commonwealth Caribbean countries had led to the signing in April 1968, at St John's, Antigua, of the agreement establishing the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), following the pattern of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA). The four original signatories (Antigua, Barbados, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago) were joined, between May and August 1968, by Jamaica, Grenada, Dominica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent, Saint Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, Montserrat and in May 1971 by Belize. In June 1968, seven small lesser developed countries of the subregion, initially reluctant to join CARIFTA, had formed their own customs union, the East Caribbean Common Market (ECCM). An autonomous financial institution, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), was set up in 1969 with the participation of both regional and non-regional members. A generalized consen-

sus over the need to deepen and improve the integration process and the ensuing negotiations made it possible to replace CARIFTA with the broader and more advanced CARICOM.

Membership

Full members include 15 Caribbean countries. Haiti was granted provisional membership on 4 July 1998 and on 3 July 2002 became the first French-speaking country to join the Community as a full member. The British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands were granted associate membership in July 1991, followed by Anguilla in July 1999, the Cayman Islands in May 2002, and Bermuda in July 2003. A number of Caribbean islands, Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela have observer status.

Suriname, hitherto an observer, became a full member in February 1995, the first non-English speaking country to join the Community. Free trade agreements have been negotiated with the Dominican Republic and Cuba respectively.

Objectives

The Community's objectives include: improved standards of living; full employment of labour and other factors of production; co-ordinated economic development; expansion of trade and economic relations with third countries. Foreign policy co-ordination is dealt with by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of independent member countries. Functional co-operation is directed towards more efficient operation of common services and activities, promotion of greater understanding among peoples of the region and advancement of their development, and intensification of activities in areas such as health, education, transportation and telecommunications.

Structure

The institutional framework of the Community has been reorganized by Protocol I (amending the Chaguaramas Treaty) adopted in February 1997 and signed the following July. The Community's functions and decision-making powers bear no supranational features and are fairly limited by the unanimity principle which is applicable in any delicate case.

The Conference of Heads of Government, commonly called the Conference (whose meetings have been held annually since 1983), is the supreme organ responsible for the determination of basic policies, including relations with third countries

and international organizations, and the establishment of financial arrangements to meet the Community's expenses. At a special meeting, held in Trinidad and Tobago in October 1992, the Conference decided to establish the Bureau of the Conference, a four-member body with competence to initiate proposals, update consensus, mobilize action and secure the implementation of Community decisions. The Bureau, in operation since December 1992, consists of the current Chairman of the Conference, rotating on a six-monthly basis, his immediate predecessor and his scheduled successor plus the Secretary-General as chief executive officer.

The Community Council of Ministers, commonly called the Council, replaced the Common Market Council of Ministers according to the decision taken at the October 1992 meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government. The Council, which held its inaugural meeting in February 1998, consists of ministers responsible for Community affairs and any other minister designated by member countries. It is responsible for the development of Community strategic planning and co-ordination in the areas of economic integration, functional co-operation and external relations.

The two principal organs of the Community are assisted in their functions by four Ministerial Councils: the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED); the Council for Foreign and Community Relations (COFCOR); the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD); the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP).

The Secretariat (successor to the Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Secretariat) is located in Georgetown, Guyana. It performs technical and administrative functions, takes appropriate action on decisions of the various organs, initiates and carries out studies on regional co-operation and integration and provides services requested by member countries in order to achieve the Community's objectives. The Secretary-General is appointed by the Conference on the recommendation of the Council for a term not exceeding five years and may be reappointed.

A Caribbean Court of Justice has been established to settle disputes within the Community.

A number of institutions have been set up within the Community's framework such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA); the Caribbean Meteorological Organization (CMO); the Caribbean Food Corporation (CFC); and the

Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI). The Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians (ACCP), also an institution of the Community, is a consultative body designed as a forum to discuss regional issues and increase public and private awareness.

A number of regional bodies, having their own constitutive documents and enjoying legal autonomy, are recognized as Associate Institutions of the Community. Besides the already-cited Caribbean Development Bank, these bodies include: the University of Guyana (UG); the University of the West Indies (UWI); and the Caribbean Law Institute/Caribbean Law Institute Centre (CLI/CLIC).

Activities

In the context of the Single Market and Economy, the Community has made several efforts to modernize and harmonize national laws for trade, finance and investment as well as the larger macroeconomic policy framework. The Single Market and Economy should represent the platform for the full participation of the Community into the global economy.

As regards trade liberalization, the Community inherited from its predecessor CARIFTA a free trade pattern with numerous exceptions whose complete elimination has proved difficult. The four more advanced members took the first step towards the creation of a common external tariff in August 1973; longer and more flexible schedules were envisaged for the less developed countries. As well as through the acceleration of intra-area trade, integration is promoted through the harmonization of economic policies and the establishment and operation of regional industrial and agricultural projects. This implies, *inter alia*, some form of control over foreign investments in key sectors. Agreements have been concluded to harmonize fiscal incentives to industry and to avoid double taxation.

In the last half of the 1970s, most of the countries of the Community (particularly Jamaica and Guyana) were adversely affected by severe economic disturbances, which in some cases led to the introduction of stabilization programmes and the tightening of import restrictions. Moreover, the less developed members showed a growing dissatisfaction and claimed a more equitable share of the benefits of integration. In order to co-ordinate financial and technical assistance, the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development was formed in late 1977 by Caribbean countries, donor

countries and international development institutions, under the chairmanship of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).

The Community has made intensive efforts to formulate long-term solutions to the severe energy problems faced by most member countries. In order to ease serious balance-of-payments difficulties, a Multilateral Clearing Facility (MCF) was put into effect in June 1977, while other funds were made available for emergency payments.

In June 1981, the seven lesser developed members participating in the ECCM established the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). Severe difficulties hindered the development of Caribbean trade and integration during the first half of the 1980s. A Group of Experts, set up in 1980, drew up a strategy for the decade with respect to production, export, productivity, marketing, energy policy and air transport. Other meetings of experts were held to review the key components of Caribbean economy.

In July 1984, the Conference of Heads of Government, meeting in Nassau, Bahamas, called for structural adjustment in the economies of the member countries with a view to expanding production and reducing imports and set new target dates for the implementation of the common external tariff. An unsuccessful attempt was also made at re-launching the activities of the MCF which had collapsed in 1983 after having exceeded its credit limit. In July 1986 the Conference agreed to replace the MCF with a Caribbean Export Bank but the plan was ultimately shelved because of the lack of adequate financing. The Conference held in 1989 adopted a series of measures intended to remove by the early 1990s the remaining barriers to the establishment of a single Caribbean market and set new detailed deadlines which, however, were repeatedly postponed. In 1989 it was also decided to set up a 15-member West Indian Commission to explore new avenues to regional political and economic integration. Between July 1990 and July 1992 the Commission prepared a report recommending the strengthening of the integration process of the Community and the setting up of a larger body, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) which was actually established in July 1994. The Community held in February 1995 a joint meeting with representatives of the OECS to expand region-wide co-operation and prepare for the new challenges of globalization. At the July 1997 Summit – held in Montego Bay, Jamaica – Haiti was accepted as a full member of the Community. At the same meeting,

Protocol II to the Chaguaramas Treaty was adopted with a view to achieving a single market. By early 1999, Protocol II was provisionally applied by all member countries. Further amendments to the Chaguaramas Treaty were introduced in July 1998 with the opening for signature of a number of Protocols regarding, *inter alia*, agriculture and industrial policy.

In spite of economic and financial constraints, the Community has played a significant role in promoting broader understanding and increased trade and economic relations in the Caribbean. On the other hand, recurring disputes in the region may have a negative impact on the integration prospects until equitable and lasting solutions are found.

External relations

The Community has enjoyed observer status at the UN General Assembly since 1992 and has established close ties with other UN bodies and regional agencies. The Community's member countries belonging to the group of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states have a special relationship with the European Union (EU) under the Cotonou Agreement which succeeded in June 2000 the fourth Lomé Convention. The Community has observer status in the Rio Group, set up in 1987 to provide a permanent mechanism for joint political action of Latin American countries.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Edwin W. Carrington

HEADQUARTERS: Bank of Guyana Building, PO Box 10827, Georgetown, Guyana (telephone: +592 222 0001; fax: +592 222 0171)

WEBSITE: <http://www.caricom.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *CARICOM Perspective* (annual); *CARICOM View* (occasional)

REFERENCES: H.J. Geiser, P. Alleyne and C. Gajraj, *Legal Problems of Caribbean Integration* (Leiden, 1976); A.W. Axline, *Caribbean Integration. The Politics of Regionalism* (London, 1979); A.R. Carnegie, 'Commonwealth Caribbean Regionalism: Legal Aspects', *Year Book of World Affairs*, 33 (1979), 180–200; A.J. Payne, *The Politics of the Caribbean Community 1961–79* (Manchester, 1980); K.O. Hall (ed.), *The Caribbean Community: Beyond Survival* (Kingston, 2001); S. Nicholls *et al.*, *Trade and Economic Relations between the Caribbean*

Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Common Market (CACM) (Saint Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, 2002); K.O. Hall (ed.), *Integrate or Perish: Perspectives of the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community and Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, 1963–2002* (Kingston, 2nd edn, 2003)

Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

The Bank aims to contribute to the harmonious economic growth and development of member countries in the Caribbean and to foster economic co-operation and integration by financing investment projects and programmes, with 'special and urgent regard' to the needs of its less developed members.

Origin and development

The agreement establishing the Bank was signed on 18 October 1969 at Kingston, Jamaica, and entered into effect on 26 January 1970 when the Bank started operations in Barbados. The agreement was subsequently revised twice; the first amendments came into force on 2 September 1976 and the second on 24 June 1985. The creation of an autonomous financial body was part of the efforts towards Commonwealth Caribbean co-operation as shown by the establishment of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) in 1968. In the early 1970s CARIFTA was succeeded by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The Bank is recognized, under the Treaty establishing CARICOM, as an Associate Institution of the Community since it is contributing to the Caribbean integration process.

Membership

Membership currently consists of 26 countries of which 21 are regional and five non-regional members. More precisely, membership comprises the countries participating in CARICOM and other Commonwealth Caribbean countries (Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands) plus Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela as regional members, and Canada, China, Germany, Italy and the UK as non-regional non-borrowing members. Haiti formally joined in January 2007. France, a founder member of the Bank, withdrew in 2000.

Objectives

The Bank, as the leading Caribbean development finance institution, aims towards the systematic

reduction of poverty in Borrowing Member Countries (BMCs) through social and economic development. While the Bank's ordinary operations embrace all of BMCs, the major part of its special operations covers the less developed member countries. The Bank helps finance capital infrastructure and investment projects, large and small, public and private, in the productive sectors of the economy, particularly in the less developed countries, as well as regional integration projects in agriculture and air and sea transportation. The main areas covered by Bank lending are: agriculture and rural development (credits to private farmers and loans to governments for infrastructural projects); manufacturing industries (loans to industrialists, development corporations and other agencies); tourism promotion (loans to hotel operators and governments); and education (loans to governments for the development of higher education, teachers' training and technical and vocational training).

Structure

The Bank's highest decision-making organ is the Board of Governors, appointed by governments and meeting annually; voting power is roughly proportional to shares subscribed, with a slight weighting in favour of the smaller members. The Board of Governors may delegate most of its powers to the Board of Directors, main exceptions being the admission of new members, changes in capital stock and amendments of the Charter. The Directors, currently numbering 17 (12 representing the regional members and five the non-regional members), are selected by the Board of Governors for a renewable two-year period. The Board of Directors, meeting six times a year, is in charge of the overall policy and management of the operations of the Bank. The President, elected by the Board of Governors for a renewable five-year term, is responsible for the organization and operation of the Bank, under the direction of the Board of Directors of which he is Chairman.

Activities

The Bank operates with its ordinary capital resources; in addition, a Special Development Fund and other Special Funds have been set up for specific purposes such as development of small farming, livestock production, technical assistance and housing. The original authorized capital stock amounted to \$50 million, of which \$25 million paid-up and \$25 million callable. The authorized capital

has been repeatedly increased to face the pressing needs especially of the less developed member countries. Non-regional members may hold not more than 40 per cent and regional members not less than 60 per cent.

As at 31 December 2006, ordinary capital resources amounted to \$925.9 million. As of 30 April 2007, the total subscribed capital (not including \$56.4 million additional subscriptions) amounted to \$656.5 million, of which \$143.8 million paid-up and \$512.8 million callable. The largest shareholders are Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Canada and the UK. The US, which is not a member, is the largest contributor to the Bank's Special Funds Resources. Among other non-member contributors to the resources of the Bank have been the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria and Sweden.

Financial support has been secured from various governments and institutions, both regional and extra-regional. Credits have been granted to the Bank by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the European Union (EU). Lending from the Bank's ordinary capital resources is subject to stringent criteria which are unlikely to be fully met by applicants from less developed countries. In such cases, the Bank may grant loans on non-commercial terms through a soft window provided by its Special Funds resources earmarked for the benefit of less developed members. In 1990 the decision was adopted to create a Special Development Fund of \$124 million to make or to guarantee loans of high developmental priority calling for longer maturities and lower interest rates than those adopted for ordinary operations; the Fund's resources amounted to \$644.7 million at the end of 2006.

Despite occasional criticism and the exit of France, the Bank has played a significant role in the process of Caribbean integration by financing agricultural, industrial and infrastructural development. In several cases the Bank has effectively operated as a corrective mechanism in favour of the less industrialized and less competitive member countries.

External relations

The Bank's operations have been considerably smoothed by its close working relations with CARICOM and several financial institutions within and outside the Caribbean.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Dr Compton Bourne

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 408, Wildey, St Michael, Barbados (telephone: +246 431 1600; fax: +246 426 7269)

WEBSITE: <http://www.caribank.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *CDB News* (quarterly)

REFERENCE: C. Hardy, *The Caribbean Development Bank* (London, 1995)

Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI)

[Banco Centroamericano de Integración Económica (BCIE)]

The Bank stimulates and supports efforts towards Central American economic integration by financing public and private investment projects particularly related to industrialization, infrastructure and the promotion of reciprocal trade.

Origin and development

The agreement establishing the Bank was signed on 13 December 1960, in Managua, by El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. These countries were also contracting parties to the General Treaty of Central American Economic Integration which laid the foundations for the Central American Common Market (CACM). Although created as a separate and autonomous body, the Bank was intended to act within the framework of the Common Market. The founding agreement entered into effect on 31 May 1961 and the Bank started operations in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Costa Rica joined the Bank on 23 September 1963. A modified founding agreement – allowing the membership of extra-regional countries – was signed on 2 September 1989 in Managua and entered into force on 20 January 1992. Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Taiwan have since joined the Bank.

The Bank has become a regional institution within the framework of the Central American Integration System (SICA).

Membership

Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua are regional members and Argentina,

Colombia, Mexico, Spain and Taiwan non-regional members. The Dominican Republic, Belize and Panama were accepted as non-regional members and beneficiary countries between 2004 and 2005.

Objectives

The Bank is intended to finance: infrastructural projects for the completion of existing regional systems and the reduction of disparities in basic sectors, excluding undertakings of merely local or national scope; long-term investment projects in industries of a regional character; co-ordinated projects related to specialization in agriculture and livestock; enterprises wishing to improve their efficiency and adjust to growing competition; other productive projects concerning economic complementation and the development of Central American trade.

Structure

The Bank's structure consists of the Board of Governors (composed of the Economic Ministers and the Presidents of the Central Banks of member countries meeting annually), and of five Executive Directors including the Executive President. The Executive President is the Bank's highest-ranking officer in charge of conducting the administration and ensuring compliance with the decisions adopted by the Board of Governors and Directors.

Activities

The Bank operates with its ordinary capital resources; several funds for special operations have been set up. The authorized capital stock initially amounting to \$20 million was gradually increased to reach \$2 billion by 2005. As of 31 December 2005, the paid-in capital amounted to \$384.4 million. Financial support has been secured from several public and private sources and international and national financial institutions operating within and outside Latin America. The Bank has been financing the private sector since 1991 through credit lines, loans to small and middle-sized enterprises and direct co-financed credit. In November 1993, the Board of Governors approved the direct financing of investment projects, either as co-financer or co-investor. The Bank's future role will largely remain dependent on concrete results achieved by continuing effort towards subregional integration. During 2005 the Bank established the Evaluation and Follow-Up System to the new 2004–2009 Institutional Strategy. The three institutional strategic themes for

2004–2009 concern: poverty reduction (basic services and education); regional integration (roads, electricity and telecommunications); and globalization (strengthening national and regional institutions, improving competitiveness and creating a better investment climate).

EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT: Harry E. Brautigam

HEADQUARTERS: Edificio Sede BCIE, Bulevar Suyapa, P.O. Box 772, Tegucigalpa, Honduras (telephone: +504 240 2243; fax: +504 240 2185)

WEBSITE: <http://www.bcie.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *CABEI Today* (news bulletin); *Revista de la integración*

REFERENCE: F. González Davison, *Fostering Development: CABEI 40th Anniversary* (Tegucigalpa, 2001)

Central American Integration System

[Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana] (SICA)

The System was established in the early 1990s to oversee political and economic co-operation efforts among six countries of the Central American subregion. Belize recently joined the System while the Dominican Republic has signed an association agreement. All Central American bodies for co-operation and integration operate within the framework of the System.

Origin and development

Since the early 1950s, attempts to establish a Central American common market as a means of transcending national frontiers, stimulating foreign trade and reducing heavy economic and financial dependence on outside partners, had been encouraged by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The move towards closer economic co-operation received additional impetus from the inability of the Organization of Central American States (ODECA) – whose charter had been in force since 1952 – to make headway on the political plane. A Multilateral Treaty on Free Trade and Central American Economic Integration was signed in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, on 10 June 1958 by all ODECA members, with the exception of Costa Rica which joined in

1962. A Convention on the Legal Regime for Central American Integration Industries was also adopted at the same meeting. In 1959 the Central American Convention on Equalization of Import Duties and Charges was signed with a view to establishing a common external tariff. Additional agreements concerning specific sectors were reached during the following years. Further negotiations led to the signing of a Treaty of Economic Association in February 1960 by El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. These countries and Nicaragua concluded the General Treaty of Central American Economic Integration, establishing the Central American Common Market (CACM), in Managua, Nicaragua, on 13 December 1960. Costa Rica joined in July 1962. A Permanent Secretariat (Secretaría de Integración Económica Centroamericana – SIECA), based in Guatemala City and performing technical and administrative functions, started operations on 12 October 1961. The General Treaty entered into force on 4 June 1961 for a 20-year period; in July 1980, the contracting parties declared that the General Treaty, due to expire in June 1981, would continue in operation until agreement was reached on a new integration scheme.

During their meeting of December 1960, the contracting parties to the General Treaty had also set up, under a separate agreement, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) as an autonomous body.

The basic objectives of the General Treaty with regard to trade liberalization and the creation of a common external tariff were largely achieved by 1969 but the integration process virtually came to a halt, mainly because of the Honduran disengagement as a result of its war with El Salvador.

Recurrent political crises due to social and other factors, long-standing rivalries and conflicts of economic interests made it impossible to carry out the liberalization and co-operation programme during the 1970s. Attempts in 1975 and 1976 to establish an Economic and Social Community of Central America as a successor to CACM also failed. The sharp decrease in intra-regional trade in the first half of the 1980s further reduced the possibilities of reviving the Central American integration process. Although regional meetings at the ministerial level took place more or less regularly, any significant progress was hindered by heavy external and intra-regional debts, protectionist measures by major trade partners and a number of other economic and non-economic factors.

In the second half of the 1980s, the gradual return to peace and democracy in Central America made it possible to relaunch the integration process at the subregional level. In May 1986 the Presidents of the five CACM countries approved the creation of a Central American Parliament (Parlamento Centroamericano – Parlacen) whose founding agreement was concluded in 1987 in Guatemala; a Protocol was signed in September 1990 in order to allow the establishment of the Parliament with the participation of representatives from only three countries. In fact, when Parlacen first met, on 28 October 1991, only the representatives of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras were present. Panama was subsequently invited to join Parlacen and in October 1993 signed a Protocol to that effect.

In June 1990, CACM members stressed their renewed willingness to implement a free trade agreement by 1992, and the following December started the drafting of a framework agreement to set up a regional common market. In July 1991, with the participation of Panama, member countries formally agreed on a timetable for trade liberalization for most agricultural products by the end of 1991 and for substantial tariff cuts on most non-agricultural products by the end of 1992.

On 13 December 1991, the presidents of the CACM countries and Panama signed the Protocol of Tegucigalpa to the Charter of ODECA creating a new body, the Central American Integration System (SICA). SICA has its own General Secretariat (SG-SICA), located in El Salvador. The System – which superseded ODECA and was officially launched on 1 February 1993 – aims to supervise and organize efforts at political, economic, social and cultural co-ordination within the subregion and towards international organizations and forums. The functions performed by SIECA in the area of economic integration were to continue within the newly created System.

On 29 October 1993, the presidents of the six Central American countries, meeting at Guatemala City, signed a Protocol to the 1960 General Treaty. The Protocol of Guatemala lays the institutional foundations for the Subsystem of Central American Economic Integration within the framework of the Central American Integration System. It also establishes SIECA as a technical and administrative body acting as the secretariat of the other bodies of the Economic Subsystem and ensuring co-ordination with the SG-SICA.

Membership

Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama. The Dominican Republic is an associate member. Mexico enjoys the status of regional observer, while Spain and Taiwan are non-regional observers. Belize and Panama, despite being full members of the System as such, do not belong to the Economic Subsystem.

Objectives

The foremost goal of the System is the establishment of Central America as a 'region of peace, freedom, democracy and development'. The promotion of democracy and respect for human rights in the region are to be reached through the creation of a system of welfare and economic and social justice, the establishment of an economic union and a strong financial system, the instauration of a new ecological order, the insertion of the subregion in the world economy and the strengthening of its international role.

Structure

The organs of the Central American Integration System are the Summit of the Presidents, the Council of Ministers, the Executive Committee, and the General Secretariat. The SG-SICA, under a Secretary-General, performs functions of co-ordination and support of the process of regional integration according to the relevant treaties. The institutional framework is completed by the Central American Parliament and the Central American Court of Justice based, respectively, in Guatemala City and Managua.

The main organ of the Subsystem of Central American Economic Integration, as established by the Protocol of Guatemala, is the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration, consisting of the Economic Ministers and of the Presidents of Central Banks of member countries. Heads of other ministries are involved according to the specific topics under discussion. SIECA, under a Secretary-General appointed by the Council of Ministers of Economic Integration, is organized in three General Directorates in charge, respectively, of Integration and Trade, Legal Affairs, and Information Technologies. CABEI, set up in 1960, has now become an institution of the Subsystem.

Activities

Despite an abundance of integration plans and programmes in a variety of sectors, actual progress

has been fairly limited owing to several factors, including natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes. Efforts are currently being undertaken to simplify and streamline the complex organizational structure existing under the umbrella of the System. A Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America was signed by the Presidents of the six countries of the subregion at San Pedro Sula, Honduras, in December 1995 with a view to achieving a proper 'balance of forces', intensifying the fight against trafficking of drugs and arms, and reintegrating refugees and displaced persons. The creation of a common military force for peacekeeping operations has also been considered. The economic integration agenda for the coming years includes the implementation of measures for facilitating trade in services and foreign investment, regulations concerning intellectual property, and the protection of the environment.

External relations

Regular ministerial conferences between the countries of Central America (with Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela as co-operating countries) and the then European Economic Community (EEC) began at San José, Costa Rica, in 1984. The conclusion of an agreement with the EEC in November 1985 provided Central America with support to pursue subregional integration plans.

The six countries belonging to the San José group signed a new framework co-operation agreement with the EC in February 1993. The signature of the agreement (entered into force on 1 March 1999) took place on the occasion of the annual San José ministerial conference. The political and economic dialogue between the two regions has been steadily developing over the past several years and should lead to the conclusion, in due time, of an Association Agreement between Central America and the European Union (EU).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Spanish

SECRETARIAT OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN INTEGRATION SYSTEM (SG-SICA)

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Aníbal Enrique Quiñónez Abarca

HEADQUARTERS: Boulevard Orden de Malta 470, Urbanización Santa Elena, Antiguo Cuscatlán, San Salvador, El Salvador (telephone: +503 2248 8800; fax: +503 2248 8899)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sica.int> (site established by the General Secretariat of the System);
<http://www.parlacen.org.gt> (site established by the Central American Parliament)

SECRETARIAT OF THE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION SUBSYSTEM (SIECA)

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Haroldo Rodas Melgar

HEADQUARTERS: 4a Avenida 10–25, Zona 14, PO Box 1237, 01901 Guatemala City, Guatemala (telephone: +502 2368 6151; fax: +502 2368 1071).

WEBSITE: <http://www.sieca.org.gt>

PUBLICATIONS: *Carta informativa* (monthly); *Cuadernos de la SIECA* (twice a year)

REFERENCES: J. Cochrane, *The Politics of Regional Integration: The Central American Case* (New Orleans, 1969); F. Parkinson, 'International Economic Integration in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Survey', *Year Book of World Affairs*, 31 (1977) 236–56; S. Nicholls *et al.*, *Trade and Economic Relations between the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Central American Common Market (CACM)* (Saint Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago, 2002)

Central Asia Regional Economic Co-operation (CAREC)

FOUNDED: 1997 at the initiative of the Asian Development Bank (AsDB) to foster economic co-operation in order to promote economic growth and raise living standards in the Central Asia region

OBJECTIVES: To improve living standards and to reduce poverty in member countries through more efficient and effective regional economic co-operation in the priority areas of energy, trade facilitation, trade policy and transport

MEMBERS: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Russia has been invited to join. Besides the AsDB, other multilateral institutions provide support: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank

SECRETARIAT: Central Asia Regional Economic Co-operation Unit (CARECU) at AsDB

Headquarters in Manila (telephone: +632 6325857; fax: +632 6362387)

WEBSITE: <http://www.adb.org/Carec>

PUBLICATIONS: *CAREC News* (quarterly newsletter); reports and policy papers

Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine (CCNR)

The Commission is among the oldest existing international organizations in Europe.

Origin and development

The principle of freedom of navigation on international waterways was established by the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna in 1815. In an annex to the Final Act, the creation of a Central Commission for the river Rhine was envisaged, 'in order to ensure a precise control of the enforcement of common rules as well as to provide an authority used as a means of communication between riparian states with regard to all aspects of navigation'. The first session of the Commission was held at Mainz, Germany, on 15 August 1816. Uniform principles for navigation on the Rhine were adopted through the Convention of Mainz signed on 31 March 1831. The evolution of the main characteristics of river navigation in various fields made it necessary to sign a new international instrument, the Convention of Mannheim, on 17 October 1868. The seat of the Commission that had been transferred from Mainz to Mannheim in 1861 was moved to Strasbourg in 1920 and a permanent secretariat was set up. The Mannheim Convention was amended in Strasbourg on 17 October 1963 and integrated into the Revised Convention for Rhine Navigation. Further amendments and protocols have gradually adapted the Rhine regulations to the evolution of needs and technology.

Membership

Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Objectives

The purposes of the Commission are to ensure freedom and security of navigation and equality of treatment to ships of all nations, to draw up navigational rules, to standardize customs regulations, to arbitrate in disputes involving river traffic and to approve plans for river maintenance work.

Structure

The delegation of each member country consists of four representatives (called Commissioners) and two substitutes (Deputy-Commissioners). Commissioners meet twice a year, in spring and autumn, for the general assembly of the Commission. Sessions are chaired by the President appointed for a two-year term, the post alternating between member countries in alphabetical order. Resolutions are adopted unanimously.

Activities

The Rhine represents today the most important inland waterway in Europe, carrying about 300 million tons of goods yearly, over three times the volume transported on the Danube. The opening of the Rhine-Main-Danube Canal – a German artificial waterway in operation since September 1992 for which charges are levied – has brought about a substantial expansion of traffic and increased benefits for the shipping companies. This has resulted in the need for an intensification of the co-operation between the Commission and the Danube Commission on harmonization of the shipping regimes and other priority technical, commercial and legal issues. The Commission has established an administrative centre for social security of boatmen and a tripartite body dealing with labour conditions.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Dutch, French, German

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Jean-Marie Woehrling

HEADQUARTERS: Palais du Rhin, Place de la République 2, 67082 Strasbourg, France (telephone: +33 3 8852 2010; fax: +33 3 8832 1072)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ccr-zkr.org>

PUBLICATION: *Annual Report*

Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA)

The original Agreement and subsequent amendments involve countries in Central and Southeastern Europe gradually implementing trade liberalization among themselves and co-ordinating policies towards major European and international economic organizations.

Origin and development

The origins of the Agreement are to be found in the attempts at institutionalizing triangular co-operation

which were undertaken at the Bratislava Summit meeting of April 1990, convened to discuss the 'return to Europe' of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The accession of Czechoslovakia the following May to the grouping which then became known as the 'Pentagonal' (already including Hungary as well as Austria, Italy and Yugoslavia) seemed to jeopardize efforts to establish a genuine Central European institution. Nonetheless, the Heads of State of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland, meeting on 15 February 1991 in Visegrád, Hungary, adopted a Declaration on the co-operation of the three countries 'on the road to European integration'. Poland's entry in June 1991 into the 'Hexagonal' – renamed in 1992 the Central European Initiative (CEI), dropping any reference to the actual number of members – did not affect the prospects of the Visegrád Group which held another Summit in Kraków in October 1991. The Summit Declaration identified a number of areas for possible co-operation and stressed once more the aspiration of the signatory countries to an association with the European Community (EC) and to an extension of relations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The CEFTA Agreement was signed on 21 December 1992 in Kraków by the then Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland to undertake concerted trade liberalization efforts in view of their prospective entry into the European Union (EU) and to contribute to the establishment of a new democratic order in Central and Eastern Europe. Czechoslovakia split in the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. Slovenia joined in 1996, followed by Romania in 1997, Bulgaria in 1999, Croatia in 2003, Macedonia in 2006 and by five more countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia) in 2007.

Membership

Present membership consists of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia (also including Kosovo through the UN Interim Administration in Kosovo – UNMIK). Former members were Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Objectives

The Visegrád Declaration emphasized the goal of 'total integration into the European political, economic, security and legislative order' and set up

a new mechanism for the co-ordination of policies of the participating countries. The so-called Visegrád Group was therefore created to enhance co-operation with the EC and develop a free trade zone among its members.

Activities

The original CEFTA Agreement of 1992 came into effect on 1 March 1993, eliminating duties on approximately 40 per cent of industrial goods. The 'Protocols of Budapest' in 1994 represented a substantial step towards further trade liberalization, bringing the proportion of duty-free imports to over 50 per cent. At the Brno Summit on 11 September 1995 the decision was taken to complete the free trade zone by the year 2001 (at a later date in the case of Poland). Amendments were also adopted at Brno to the original CEFTA Agreement. In 1996 duties were abolished on 80 per cent of industrial goods while the gradual reduction of agricultural duties continued. On 1 January 1997, duties on industrial goods were completely abolished, except for a number of 'sensitive' items, with a resulting rapid growth in regional trade. Further amendments to the CEFTA Agreement were introduced at the meeting held in Bled on 4 July 2003.

On 1 May 2004, five CEFTA countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) joined the EU as full members followed by Bulgaria and Romania on 1 January 2007. With only Croatia and Macedonia left, the decision was adopted to extend CEFTA to the rest of the western Balkans. A further set of amendments to the CEFTA Agreement in order to take account of the latest developments was therefore agreed upon on 19 December 2006 in Bucharest. The Agreement, generally referred to as 'CEFTA 2006', aims to establish a free trade zone in the region by 31 December 2010.

Central European Initiative (CEI)

The Initiative aims at facilitating the integration of Central and Eastern countries into Western European structures through the planning, financing and implementation of joint projects and programmes in specific fields.

Origin and development

The Initiative originated with the 'Quadrilateral', a four-nation grouping established, as a result of an

Italian proposal, on 11 November 1989 in Budapest by the Foreign Ministers of Austria, Hungary, Italy and the then Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. According to the founding declaration, the four countries intended to encourage 'quadrilateral co-operation in different spheres of social and economic life', with special emphasis on economic and scientific-technical relations and on co-operation in the fields of energy, industry, environmental protection, transport, tourism, culture and education. The subregional approach was originally conceived as an additional institutional mechanism to advance co-operation within Central Europe involving, on an equal footing, a neutral country belonging to the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) such as Austria, a member of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA/Comecon) such as Hungary, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Communities such as Italy, and a member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) such as Yugoslavia. The post-1989 events in the region, including the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the division of Czechoslovakia, set the stage for a reorientation of the grouping with a greatly enlarged membership and new tasks involving the political, security and human rights spheres.

Following the accession of the then Czechoslovakia on 20 May 1990, the grouping became known as the 'Pentagonal', and after the entry of Poland on 27 July 1991 as the 'Hexagonal'. The Belgrade government had assumed the rotating one-year presidency of the Hexagonal grouping in July 1991 but Yugoslavia was formally suspended the following November while a number of its former constituent republics applied for full membership. Austria then took on the presidency for the calendar year 1992. The grouping was formally renamed the Central European Initiative, abandoning any numerical designation, by the Conference of Heads of Government held in Vienna in July 1992 when Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia were admitted as full members. The Czech Republic and Slovakia joined the Initiative as independent countries in January 1993 followed by Macedonia in July. Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine – previously associate members – became full members in 1996; Serbia and Montenegro have also joined. Several other countries have shown interest in establishing close links with the Initiative.

Membership

The Initiative includes 18 countries in the Adriatic, the Danube and the Baltic. A regular exchange of information takes place with Russia.

Objectives

The Initiative provides a general framework for co-operation between member countries with a view to fostering the co-ordinated implementation of joint projects in the fields where additional advantages can be obtained from the subregional harmonization of policies. Future activities will be focused towards assistance to the least advanced member countries as well as those having the greatest need for accelerated economic development or recovery.

Structure

The Conference of Heads of Government and the Conference of Foreign Ministers are the organs setting guidelines for co-operation in the selected areas. The meetings of Heads of Government are organized, at yearly intervals, by the country holding the rotating chairmanship. Foreign Ministers initially met every six months and annually since 1995. Meetings of the parliamentarians from the member countries take place annually within the frameworks of the Parliamentary Committee and of the Parliamentary Assembly. The Committee of National Co-ordinators, meeting regularly at monthly intervals, is entrusted with the responsibility to ensure the link between Working Groups, operating at both ministerial and expert levels, and the national administrations; it also prepares the agendas for the meetings of the Heads of Government and the Foreign Ministers. Special meetings of other ministers take place whenever necessary. Project groups are established in co-operation with enterprises, banks and international agencies. The Initiative maintains an Executive Secretariat in Trieste, Italy. A Secretariat for CEI Projects has been operating since the early 1990s at the London headquarters of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) with the task of assisting the transformation of project ideas into bankable projects.

Activities

The first summit of the Heads of Government of the then Pentagonal grouping took place in Venice on 1 August 1990. The following summits were held in Dubrovnik (27 July 1991); Vienna (18 July

1992); Budapest (16–17 July 1993); Trieste (16 July 1994); Warsaw (6–7 October 1995); Graz (9 November 1996); Sarajevo (28–29 November 1997); Zagreb (20–21 November 1998); Prague (5–6 November 1999); Budapest (24–25 November 2000); Trieste (23 November 2001); Skopje (15 November 2002); Warsaw (21 November 2003); Portoroz (26 November 2004); Piestani, Slovakia (25 November 2005); Tirana (24 November 2006). The last Summit took place in Sofia on 27 November 2007.

Besides the results achieved in specific sectors which are the responsibility of the Working Groups, the Initiative acted as a forum for dealing with very delicate and controversial issues in the political and humanitarian areas and facilitating the transition to democracy of Central European countries. The situation in the former Yugoslavia, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina, represented a major concern for the grouping which requested international assistance to cope with the increasing flow of refugees and to defend the integrity of Bosnian territory. The status of the ethnic Hungarian minority in Slovakia and other similar problems in other countries led the Initiative to deal with minority issues and eventually to draw up, in 1994, the 'CEI Instrument for the Protection of Minority Rights', an international legal text for their protection. The CEI Centre for Information and Documentation (CID), opened in Trieste in March 1996, was renamed CEI – Executive Secretariat (CEI-ES) in 1997. In June 2001 the decision was taken to establish a 'CEI Co-operation Fund' on the basis of the member countries' annual contributions, with a view to facilitating the implementation of programmes and projects adopted within the framework of the Initiative. The 'CEI Guidelines for Activities and Rules of Procedure', first adopted in 1995 and subsequently amended in 2000 and 2002, have gradually strengthened the role of both the parliamentary and the business dimension within the Initiative.

External relations

Several international organizations – in particular the World Bank, the EBRD, the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Union (EU) – provide financing for the projects undertaken within the framework of the Initiative. A Steering Committee supervises the activities of the CEI Project Secretariat within the EBRD. The CEI EBRD Trust Fund is used to finance investment projects in their preparatory stage, frequently for feasibility studies. As regards

the preparation and implementation of projects, specific forms of co-operation are being developed with the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). As regards human rights and democracy issues in Europe, the Initiative has close relations with the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Links have also been established with other regional and subregional organizations for trans-border co-operation.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

DIRECTOR GENERAL: Ambassador Pietro Ercole Ago

EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT: Via Genova 9, 34121 Trieste, Italy (telephone: +39 040 7786 777; fax: +39 040 360640)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ceinet.org>

PUBLICATION: *CEI Newsletter* (monthly)

Cocoa Producers' Alliance (COPAL)

FOUNDED: January 1962

OBJECTIVES: To examine problems of mutual concern to producers, to ensure adequate supplies at remunerative prices, to promote consumption and to exchange technical and scientific information

MEMBERS: Brazil, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Ghana, Malaysia, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Togo; members account for approximately 75 per cent of total world cocoa production

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Hope Sona Ebal

HEADQUARTERS: National Assembly Complex, Tafawa Balewa Square, PO Box 1718, Lagos, Nigeria (telephone +234 1 2635574; fax: +234 1 2635684)

WEBSITE: <http://www.copal-cpa.org>

Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)

The Organization links several former Soviet republics with a view to promoting military co-operation and eventually creating a peacekeeping force.

Origin and development

On 7 October 2002 the then six members of the Collective Security Treaty (CST) (concluded on 15 May 1992 between Russia and five former Soviet republics), meeting in Chisinau, Moldova, decided to expand and rename the Treaty and signed the relevant Charter.

Membership

Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan.

Objectives

To develop and intensify military and political co-operation among members with a view to ensuring and strengthening national, regional and international security. An aggression against one of the members would be considered as an aggression against them all.

Structure

Council of Collective Security (at the level of Heads of State); Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs; Council of Ministers of Defence; Committee of Secretaries of the Security Council; Secretariat.

Activities

Common military exercises conducted in 2005. Agreement signed with the Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO) in October 2007 to expand common efforts in the fields of security, crime and drug trafficking.

OFFICIAL AND WORKING LANGUAGE: Russian

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Nikolai Nikolayevich Bordyuzha

HEADQUARTERS: ul. Varvarka 7, 103012 Moscow (telephone and fax: +7 495 625 7620; +7 495 606 9771)

WEBSITE: <http://www.dkb.gov.ru> (in Russian)

Colombo Plan, The

The Plan links advanced and developing economies in the Asia Pacific and a number of non-regional members. The geographical scope of the Plan is described by its full official title: the Colombo Plan for Co-operative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific.

Origin and development

The Plan was founded at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Commonwealth in Colombo, in January 1950. It was formally established on 1 July 1951 for promoting co-operative economic development in South and Southeast Asia. Following a proposal by Australia for the adoption of a programme of economic assistance to South and Southeast Asia, a Consultative Committee was set up to draft a Commonwealth Technical Assistance Scheme, administered by a Council for Technical Co-operation, meeting at regular intervals, and assisted by a small permanent bureau located in Colombo. The founder members were Australia, Canada, Ceylon (renamed Sri Lanka in 1972), India, New Zealand, the UK, and the then Union of South Africa (which subsequently withdrew). They were joined over the years by many other countries within and outside the Commonwealth. Originally intended to cover a limited period of time and subsequently renewed for five-year terms, the Plan was extended indefinitely in November 1980. Canada and the UK announced their withdrawal in October 1991.

Membership

The Plan's present membership includes 21 developing countries (all within Asia and the Pacific) and 4 developed countries (Australia, Japan, New Zealand and the US).

Objectives

The Plan is intended primarily to improve the living standards of the peoples of the region by reviewing aid projects, co-ordinating development assistance and providing training and research facilities. The objectives and principles of the Plan are broadly formulated and its functions and powers are essentially confined to consultation and voluntary co-ordination of efforts. Within the multilateral framework provided by the Plan, aid to developing member countries is negotiated and supplied on a bilateral basis.

Structure

The organizational structure of the Plan comprises: the Consultative Committee, consisting of Ministers of member countries, which meets every two years to review progress within the region and to consider the general principles of economic and social co-operation; the Colombo Plan Council, composed of the heads of member countries' diplomatic missions in Colombo, which meets several times a year to

identify issues of interest for consideration by the Consultative Committee and to give overall guidance; and the Colombo Plan Secretariat which performs various administrative tasks, represents the Plan and disseminates information on its activities. The Secretary-General is appointed by the Council. Subsidiary bodies, consisting of officials of member countries, hold periodic meetings to review issues for submission to Ministers.

An unusual feature of the Plan is that the administrative costs of the Secretariat are borne equally by all members. Programmes are voluntarily financed by traditional as well as newly emerging donor countries, non-member countries, public and private aid agencies and other entities.

Activities

Although basically providing a forum for consultation and co-ordination with no authority to produce a centralized plan for channelling capital aid and technical assistance, the Plan succeeded to a significant extent in harmonizing development assistance policies and assuring a substantial flow of resources to developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. Capital aid to developing member countries (in the form of grants and loans for national economic and social development projects) mainly concerned agriculture, industry, communications, energy and education. Technical co-operation programmes provided experts and volunteers, training fellowships and equipment for training and research.

At the Consultative Committee meeting in November 1998, a set of basic guidelines was adopted under the name of 'Manila Colombo Plan Agenda for Action in the 21st Century (MACOPA 21)'.

The Drug Advisory Programme was launched in 1973 and is funded by voluntary contributions from various members; its tasks are to supplement national campaigns concerning drug abuse prevention and to provide assistance to member countries in establishing control offices, improving legislation, and training narcotics officials. Major programmes have been designed with regard to the drug situation in both South and Southeast Asian countries, with special attention to Afghanistan. The Programme for Public Administration, established in 1995 and mainly funded by Japan, provides training for government officials in the framework of a market-oriented economy. Training courses are also carried out in the context of the Programme for Private Sector Development.

The Colombo Plan Staff College for Technician Education, transferred from Singapore to the Philippines in 1987, was established in 1975 as an autonomous specialized agency involving all member countries for the development of training facilities; it is separately financed by most member countries and is supervised by its own Governing Board.

External relations

The Plan has a regular liaison with the relevant UN bodies as well as other international and regional agencies concerned with development assistance.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Kittipan Kanjanapipatkul

HEADQUARTERS: Bank of Ceylon Merchant Tower, 13th floor, 28 St Michael's Road, Colombo 03, Sri Lanka (telephone: +94 11 2564448; fax: +94 11 2564531)

WEBSITE: <http://www.colombo-plan.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Colombo Plan Council*; *The Colombo Plan Programme Activities* (annual); *The Colombo Plan Focus* (quarterly)

REFERENCE: *The Colombo Plan at 50: A New Zealand Perspective: 50th Anniversary of the Colombo Plan 1951–2001* (Wellington, 2001)

Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

The Commission aims to manage and conserve living resources within its area of competence.

Origin and development

The Commission was established by the international Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, signed in May 1980 and entered into force on 7 April 1982; the Convention applies to all species of living organisms, other than whales and seals, found in the Southern Ocean.

Membership

Membership currently includes 23 countries in all continents, plus the European Community (EC).

Objectives

The Commission aims to ensure that all harvesting and research activities are conducted in accordance with predetermined objectives; to formulate, adopt and revise conservation measures; to compile, analyse and disseminate information on the status of resources; and to facilitate research activities.

Activities

Major concerns of the Commission are the assessment and avoidance of incidental mortality of Antarctic marine living resources, the improvement of the system of observation and inspection, the development of an appropriate conservation strategy and the compliance with Conservation Measures presently in force. These measures refer to fishing regulations, data reporting and research requirements, prevention of incidental mortality of seabirds and protection of sites for conducting ecosystem monitoring studies. Precautionary catch limits have been adopted with regard to the krill fishery which is the largest in the area within the competence of the Commission.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Dr Denzil G.M. Miller

HEADQUARTERS: 25 Old Wharf, PO Box 213, North Hobart, Tasmania 7002, Australia (telephone: +61 3 6210 1111; fax: +61 3 6224 8744)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ccamlr.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Report of the annual meeting of the Commission*; *Report of the annual meeting of the Scientific Committee*; *Statistical Bulletin*; *Schedule of Conservation Measures*

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

The Commission is one of the functional commissions operating within the framework of the UN Economic and Social Council.

Origin and development

The Commission was set up in 1946 to review matters pertaining to the relevant international drug treaties and the implementation of their provisions. It is empowered to make recommendations to the Economic and Social Council on the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Membership

Membership of the Commission, originally 15, has been repeatedly increased, eventually reaching the number of 53. Members are elected for a four-year term: (a) from among the members of the UN and members of the specialized agencies and the parties to the international drug control treaties; (b) with due regard to the adequate representation of countries that are important producers of opium or coca leaves, of countries that are important in the field of manufacture of narcotic drugs and of countries in which drug addiction or the illicit traffic in narcotic drugs constitutes an important problem; and (c) taking into account the principle of equitable geographic distribution. The Council elects, at two-year intervals, 20 and 33 members respectively.

In 1973 the Economic and Social Council established a Sub-commission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East whose membership has been gradually enlarged and currently includes 23 countries.

Objectives

The Commission is the central policy-making body within the UN for dealing with all drug-related issues. It provides legislative overview and policy guidance to the UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), now an integral part of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Commission has primary responsibility for amending the schedules annexed to international treaties in order to bring substances under international control, delete them from control, or change the regime of control to which they are subject.

Structure

Since the mid-1970s a number of additional regional subsidiary bodies of the Commission have been set up under the name of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies (HONLEAs). They currently include: HONLEA, Asia and the Pacific; HONLEA, Africa; HONLEA, Latin America and the Caribbean; and HONLEA, Europe. Regional HONLEAs meet annually, except for HONLEA, Europe, which meets every three years.

The Division of Narcotic Drugs of the UN Secretariat acted as secretariat to the Commission and also carried out various functions entrusted to the Secretary-General under the international drug control treaties. Following the General Assembly resolution of December 1990 establishing a single

body responsible for concerted international actions for drug abuse control, the structures and functions of the Division of Narcotic Drugs were integrated in the UNDCP.

Activities

During the session held in early 1991, the Commission focused on ways and means of improving its functioning as a policy-making body pursuant to the direction given by the General Assembly resolution. The need was stressed for the Commission to hold regular annual sessions, instead of meeting biennially as had previously been the case, in order to fulfil more effectively its responsibilities in keeping with the new functions and mandates of the UN in the field of international control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. At the following (early 1992) session, the Commission, in view of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) taking place the following June, adopted a resolution stressing the link between illicit drug cultivation and manufacture and environmental damage. The implementation of General Assembly resolution of 28 October 1993 on measures to strengthen international co-operation against the illicit production, sale, demand, traffic and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances represented one of the major tasks of the Commission. At the 20th special session of the General Assembly held on 8–10 June 1998 and dedicated to countering the world drug problem, the Commission was put in charge of the follow-up on the implementation of the goals and targets for 2003 and 2008 with a view to strengthening international co-operation. The fiftieth session of the Commission took place on 12–16 March 2007 in Vienna. The Executive Director stressed that many positive trends are emerging for all sectors in most regions; on the other hand, the reaching of the targets set in 1998 will require significantly increased commitments and investments by member countries in the near future.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, PO Box 500, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 26060 01; fax: +43 1 26060 5866)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/cnd.html>

Common Fund for Commodities (CFC)

The Fund is a financial institution established within the UN framework to help developing commodity-dependent countries to improve and diversify production and trade. Commodities form around 70 per cent of the merchandise exports of the least developed countries.

Origin and development

The creation of an Integrated Programme for Commodities was envisaged by a resolution adopted by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) at its fourth session in May 1976 in Nairobi. An Agreement for the establishment of the Fund was adopted in June 1980, after four years of negotiations, and opened for signature the following October. The Agreement came into effect on 19 June 1989 after ratification by 90 countries accounting for two-thirds of directly contributed capital. The first commodity development project was approved by the Fund in 1991.

Membership

Membership of the Fund currently consists of 107 countries. Among the nine institutional members are the European Community (EC), the African Union (AU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Among the 50 countries classified as least developed, 42 are members of the Fund.

Objectives

The Fund concentrates on commodity development projects financed from its resources. The projects cover 38 commodities of which 35 are agricultural and the remaining ones mineral.

Structure

The institutional structure includes the Governing Council, meeting at yearly intervals, and the Executive Board meeting biannually. The Consultative Committee, composed of 13 independent experts, performs advisory functions of an economic and technical character for the Executive Board. The Managing Director is the Chief Executive Officer chairing the Executive Board.

Activities

The resources of the Fund are derived from subscription of shares of directly contributed capital

paid in by member countries. Several members have also pledged voluntary contributions. As of May 2007, total financial resources amounted to \$291 million. The Fund plays a catalytic role in attracting resources from other institutions. By May 2007, the Fund had approved 263 projects with an overall cost of \$458.8 million, of which \$229.5 million was financed by the Fund.

The current five-year Action Plan 2003–2007 concentrates on commodities of interest to least developed countries, including the poorer strata of the population. Projects are also being financed for small-holder farmers and small and medium sized enterprises involved in commodity production, processing and trade.

External relations

Relations are being developed with global and regional economic institutions and international commodity bodies.

MANAGING DIRECTOR: Ali Mchumo

HEADQUARTERS: Stadhouderskade 55, 1072AB Amsterdam, The Netherlands; PO Box 74656, 1070BR, Amsterdam (telephone: +31 20 575 4949; fax: +31 20 676 0231)

WEBSITE: <http://www.common-fund.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *CFC Newsletter* (monthly)

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA)

The organization, grouping countries of Eastern and Southern Africa, replaced in 1994 the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA).

Origin and development

The proposal to establish an international organization aimed at fostering economic co-operation among the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa had been originally launched by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in the mid-1970s and subsequently endorsed by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action. The PTA was eventually established by a treaty concluded at Lusaka, Zambia, on 21 December 1981 which entered into force on 30 September 1982. The treaty was signed by the representatives of nine countries – Comoros, Djibouti,

Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Somalia, Uganda and Zambia. They were joined by Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe in 1982, Burundi and Rwanda in 1984, Tanzania in 1985, Mozambique and Sudan in 1988, and Angola in 1990. At the meeting of the Heads of State of the member countries in January 1992, the proposal was put forward for a merger of the PTA – whose results had been far from satisfactory – with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) which was to be established as a successor body to the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). In 1993 Eritrea, Madagascar, Namibia and Seychelles had also joined the PTA. Since the proposed merger with SADC proved impossible, the treaty creating COMESA was signed on 5 November 1993 during the summit of the member countries of the PTA held at Kampala, Uganda. Djibouti, Seychelles, Somalia and Zimbabwe did not participate in the establishment of COMESA; however, Zimbabwe, after some hesitation, signed the treaty the following December. The COMESA treaty entered into force on 8 December 1994. Zaire (now Congo Democratic Republic) joined COMESA in 1994. Lesotho and Mozambique terminated their membership in 1997 on the grounds that it was not compatible with participation in SADC. Tanzania withdrew in 2000 followed by Namibia.

Membership

Nineteen countries of Eastern and Southern Africa with the major exceptions of Mozambique and South Africa.

Objectives

The main purposes of COMESA are to improve commercial, financial and economic co-operation within the region and to facilitate the establishment of a community within which goods, services, capital and labour are free to move across national borders.

Structure

The Authority of Heads of State and Government is the supreme decision-making body responsible for policy direction and control of the performance of the organization. The Council of Ministers takes policy decisions on the programmes and activities of the organization, including the monitoring and reviewing of financial and administrative matters. The Committee of Governors of Central Banks manages the COMESA Clearing House and ensures

implementation of programmes in the sectors of monetary and financial co-operation. Following the adoption of economic reforms and structural adjustment programmes in most member countries, the role of the Clearing House is now being redefined in order to adapt to changing circumstances. The Intergovernmental Committee, consisting of permanent secretaries from member countries, is in charge of the development and management of programmes and action plans in all sectors, except those falling within the competence of the Committee of Governors. The Secretariat, headed by a Secretary-General, performs technical and administrative functions. Technical Committees deal with the various economic sectors as well as with administrative and budgetary matters. A Consultative Committee provides a link between COMESA and the business community and other interest groups. A Court of Justice, consisting of a Court of First Instance (made up of seven judges) and an Appellate Division (with five judges), is called to ensure the proper interpretation of the founding treaty and settle disputes which may arise among member countries. In March 2003 the decision was taken to establish the seat of the Court, temporarily hosted within the COMESA Secretariat, in Khartoum, Sudan.

Activities

The treaty establishing COMESA covers a large number of sectors and activities but the more immediate goal is the promotion of regional integration through the development of trade and investment flows. Current programmes that are gradually being implemented deal with trade liberalization, transportation and communication facilitation, financial and monetary harmonization, production and investment promotion, improvement of quality standards, and gradual elimination of controls on free movement of persons. A free trade area was launched in October 2000, with considerable growth of trade among participating countries. Tariff barriers are being reduced, albeit by a limited number of member countries, while non-tariff barriers have been largely eliminated. Common regulations are being introduced to facilitate the movement of goods and services with partial liberalization of air traffic rights and co-ordination of maritime transport policies. Progress has been made also in the field of telecommunications among member countries. However, divisions continue to exist among member countries as regards relations with other regional

groupings such as SADC, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC). Failure by a number of member countries to pay their membership contributions has also had a negative impact on the organization's role and programmes.

External relations

Relations are being developed with other regional economic institutions in Africa and with the European Union (EU).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Erastus J.O. Mwencha

HEADQUARTERS: Comesa Centre, Ben Bella Rd, PO Box 30051, Lusaka, Zambia (telephone: +260 1 229725; fax: +260 1 225107)

WEBSITE: <http://www.comesa.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Council of Ministers*; *COMESA Newsletter*; *COMESA Trade Directory* (annual)

REFERENCES: V. Murinde (ed.), *The Free Trade Area of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa* (Aldershot, UK, 2001); G. Sunny *et al.*, *A Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa: Costs and Benefits* (Lusaka, 2001)

Commonwealth, The

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of independent states, comprising about 30 per cent of the world's population, that meet and consult on a regular basis to foster common links, to co-ordinate mutual assistance for economic and social development, and to contribute to the restructuring of international economic relations.

Origin and development

The Commonwealth originated from the effort undertaken after World War I to reorganize the British Empire on the basis of the union of Britain and the Dominions as autonomous countries enjoying equal rights. The significant contribution of the Dominions to the conduct of the conflict, their participation at the peace conference with separate delegations and signatures, and their individual membership in the League of Nations were among the events that paved the way to the establishment

of a free association of independent countries linked with Britain on an equal footing. After the Imperial Conferences of 1921 and 1923, devoted respectively to the discussion of major foreign policy issues, and the definition of the rights of the Dominions to conclude international treaties independently, the Imperial Conference of 1926 adopted the Balfour Formula on the status of the Dominions, including at the time six countries – Australia, Canada, Eire (Ireland), Newfoundland, New Zealand, and the Union of South Africa. Britain and the Dominions were defined as 'autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or foreign affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations'.

The Imperial Conference of 1930 confirmed the Balfour Formula and recognized the full legislative autonomy of the Dominions. The basic principles governing relations within the Commonwealth were embodied in the Statute of Westminster of 31 December 1931. The Ottawa Imperial Conference, held in 1932, established a preferential system, based on the concession, on a bilateral basis, of preferential tariffs in the trade between Britain and the other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

A new Commonwealth, reflecting the changed needs and roles of its member countries, gradually emerged from World War II with the spread of decolonization and the consequent attainment of independence by territories formerly under British jurisdiction or mandate. The requirement of common allegiance to the Crown was dropped while egalitarianism became a more prominent feature of the association, whose membership began to expand. The countries of the Indian sub-continent were the first to achieve full independence and join the Commonwealth: India and Pakistan became members in 1947 while Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) did so in 1948. A substantial change was brought about in the association in 1949 when India announced her intention to become a republic while retaining full membership. At the London Conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in April 1949, unanimous agreement was reached allowing India to continue 'her full membership of the Commonwealth of Nations and her acceptance of the King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and, as such, the Head of the Commonwealth'. Ghana and the

Federation of Malaya (now Malaysia) joined in 1957, followed by Nigeria in 1960.

During the 1960s a steady expansion in membership took place with the entry of Cyprus, Sierra Leone and Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in 1961; Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uganda in 1962; Kenya in 1963; Malawi, Malta and Zambia in 1964; The Gambia and Singapore, which had seceded from Malaysia, in 1965; Guyana, Botswana, Lesotho and Barbados in 1966; Mauritius and Swaziland in 1968; Tonga, Western Samoa and Fiji in 1970. Membership grew at a slower pace during the 1970s and 1980s with the entry of Bangladesh, which had seceded from Pakistan, in 1972; Bahamas in 1973; Grenada in 1974; Papua New Guinea in 1975; Seychelles in 1976; Solomon Islands and Dominica in 1978; Saint Lucia and Kiribati in 1979; Zimbabwe and Vanuatu in 1980; Belize, Antigua and Barbuda in 1981; Saint Kitts and Nevis (1983); and Brunei (1984). After Brunei's admission no other country joined the Commonwealth until the entry of Namibia in 1990; Cameroon and Mozambique were admitted in 1995. Tuvalu, formerly a 'special' member entitled to participate in all functional activities but not to attend meetings of Heads of Government, became a full member in September 2000. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (since 1979) and the Maldives (since 1982) were also special members whose status was subsequently upgraded to full membership. Nauru, a special member since 1968, became a full member in 1999. Upon attainment of independence, a number of territories did not join the Commonwealth for various reasons. Among these territories were Egypt, Iraq, Transjordan, Burma (now Myanmar), Palestine, Sudan, British Somaliland, Southern Cameroons and Southern Yemen. The Maldives and Western Samoa joined some years after independence. Of the seven original members of the Commonwealth, two no longer belong to the association: Eire withdrew in 1949; Newfoundland changed its status from Dominion to Crown Colony, and eventually became the tenth province of Canada in 1949. The Republic of South Africa, whose white minority government had withdrawn in 1961 after declaring a republic, rejoined in June 1994 following its first multi-racial elections held in April. Pakistan, which had left in 1972 when its former Eastern province was recognized by the UK and other Commonwealth member countries as an independent state under the name of Bangladesh, rejoined the Commonwealth in October 1989. Pakistan was suspended in 1999 after

the military coup. Fiji, whose membership was declared lapsed in October 1987 after the constitutional changes following the coup, rejoined the Commonwealth in 1997 but was again suspended in June 2000 and eventually readmitted in December 2001. Nigeria was suspended from the Commonwealth in November 1995 and readmitted in May 1999. Sierra Leone, suspended in July 1997, was subsequently readmitted. Zimbabwe was suspended in March 2002.

More than half of the present members of the Commonwealth are republics, while five countries have their own monarchs. The Commonwealth also encompasses dependencies of the UK, Australia and New Zealand.

Membership of the Commonwealth requires the voluntary acceptance of the reigning British monarch's status as symbolic Head of the association by independent countries which have previously been a part of the British Empire; Mozambique is a special case because of its long and close relationship with neighbouring Commonwealth countries during the anti-apartheid struggle. Membership requirements were reconsidered at the 1997 summit in Edinburgh. The Heads of Government agreed that an applicant country should, as a rule, have had a constitutional association with an existing Commonwealth member; that it should comply with Commonwealth values, principles and priorities as set out in the Harare Declaration; and that it should accept Commonwealth norms and conventions. Final decision on admission requires the unanimous consent of member countries. There is no incompatibility between membership in the Commonwealth and participation in other international organizations of a political or other nature. Governments of member countries are represented in other Commonwealth countries by High Commissioners whose rank is equivalent to that of Ambassadors.

Membership

Fifty-three independent countries in all continents. No new members have been admitted since 1995 although interest in the Commonwealth has been growing and several applications to join are outstanding.

Objectives

Although the objectives of the contemporary Commonwealth are not defined in a formal constitution or founding treaty but are rather to be found

in consultation, co-ordination and co-operation procedures, two documents may be considered as embodying its basic principles and ideals: the Declaration of Commonwealth Principles, unanimously adopted in Singapore in 1971, and the Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991 which reaffirmed the commitment of the member countries to the 1971 principles and placed special emphasis on the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights. Commonwealth Heads of Government have agreed several other declarations and statements to which Commonwealth member countries are committed: the statement (Gleneagles Agreement) on apartheid in sport (1977); the Lusaka Declaration on Racism and Racial Prejudice (1979); the Melbourne Declaration on relations between developed and developing countries (1981); the Goa Declaration on International Security (1983); the New Delhi Statement on Economic Action (1983); the Nassau Declaration on World Order (1985); the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa (1985); the Vancouver Declaration on World Trade (1987); the Okanagan Statement and Programme of Action on Southern Africa (1987); the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment (1989); the Kuala Lumpur Statement on Southern Africa (1989); the Ottawa Declaration on Women and Structural Adjustment (1991); the Limassol Statement on the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (1993); the Commonwealth Statement on Disarmament (1995); the Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Declaration (1995); the Edinburgh Commonwealth Economic Declaration (1997); the Fancourt Declaration on Globalization and People-Centred Development (1999); the Coolum Declaration on the Commonwealth in the 21st Century (2002). The meeting held in Coolum had been originally scheduled to take place in October 2001 but was postponed for a few months following the attacks of 11 September in the US. At the meeting held at Abuja, Nigeria, on 5–8 December 2003, the Heads of Government reaffirmed, in the Aso Rock Declaration on Development and Democracy, their commitment to strengthen development and democracy through partnership for peace and prosperity and a more equitable sharing of the benefits of globalization. The most recent meeting took place in Malta, on 25–27 November 2005, and adopted a Declaration on Networking the Commonwealth for Development, endorsing *inter alia* the Action Programme for the Digital Divide.

Structure

The basic guidelines of Commonwealth activities are laid down at the meetings of the Heads of Government which take place regularly at biennial intervals and are attended by the British monarch. In alternate years senior government officials hold meetings to review policies and consider important matters of common concern. Finance Ministers meet annually in the week prior to the annual meeting of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Regular meetings are also held by Ministers of Education, Labour, Health, and others as appropriate. Several other meetings take place at different levels, on a regular or *ad hoc* basis, to ensure close co-ordination on specific issues. Meetings are open to all member countries and are held in different cities and regions within the Commonwealth in conformity with the multi-lateral character of the association; votes are not taken.

The central organization for joint consultation and co-operation is provided by the Commonwealth Secretariat which was established in 1965 upon decision of the Heads of Government. The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General, elected by the Heads of Government for a four-year term renewable only once. The Secretary-General is assisted by two Deputies. The Secretariat, located in London, organizes and services meetings and conferences, co-ordinates a broad range of activities and disseminates information on questions of common concern. It is organized in 12 Divisions and Units carrying out its work and programmes. The expenses of the Secretariat are apportioned among member countries according to a scale related to UN contributions. Canada, Australia, India, and the UK are among the largest contributors; smaller amounts are contributed by the overwhelming majority of the other members.

Multilateral technical assistance for economic and social development is provided through the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC), established in 1971 and subsequently integrated into the Secretariat for administration. The CFTC, which is supported by the voluntary contributions of member countries, particularly the most developed, provides specialist advice in a wide variety of fields, offers training facilities and sends out experts. Government and private funds are channelled to meet the special needs of the association's smaller countries: 32 members are small states, mostly with populations of less than 1.5

million. A Commonwealth Small States Office, managed by the Commonwealth Secretariat, is based in New York to ensure the voice of smaller members of the association is heard in the UN. Several special programmes and other minor undertakings are carried out with a view to improving socio-economic conditions of the poorest members and/or strengthening the extensive network of co-operation links existing between members at both the intergovernmental and non-governmental level.

Activities

The peculiar nature of the association, characterized by full equality and consensus of members and freedom from rigid patterns, has remarkably improved its ability to survive through swift and effective adjustment to changed circumstances in the political, economic, financial, technical and social fields. The contemporary Commonwealth generally provides an effective and flexible framework for consultation and co-operation between countries characterized by wide disparities in political and economic power, interests and ideological views. Major adaptations and adjustments have been necessary in order to help the association maintain and enhance its unique character and role on the world scene.

Severe political strains have been suffered by the association on a number of occasions, such as armed conflicts between members (India and Pakistan) or within the boundaries of a member (Nigeria). The situation in the countries of Southern Africa was, for a substantial period of time, one of the Commonwealth's most important concerns. The Commonwealth played an active role in achieving majority rule in Zimbabwe, provided humanitarian technical assistance and support in international forums to Namibia and opposed apartheid in South Africa. It took a lead in the international efforts to isolate the then white minority-dominated South Africa in sport through its 1977 Gleneagles Agreement; it also supported the efforts of majority-ruled countries in the region to reduce their economic dependence on South Africa. Attempts have consistently been made by representatives of Commonwealth countries to establish a common position on sensitive matters discussed by major international organizations, especially the UN. The Commonwealth plays a growing role in the fields of economic and financial co-operation and technical assistance, especially since the creation of the CFTC.

The Commonwealth Service Abroad Programme (CSAP), launched in 1995, places volunteer experts in Africa, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Commonwealth activities are growing in a variety of areas, from observing elections to making available models for good health practices for women to helping member countries negotiate better trade arrangements.

The Commonwealth has contributed to international thought on North-South economic disparities through a number of expert group reports, such as those proposing measures to reduce protectionism, reform the Bretton Woods institutions, relieve the debt problems of developing countries and increase the security of small countries. Emphasis on privatization of state-owned enterprises and overall support for the free market has recently characterized Commonwealth attitudes. The development of human resources and the promotion of human rights throughout the Commonwealth are areas on which increasing emphasis is being placed at different levels within the framework of the association. The Commonwealth is now concentrating on issues of democratization and good governance. A Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), with membership from all regions, was established in 1995 to foster adherence by member countries to the fundamental principles of democracy and human rights as envisaged by the 1991 Harare Declaration and to recommend collective Commonwealth action in case of serious and persistent violations. The Group has become a permanent organ investigating abuses of human rights and reviewing developments relating to the countries within its remit.

Several Commonwealth organizations, most of them based in the UK, are active in a variety of fields such as agriculture and forestry, health, education and culture, communications, information and the media, legal professions, parliamentary affairs, science and technology, parliamentary affairs, sport and Commonwealth studies. The Commonwealth Foundation, based in London, links non-governmental bodies and organizations, collectively known as 'the unofficial Commonwealth'.

External relations

Besides supporting the UN efforts for international peace and security, the Commonwealth is an active advocate of regional co-operation and has helped strengthen regional groupings in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

The Commonwealth maintains close links with many international institutions both within and outside the UN system; observer status was granted to the Commonwealth by the UN General Assembly in October 1976. Special co-operative relations have been established with the international agencies concerned with development work, such as the World Bank, the IMF, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Important links are maintained with regional economic bodies in Europe, especially the European Union (EU), Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Various forms of co-operation are developing in several fields with the Francophonie, the international organization of French-speaking countries; six Commonwealth members, among them Canada, also belong to the francophone institution.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Donald C McKinnon

HEADQUARTERS: Marlborough House, Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HX, UK (telephone: +44 20 7747 6500; fax: +44 20 7930 0827)

WEBSITE: <http://www.thecommonwealth.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *The Commonwealth Today*; *The Commonwealth Factbook*; *The Commonwealth Yearbook*; *Report of the Commonwealth Secretary-General* (every two years); *Commonwealth Currents* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: H.D. Hall, *Commonwealth: A History of the British Commonwealth* (London, 1971); A. Walker, *The Modern Commonwealth* (London, 1976); D. Judd and P. Slinn, *The Evolution of the Modern Commonwealth 1902–80* (London, 1982); A. Smith and C. Sanger, *Stitches in Time. The Commonwealth in World Politics* (New York, 1983); A.J.R. Groom and P. Taylor (eds), *The Commonwealth in the 1980s. Challenges and Opportunities* (London, 1984); R.J. Moore, *Making the New Commonwealth* (Oxford, 1987); D. Austin, *The Commonwealth and Britain* (London, 1988); M.P. Doxey, *The Commonwealth Secretariat and the Contemporary Commonwealth* (London, 1989); W.D. McIntyre, *The Significance of the Commonwealth 1965–90* (London, 1991); S. Chan, *Twelve Years of Commonwealth Diplomatic History: Commonwealth*

Summit Meetings 1979–91 (Lampeter, 1992); K. Srinivasan and P. Lyon, *The Rise, Decline and Future of the British Commonwealth* (Basingstoke, UK, 2005)

Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), The

The Commonwealth of Independent States is a voluntary association of countries established after the dissolution of the USSR with a view to developing relations of friendship and co-operation.

Origin and development

The Agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth was signed by the leaders of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine on 8 December 1991 in Viskuli, Belarus. The co-ordinating structures of the Commonwealth were to be based in Minsk, Belarus. The three contracting parties declared that the USSR had ceased to exist 'as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality'. The Heads of all former Soviet republics (with the exception of the three Baltic countries and Georgia) meeting in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, on 21 December 1991, signed a Protocol to the above-mentioned Agreement and adopted the 'Alma-Ata Declaration', stressing the commitment of participating countries to co-operate in a number of fields concerning external and internal policies. On 15 May 1992, a Treaty on Collective Security was signed. The Charter of the Commonwealth was adopted on the occasion of the joint meeting of the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Heads of Government on 22 January 1993 in Minsk. Another meeting of both Councils, held on 24 September 1993 in Moscow, led to the signature, *inter alia*, of the Treaty on the Establishment of the Economic Union. Georgia joined the Commonwealth on 9 December 1993. In principle, membership of the Commonwealth is open to all other countries sharing its principles and purposes, with the consent of existing members. Turkmenistan terminated full participation in the Commonwealth in August 2005 and became an associate member.

Membership

All former republics of the USSR except the three Baltic countries and Uzbekistan.

Objectives

The Commonwealth, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of its members, was intended to assist in the orderly transfer of governmental functions and treaty obligations of the USSR to its independent successor republics. The current aims are to further develop and strengthen the relations of friendship, good neighbourhood, inter-ethnic accord, trust and mutual understanding and co-operation among member countries. The objectives of the Economic Union are the creation of a common economic space – based on the free movement of goods, services, workers and capital – and the implementation of concerted policies in the economic, financial and commercial fields.

Structure

The institutional structure of the Commonwealth includes the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Heads of Government, Councils of Foreign and Defence Ministers, and the Executive Committee. The Council of Border Troops Commanders, the Interstate Committee of the Economic Union, and the Interparliamentary Assembly complete the basic institutional framework. The Council of Heads of State is the supreme policy-making organ, meeting at least twice a year and deciding by common consent. The Council of Heads of Government, which may hold joint sittings with the Council of Heads of State, meets at least every three months. Ministerial meetings are held to discuss issues concerning foreign affairs, defence, energy, transportation and the environment as well as other matters. The Executive Committee was set up on 2 April 1999 and superseded the former Executive Secretariat and other working bodies and committees. The Chairman of the Executive Committee also fulfils the function of Executive Secretary.

Activities

The activities and prospects of the Commonwealth have been severely affected by a number of negative factors including grave economic difficulties and regional conflicts, with the result that only a fraction of the international instruments signed within its framework have been implemented. Recurring political and economic tensions among various members and the emergence of smaller groupings pursuing specific objectives within the broader structure of the Commonwealth have hindered the development of the organization. At

the Commonwealth level, measures have been adopted in the political, military and socio-economic fields amid attempts to reform and streamline the organizational mechanism. Collective forces for peacekeeping had been formed to deal with local conflicts in member countries while a co-ordination of efforts was attempted to fight against 'international terrorism' and 'extremism'. Economic co-operation was singled out as a priority area with the aim of establishing a multi-lateral free trade zone as the first step towards a common market. However, due to differences in economic potentials and degrees of reform of domestic economies as well as the gradual drifting towards the West of several members, the usefulness and viability of the Commonwealth are increasingly being questioned.

External relations

The Commonwealth was granted observer status in the UN General Assembly on 24 March 1994. Close links have been established by the Commonwealth with the European Union (EU), especially within the framework of the TACIS Programme, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

WORKING LANGUAGE: Russian

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Vladimir Borisovich Rushaylo

HEADQUARTERS: Kirov Street 17, 220000 Minsk, Belarus (telephone: + 375 17 2223517; fax: + 375 17 2272339)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cis.minsk.by>

PUBLICATIONS: *Sodruzhestvo* (information bulletin); newsletters; reference and information materials.

REFERENCES: A. Patnaik (ed.), *The Commonwealth of Independent States: Problems and Prospects* (New Delhi, 1995); Z. Brzezinski and P. Sullivan (eds), *Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Armonk, NY, 1996); M. Brill Olcott, A. Aslund and S.W. Garnett, *Getting it Wrong: Regional Cooperation and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Washington, DC, 1999)

Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries

[*Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa*]
(CPLP)

The Community groups the independent lusophone countries in the world to organize and strengthen co-operation in a variety of fields.

Origin and development

The Community was established on 17 July 1996 in Lisbon by the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and São Tomé and Príncipe. Timor-Leste became an observer in 1998 and obtained full membership on 20 May 2002 upon achievement of independence.

Membership

All eight Portuguese-speaking countries in the world. Equatorial Guinea and Mauritius have been granted in 2006 the status of associate observer country.

Objectives

The Community is intended as a means of fostering co-operation between members in the pursuit of common interests in the cultural, economic, social, scientific and legal-institutional fields. The lusophone commonwealth should also help member countries expand their influence in international institutions and forums by acting in concert over specific matters.

Structure

The Conference of the Heads of State and Government is the supreme decision-making organ holding ordinary sessions at two-year intervals, under the rotating chairmanship of the host country. All decisions are taken by consensus. The Council of Ministers, meeting every year, is charged with the implementation of the decisions of the Conference and the approval of the Community's plan of action. The Permanent Steering Committee, consisting of the representatives of the member countries in Lisbon, holds frequent meetings to monitor the realization of the various programmes and activities. The Executive Secretariat, headed by the Executive Secretary assisted by a Deputy and the necessary staff, is responsible for administrative tasks. A Special

Fund has been created with voluntary contributions from public and private entities.

Activities

After its first meeting in Lisbon on 16–17 July 1996, the Conference of the Heads of State and Government held sessions in Praia, Cape Verde, on 16–17 July 1998; in Maputo, Mozambique, on 16–17 July 2000; in Brasília on 31 July–1 August 2002; in São Tomé, São Tomé and Príncipe, on 26–27 July 2004; and in Bissau, Guinea-Bissau, on 16–17 July 2006.

Besides implementing its first commitment with regard to the Portuguese language with the strengthening of the relevant body (Instituto Internacional da Língua Portuguesa/IILP based in Praia), the Community has undertaken a thorough examination of the main political and economic issues of direct relevance to its members. These issues include, *inter alia*, the reform of the UN and of the World Bank, the improvement of relations between the European Union (EU) and Mercosur, and the organization of a Europe-Africa summit meeting.

Efforts have been made through a specially established contact group to reach a negotiated settlement and restore peace in Guinea-Bissau in 1998. The Community monitored the 1999 popular consultation in Timor-Leste as well as elections in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique. Major projects concern an HIV-Aids Programme in Africa, the establishment of a Centre for the Development of Entrepreneurial Skills in Luanda, and a Centre for the Development of Public Administration in Maputo.

External relations

The Community enjoys observer status at the UN and has been developing various forms of co-operation with several agencies including the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Portuguese

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Luís Fonseca

HEADQUARTERS: Rua de São Caetano 32, 1200-829 Lisbon, Portugal (telephone: +351 21 392 8560; fax: +351 21 392 8588)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cplp.org>

PUBLICATION: *Boletim da CPLP*

Community of Sahel-Saharan States

[*Communauté des états sahélo-sahariens*]
(CEN-SAD)

The Community is intended as a framework for integration and complementarity among member countries with a view to strengthening peace, security and stability and achieving economic, social and cultural development.

Origin and development

The Community was established on 4 February 1998 following the Conference of Leaders and Heads of State held in Tripoli, Libya, with the participation of Burkina Faso, Chad, Libya, Mali, Niger and Sudan. The Central African Republic and Eritrea joined the Community in April 1999, followed by Djibouti, Gambia and Senegal in February 2000. The Community has further expanded to include Benin, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, Togo and Tunisia.

Membership

Twenty-three countries in North and Central Africa.

Objectives

The basic goal is that of establishing an economic union through a global development plan complementary to the national development plans of the countries concerned and the removal of all restrictions to the free movement of goods, persons, capital and services between members. The improvement of transportation and communication links among member countries and the harmonization of educational systems are also envisaged.

Structure

The supreme decision-making body is the Conference of the Heads of State meeting once a year in ordinary session in the capital of a member country on a rotating basis. The Executive Council, at ministerial level, meets in principle every six months and is responsible for the preparation of the co-operation and integration plans and the implementation of the decisions of the Conference. The General Secretariat, based in Tripoli, is the administrative and executive organ composed of the Secretary-General, the Assistant Secretary-General and the necessary staff. A Convention was adopted in 1999 on the establishment of the African Bank for

Development and Trade, with headquarters in Libya, for financing development projects and foreign trade. An Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ESCC), located in Bamako, Mali, and meeting once a year, has also been set up to perform consultative functions.

Activities

The Community has played a role in advancing solidarity among member countries and urging major international organizations, at both the global and the regional levels, to lift sanctions against Libya.

External relations

The Community has developed relations with the African Union (AU) and other regional organizations and enjoys observer status at the UN.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Dr Mohammed Al-Madani Al-Azhari

HEADQUARTERS: P.O. Box 4041, Aljazeera Square, Tripoli, Libya (telephone: +218 21 333 2347; fax: +218 21 444 0076)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cen-sad.org>

PUBLICATION: *News Bulletin* (monthly)

Community of Sant'Egidio

FOUNDED: 1968; the Community takes its name from the Church of Sant'Egidio in the area of Trastevere, Rome

OBJECTIVES: To organize communities of prayer, to communicate the Gospel, to provide voluntary and free service to the poor (including disabled people, homeless and foreign immigrants), to strengthen ecumenism and to develop dialogue and co-operation among religions

MEMBERS: More than 50,000 lay people in about 70 countries in four continents

HEADQUARTERS: Piazza S. Egidio 3/a, 00153 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 585661; fax: +39 06 5800197)

WEBSITE: <http://www.santegidio.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Sant'Egidio Newsletter* (bimonthly); books and reports

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Preparatory Commission for the (CTBTO Preparatory Commission)

The Preparatory Commission is setting up the global verification system foreseen under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) which forbids any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion.

Origin and development

The CTBT was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 September 1996 and was opened for signature in New York on 24 September 1996 when it was signed by 71 countries, including the five nuclear-weapon states. The adoption of a treaty prohibiting all nuclear explosions had been advocated since the early 1950s when public concern over radioactive fall-out from atmospheric nuclear tests began to grow. However, difficulties verifying compliance with a comprehensive nuclear test ban during the period of the Cold War made the adoption of an international instrument impracticable. The conclusion in 1963 of the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) forbidding nuclear tests in the atmosphere, under water and in space represented a significant step forward, despite the fact that two nuclear-weapon countries, China and France, refused to sign the Treaty. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) of 1968 committed all signatories to the goal of nuclear disarmament; under the Treaty, non-nuclear weapon countries were forbidden from manufacturing or acquiring nuclear weapons or other explosive devices.

In 1991, in a new international climate, parties to the PTBT convened a conference with a view to converting the Treaty into an instrument prohibiting all nuclear-weapons tests. Negotiations lasted from 1993 to 1996 when the CTBT was eventually signed. India, North Korea and Pakistan are among the countries that have not signed the Treaty. The US Senate rejected the ratification of the Treaty on 13 October 1999.

Membership

There are 177 countries that are signatories of which 139 have deposited their instruments of ratification. Annex 2 to the CTBT lists the 44 nuclear-capable countries whose signature and ratification are required for entry into force; 34 countries have ratified so far.

Activities

The Preparatory Commission, created on 19 November 1996 to prepare for the Treaty's entry into force, has set up a Provisional Technical Secretariat which became operational on 17 March 1997. The Preparatory Commission and the Provisional Technical Secretariat are involved in the establishment of the International Monitoring System (IMS), a global verification regime comprising a network of 337 stations throughout the world for detecting whether a nuclear test has occurred. When the Treaty enters into force (180 days after ratification by all 44 countries listed in Annex 2), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization will be established in Vienna.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE CTBT: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Tibor Tóth

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5, PO Box 1200, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 26030 6200; fax: +43 1 26030 5823)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ctbto.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *CTBTO Spectrum* (biannual newsletter)

Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf

The Council – generally known as the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) – aims to promote political and economic co-operation and greater solidarity between the Arab oil-producing countries on the western side of the Gulf, in view of the recurring threats to the region's stability.

Origin and development

The need to co-ordinate efforts for the solution of common problems through the establishment of a regional organization of comprehensive aims was emphasized by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, at a meeting held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on 4–5 February 1981. The decision to create the Council was announced by the Foreign Ministers of the six countries meeting at Muscat, Oman, on 10 March 1981. Finally, at Abu Dhabi, on 25 May 1981, the Heads of State of the

countries concerned approved the establishment of the new body.

Membership

Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Objectives

According to the founding document, the member countries of the Council intend to establish between them a community whose scope of activity embraces the economic and financial spheres, as well as education and culture, social affairs, health, transportation and communications, trade, customs, tourism, legislation and administration. In a Declaration adopted by the Heads of State at Abu Dhabi, emphasis was also placed on the commitment of the member countries to join in efforts to preserve their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence and to ensure the stability and security of the Gulf region which should remain 'outside the sphere of international conflicts'.

Structure

The institutional structure of the Council reflects the development of co-operation among member countries. The Supreme Council consists of the Heads of State of member countries meeting in ordinary session once a year to decide the general policy and action of the Organization. Each member country undertakes in turn, in Arabic alphabetical order, the presidency of the Supreme Council. In 1998, the Supreme Council decided to hold a consultative meeting between two summits every year. Resolutions on substantive matters are adopted by unanimous vote of the members that are present, each member having one vote. The Ministerial Council consists of the Foreign Ministers (or other ministers acting on their behalf) meeting in ordinary session every three months and in emergency session at the request of at least two members. It is the responsibility of the Ministerial Council to prepare for the sessions of the Supreme Council and to draw up policies, recommendations and projects for the improvement of co-operation and co-ordination between member countries. Periodic meetings are also held by Ministers of Agriculture, Industry, Energy, Transport, Defence, Finance and Economy, assisted by specialized committees. A Consultative Commission of 30 members (five from each member country) has been established to perform advisory functions to the Supreme Council. A special body,

the Commission for Settlement of Disputes, is attached to the Supreme Council; the Commission is convened by the Supreme Council on an *ad hoc* basis in accordance with the nature of the dispute. The Secretariat General assists member countries in the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Supreme and Ministerial Councils. The Secretary-General, appointed by the Supreme Council upon the recommendation of the Ministerial Council for a three-year term renewable only once, performs administrative and technical functions, in collaboration with five Assistant Secretaries-General in charge of Political, Economic, Human and Environment, Security and Military Affairs. The post of Secretary-General is rotated among member countries. All members contribute in equal proportions to the budget of the Secretariat whose seat is in Riyadh.

Activities

During its initial period, the Council laid out the strategy for co-operation activities in several fields – in particular the liberalization of the movement of goods, capital, and people between member countries. In June 1981 the Finance Ministers prepared an economic co-operation agreement dealing with petroleum, the abolition of customs duties, and financial and monetary co-ordination. The Ministers of Petroleum met in Riyadh at the beginning of 1982 with a view to drawing up a joint comprehensive strategy on oil matters to be carried out *vis-à-vis* third countries and international organizations, including the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). A unified policy on the acquisition of technology was also adopted. In December 1987, a plan was approved by the Supreme Council in order to allow a member whose production had been disrupted to 'borrow' petroleum from other members and fulfil its export obligations. Co-operation among member countries was fostered in the second half of the 1990s with a view to promoting market stability of petroleum products, especially during periods of decline in prices.

As regards the movement of goods, certain customs duties on domestic products of the member countries were abolished in early 1983, while a common minimum tariff on foreign imports was established in 1986. A customs union, originally planned for 1 March 2005, has been implemented on 1 January 2003.

In February 1987 the governors of the central banks reached an agreement for the co-ordination of exchange rates that was subsequently approved by the Supreme Council. The Supreme Council meeting in early 2002 announced that a timetable for monetary union had been agreed with a view to introducing a single currency by no later than January 2010. To finance specific projects, mainly in the energy, pharmaceutical, chemical and transport sectors, the Gulf Investment Corporation, having an initial capital of \$2100 million and based in Kuwait, was established in 1983. Merchant banking and financial advisory services are also provided.

In the late 1980s a number of measures were adopted within the framework of a common industrial strategy for the protection of industrial products of the Council's member countries, the co-ordination of industrial projects and the unification of legislation on foreign investment. Progress has been made for the adoption of a unified agricultural policy and harmonization of the relevant national legislation. The establishment of a joint telecommunications system is being carried out; electricity networks of member countries are also to be gradually integrated.

Co-operation on military and security issues, not expressly mentioned in the founding agreement, was formally included among the Council's activities by a decision of the Supreme Council in November 1981. At their meeting in February 1982, the Foreign Ministers stressed that an attack against any member will be considered an attack against all members. In May 1982 the Ministers of Foreign Affairs held an emergency meeting to discuss the issues arising from the conflict between Iraq (supported by the Council's member countries acting individually) and Iran; a peace plan was proposed in May 1983. To foster mutual defence co-ordination, joint military exercises were held in 1983 and 1984. In November 1984 it was decided to set up the 'Peninsula Shield Force' for rapid deployment, under a central command, against external aggression. Repeated offers by the Council to mediate between Iraq and Iran failed to materialize and no joint policy could be adopted *vis-à-vis* Iran following the cease-fire between that country and Iraq in August 1988.

Immediately after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the Ministerial Council formally demanded the withdrawal of Iraqi troops; the Defence Ministers for their part decided to put on alert the Peninsula Shield Force to prevent an

invasion of Saudi Arabia by Iraq. The Supreme Council, meeting in December 1990 in Qatar, demanded Iraq's total and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and recognized that military action might be necessary to expel Iraq from Kuwait. The Peninsula Shield Force subsequently took part in the US-led anti-Iraqi alliance which also saw the development of close links between the Council's member countries on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other. The six members of the Council plus Egypt and Syria issued in March 1991 the 'Declaration of Damascus', announcing plans to establish a regional peacekeeping force which failed to materialize because of persisting disagreements concerning its composition. In the face of the urgent need to provide conditions for greater political and economic stability in the region, the Council announced in April 1991 the creation of a multi-million-dollar development fund mainly to assist friendly countries, notably Egypt and Syria, that had played a major role in the Gulf War. The December 1992 Supreme Council meeting, held after the reconciliation between Qatar and Saudi Arabia over a border dispute, strongly criticized Iraq for failing to comply with UN resolutions. The Military Committee was inaugurated in April 1994 to co-ordinate more effectively military activities. At the end of 1997 plans were adopted with a view to linking national military telecommunications networks and setting up a common early warning system.

The Council's members have taken a favourable attitude concerning the Middle East peace process and the establishment of relations with Israel, ending the boycott which had been adopted within the framework of the League of Arab States. New tensions arose between Saudi Arabia and Qatar in December 1995 over the appointment of a Saudi national as new Secretary-General. A longstanding territorial dispute characterizes the uneasy relationship between Qatar and Bahrain. The Heads of State meeting in Qatar in December 1996 condemned Iran's continued occupation of a number of islands in the Gulf and called on Iraq to hand over its weapons of mass destruction. Subsequently the need to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq was repeatedly emphasized also with regard to Turkey's military operations in northern Iraq. The Supreme Council condemned the attacks of 11 September 2001 against the US and supported the international coalition to eradicate terrorism while also asking to stop the action

conducted by Israeli security forces against Palestinians. The escalation of tensions in the region following the US-led military intervention against Iraq and the heightened level of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict represent major causes of concern for the Council's members and the development of mutual co-operation.

External relations

The Council has been developing a relationship with other international organizations, especially regional groupings. An agreement concluded by the Council with the then European Economic Community (EEC) in June 1988 entered into effect in January 1990. Discussions on a free trade agreement between the two organizations met with several difficulties aggravated by the European proposals for the introduction of a 'carbon tax' in order to reduce pollution. During the 1990s several attempts were made to develop relations between the Council and the European Union (EU) through the intensification of political dialogue, economic co-operation and investment. Human rights issues and the EU's duties on 'sensitive products' exported by Gulf countries have represented major obstacles towards the conclusion of a free trade agreement. All members of the Council, including Saudi Arabia, fully participate in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Abdul Rahman bin Hamad al-Attiyah

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 7153, Riyadh 11462, Saudi Arabia (telephone: +966 1 482 7777; fax: +966 1 482 9089)

WEBSITE: <http://www.gcc-sg.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *GCC News* (monthly); *Statistical Bulletin* (annual)

REFERENCES: M. Rumaihi, *Beyond Oil: Unity and Development in the Gulf* (London, 1986); J.A. Sandwick (ed.), *The Gulf Cooperation Council: Moderation and Stability in an Interdependent World* (Boulder, CO, 1987); A. Al-Moussa, *The Gulf Cooperation Council, an Experiment in Regional Organization: A Legal and Political Analysis* (Geneva, 1988); G. Dietl, *Through Two Wars and Beyond: A Study of the Gulf Cooperation Council* (New Delhi, 1991); J.W. Twinam, *The Gulf, Co-*

operation and the Council: An American Perspective (Washington, DC, 1992); M.A. Malik, *The Gulf Cooperation Council: A Strategic Perspective* (New Delhi, 1999)

Council of Europe, The

The Council is a regional organization aiming to achieve a greater unity between its member countries in order to safeguard and realize the ideals and principles which characterize their common heritage and to facilitate their economic and social progress. It has represented since the early 1990s the European political organization best suited to accept, on an equal footing, the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe and republics of the former USSR.

Origin and development

The Council was created in 1949, following protracted negotiations between the representatives of several Western European nations. After 1945, the idea of the political unification of Europe had gained considerable impetus and led to the creation of numerous movements, at both the international and national levels, sponsoring the project of a European Union. In May 1948, the International Committee of the Movements for European Unity organized the 'Congress of Europe' in The Hague, the Netherlands, bringing together in a private capacity nearly 1000 influential Europeans, including many prominent statesmen. One of the resolutions adopted by the Congress called for the convening of a European Assembly, the adoption of a Charter of Human Rights and the establishment of a Court of Justice 'with adequate sanctions for the implementation of this Charter'. The proposal concerning the Assembly was considered with the Consultative Council of the Brussels Treaty Organization, an institution set up on 17 March 1948 by Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and the UK. On 27-28 January 1949, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of these countries agreed in principle to establish a Council of Europe, consisting of a ministerial committee and a consultative assembly. Proposals concerning the basic features of the new organization were subsequently submitted to a conference of ambassadors including, besides the five Brussels Treaty countries, representatives of Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Norway and Sweden who had been invited to participate.

The Statute of the Council was signed by the representatives of the 10 countries on 5 May 1949, in London, and formally went into effect two months later; subsequently it has been amended on a number of occasions. The Council's first sessions took place in Strasbourg which became the permanent seat.

The founder members were joined by Greece and Turkey later in 1949; Iceland in 1950; the Federal Republic of Germany in 1951 (having been an associate member since 1950); Austria in 1956; Cyprus in 1961; Switzerland in 1963; Malta in 1965; Portugal in 1976; Spain in 1977; Liechtenstein in 1978; San Marino in 1988; Finland in 1989; Hungary in 1990; Czechoslovakia and Poland in 1991; Bulgaria in 1992. After the dissolution of Czechoslovakia at the end of 1992, both successor states (the Czech Republic and Slovakia) were granted special guest status and later admitted to full membership. Estonia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia became full members in 1993. Andorra joined in 1994 followed by Albania, Latvia, Macedonia, Moldova and Ukraine in 1995, and Russia and Croatia in 1996. Georgia joined in April 1999 followed by Armenia and Azerbaijan in January 2001, Bosnia and Herzegovina in April 2002, Serbia in April 2003, Monaco in October 2004 and Montenegro in May 2007. The former Soviet republics of Central Asia may co-operate with the Council on the basis of flexible and practical arrangements.

All member countries are committed to pluralist democracy and the indivisibility and universality of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Every member country is bound to accept 'the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms' and must collaborate 'sincerely and effectively' in the realization of the Council's objectives. Ability to provide adequate protection of national minorities by candidates to membership has become a special concern of the Council. According to the 1993 Vienna Declaration, an undertaking by new members to sign the European Convention on Human Rights and accept the Convention's supervisory machinery in its entirety within a short period is also fundamental. Invitations to join the Council are issued by the Committee of Ministers after consulting with the Parliamentary Assembly. While a full member is entitled to participation in both the principal organs of the Council, an associate member is entitled to

representation in the Parliamentary Assembly only. The right of withdrawal may be exercised upon giving formal notice and generally takes effect at the end of the financial year in which it is notified. Any country which seriously violates the fundamental obligations arising from membership in the Council may be suspended from its rights of representation and formally requested to withdraw; if such country does not comply with the request, the other member countries may decide its expulsion from the Council.

Membership

There are 47 countries throughout the European continent. No country has ever joined the European Union (EU) without first belonging to the Council. The membership application of Belarus has been temporarily shelved because of the nature of that country's present regime. Observer status to the Committee of Ministers has been granted to the Holy See in 1970, to Canada, Japan and the US in 1996, and to Mexico in 1999. Observer status to the Parliamentary Assembly has been enjoyed by Israel since 1957, Canada since 1997, and Mexico since 1999.

Objectives

The desire for a united Europe expressed by the representatives of the various movements who met at The Hague Congress of 1948 was fulfilled to a certain extent by the creation of the Council, which is based upon the principle of voluntary co-operation of the member countries which retain their full sovereign powers. According to the Statute, the basic aims of the Council are to be pursued by discussion of questions of common concern and by agreements and common action in economic, social, cultural, scientific, legal and administrative matters and in the maintenance and further realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is worth noting that matters relating to national defence are specifically excluded from the competence of the Council. Although the scope of the Council embraces a very wide range of subjects, defence being the only notable exception, the powers entrusted to the principal organs are rather limited and substantially confined to the promotion of voluntary co-ordination of efforts, the adoption of recommendations and the drawing up of conventions and agreements. Since 1989, the Council has been assisting the former socialist countries of Europe to carry out and consolidate political, constitutional and legal reform along

with economic reform. The necessary know-how is provided in areas such as human rights, local democracy, education, culture and the environment.

Structure

The principal organs of the Council are the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, both of which are serviced by the Secretariat. The Committee of Ministers consists of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of all member countries, each country being entitled to one representative and one vote. When a Minister of Foreign Affairs is unable to attend, an alternate may be appointed, possibly from among members of the government. Members of the Committee take the chair in rotation. The Committee is responsible for taking decisions with binding effect on all matters of internal organization, making recommendations to governments and drawing up conventions and agreements; it also discusses matters of political concern. The Committee usually meets in private twice yearly, in April/May and November, at the seat of the Council in Strasbourg. From 1952 onwards, Ministers' Deputies were appointed to deal with most of the routine work at monthly meetings; they are entitled to take decisions having the same force and effect as those adopted by the Ministers themselves, provided that important policy matters are not involved. Deputies are usually senior diplomats accredited to the Council as permanent representatives of member countries. Decisions of the Committee normally require the unanimity of the representatives casting a vote and must include a majority of all members sitting on the Committee. Questions arising under the rules of procedure or under financial and administrative regulations may be decided by simple majority. A number of matters, such as those concerning the admission of members, adoption of the budget, rules of procedure, financial and administrative regulations, and amendment of the Statute, require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast and a majority of the representatives entitled to sit on the Committee.

The Parliamentary Assembly is empowered to discuss any matter within the aim and scope of the Council, and to present conclusions, in the form of recommendations, to the Committee of Ministers. The Assembly consists of 636 members (318 representatives and 318 substitutes) elected or appointed by national parliaments of member countries. Political parties are represented in each national

delegation according to the proportion of their strength in the respective parliament. Each member country is represented by a number of parliamentarians corresponding to its population size, ranging from two seats for countries with the smallest populations to 18 for those with the largest. Representatives sit in the Assembly in alphabetical order, not in national delegations, and vote in their individual capacity. Five major groups have been formed according to common political views: Socialist Group (SOC); Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD); Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE); European Democrat Group (EDG); Group of the Unified European Left (UEL). A number of representatives do not belong to any political group. The Assembly meets in ordinary session once a year for not more than a month in public at the seat of the Council. It elects its own President who controls its proceedings; the session is usually divided into four parts (held in the last full week of January, April, June and September). Annual joint meetings with the European Parliament are generally held for one day only. The Assembly may address recommendations to the Committee of Ministers by a two-thirds majority of the representatives casting a vote; resolutions on matters relating to internal procedure and opinions generally require simple majority. Committees have been set up by the Assembly to consider and report on various matters, to examine and prepare questions on the agenda, and to advise on procedural matters.

The Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe was established in 1994 as an advisory organ representing local and regional interests. Two chambers have been created within the Congress, one for the local authorities and one for the regions, thus giving voice to local democracy. The two-chamber assembly consists of 315 titular members and 315 substitute members.

The Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General responsible to the Committee of Ministers. The Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General are appointed by the Assembly for renewable five-year terms on the recommendation of the Committee of Ministers.

The budget of the Council is submitted annually by the Secretary-General for adoption by the Committee of Ministers. The expenses of the Secretariat as well as all other common expenses are shared between members according to proportions determined by the Committee of Ministers. France,

Germany, Italy and the UK together account for about two-thirds of the Council's ordinary budget.

Activities

Despite its fairly limited powers, the Council has succeeded in furthering regional co-operation in several key areas, lowering barriers between European countries, harmonizing legislation or introducing common European laws, eliminating discrimination on grounds of nationality, and undertaking a number of ventures on a joint European basis.

The end of the division of Europe and the resulting need for the creation of an area of democratic security throughout the whole of Europe led the Council to reconsider its role and its organizational mechanism at a Summit Conference of the Heads of State and Government (the first such meeting in the organization's history) held in Vienna on 8–9 October 1993. The resulting Vienna Declaration gave new impetus to the definition and implementation of legal standards in a number of fields, such as the protection of minorities. It also reinforced and streamlined the judicial control mechanism of the European Convention on Human Rights through the creation of a single European Court of Human Rights, replacing the part-time Court of Human Rights and Commission of Human Rights. A second Summit was held at Strasbourg on 10–11 October 1997 to review the Council's priorities and to reaffirm basic policies regarding democracy, human rights and human dignity, the rule of law and the enhancement of the European common cultural heritage. The Summit was also concerned with a ban on the cloning of human beings, stronger action against corruption and the creation of an office of Commissioner for Human Rights. The Commissioner helps promote the observance and full enjoyment of human rights as embodied in the various instruments of the Council. The Commissioner, who may not take up individual complaints, is elected by the Parliamentary Assembly for a non-renewable six-year term.

The third Summit, convened on 16–17 May 2005 in Warsaw, adopted a political declaration and an Action Plan stressing the main tasks of the Council in the coming years, including the need to create a new framework for enhanced co-operation with the EU.

Of paramount importance is the building up by the Council of a common law of Europe through multilateral conventions and agreements. About

200 legally binding European treaties or conventions have been adopted on topics ranging from human rights to the fight against organized crime and from the prevention of torture to cultural co-operation. Over 1000 recommendations have been addressed to governments covering major issues facing European society.

The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms represents a major achievement; its object is to guarantee internationally fundamental rights and freedoms and special machinery is provided for the observance and enforcement of the basic standards. The Convention, prepared under the auspices of the Council, was signed in Rome on 4 November 1950 and went into effect on 3 September 1953; a number of additional protocols (13) have been drawn up subsequently and gradually entered into force. Protocol 14, amending the control system of the Convention and containing a number of reform measures concerning the Court with a view to increasing its effectiveness, was agreed upon in May 2004 but has not yet come into force. Unlike the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, whose value essentially lies in the moral sphere, the European Convention is a binding treaty, though important reservations and denunciation are expressly permitted.

The new full-time single European Court of Human Rights, whose establishment was decided at the 1993 Vienna Summit, became operational on 1 November 1998. Like the original Court, it consists of a number of judges equal to that of the member countries of the Council. The judgment of the Court is final but acceptance of its jurisdiction is optional for the signatory countries.

The Council's Steering Committee for Human Rights is in charge of promoting intergovernmental co-operation in human rights and fundamental freedoms; it prepared, *inter alia*, the European Ministerial Conference on Human Rights that took place in 1985 and the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment adopted in 1987 and entered into force on 1 February 1989.

Following the adoption by the 1993 Vienna Summit Conference of a Plan of Action in the Fight against Racism, Xenophobia, Antisemitism and Intolerance, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, composed of government experts, was created in 1994. The Framework Convention for the Protection of National

Minorities, implementing a decision adopted by the Vienna Summit, was opened for signature in 1995 and came into force on 1 February 1998.

Conventions and agreements concluded within the framework of the Council cover a variety of aspects: social security; extradition; patents; medical treatment; training of nurses; equivalence of degrees and diplomas; hotel-keepers' liability; compulsory motor insurance; protection of television broadcasts; adoption of children; transportation of animals; movement of persons; archaeological heritage. A European Social Charter came into force on 26 February 1965, setting out the social and economic rights which the signatory countries agree to guarantee to their citizens and complementing to a certain extent the European Convention on Human Rights; in May 1988 the Charter was completed by an Additional Protocol. The 1996 revised European Social Charter, in force since 1999, strengthened the principle of women's equality and recognized rights in new areas. In June 1998 the Committee of Ministers established a European Committee for Social Cohesion.

The European Convention for the Suppression of Terrorism was adopted on 27 January 1977 and came into force on 4 August 1978. It is intended to facilitate the extradition and prosecution of perpetrators of terrorist acts even when such acts might be politically motivated. A protocol to the Convention has been prepared by the Council with a view to enhancing international co-operation in the area. The Council also produced a Convention on Cyber-crime, representing a significant innovation and paving the way to more effective anti-terror action. In 2002 the Council adopted the Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism in an effort to strike a balance between the obligation to provide protection against terrorist acts and the need to safeguard human rights.

In the economic and social field, particular attention is given to the protection of the socio-economic rights of the individual. The work of the Council ranges from consumer education and participation to specific aspects of social policy, welfare and labour law. The European Convention on the Legal Status of Migrant Workers has been in force since 1983.

The Council of Europe Development Bank provides funds for a variety of social projects from aid to refugees and victims of natural disasters to job creation in run-down areas and social infrastructure. With regard to health, the Council aims to

increase the exchange between member countries of medical techniques and equipment, to encourage study projects, to draw up common standards on the proper use of pharmaceuticals and on the medical and functional treatment of disabled persons. The Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine, aimed at preserving human dignity and integrity, was opened for signature on 4 April 1997 and entered into force on 1 December 1999. A protocol banning human cloning was added on 12 January 1998 and entered into force on 1 March 2001.

Many member countries co-operate within the framework of the 'Pompidou Group' to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. The Convention on the Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of a Crime was signed on 8 November 1990 and entered into force on 1 September 1993.

The Council has set up European Youth Centres in Strasbourg in 1972 and Budapest in 1995 to provide opportunities for international residential training courses and meetings. In order to grant financial assistance to European activities of non-governmental youth organizations, the Council created the European Youth Foundation which began operations in 1973.

On the legal plane, the European Committee on Legal Co-operation supervises the Council's work programme for international, administrative, civil and commercial law and has prepared numerous conventions. The European Committee on Crime Problems has also prepared conventions on matters falling within its competence such as mutual assistance in procedural matters, international validity of criminal judgments and transfer of proceedings. The Council for Cultural Co-operation (CCC) carries out the educational and cultural activities of the Council, based on the concepts of permanent education and cultural development. The CCC, which includes the members of the Council plus other signatories of the Cultural Convention, administers the Cultural Fund for the promotion and financing of educational and cultural activities. Several committees and expert groups assist the CCC. The Committee for the Development of Sport has the same membership as the CCC and administers the Sports Fund. Its activities concentrate on the implementation of the European Sport for All Charter of 1975 and related issues.

The Steering Committee on the Mass Media covers all aspects of mass communication with

special reference to broadcasting; it prepared the European Convention on Transfrontier Television which came into force on 1 May 1993.

The Steering Committee for the Conservation and Management of the Environment and Natural Habitats, established in 1962, draws up policy recommendations and promotes co-operation in all environmental questions. It introduced a European Water Charter in 1968, a Soil Charter in 1974 and a Charter on Invertebrates in 1986. The Cultural Heritage Committee promotes contacts between authorities in charge of historic buildings and encourages public interest. A Convention for the Conservation of the Architectural Heritage of Europe entered into force in 1987.

The European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North–South Centre) was established in 1990 in Lisbon with a view to encouraging co-operation between Europe and the developing countries.

Under an agreement concluded in 1990 by several member countries of the Council, the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) was established to handle the legal aspects of democratization in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

External relations

The Council has concluded agreements with the UN and several of its specialized agencies in order to exchange observers and documents and to co-ordinate mutual relations. The 1993 Vienna Declaration stressed the need for fuller co-ordination of the Council's activities with those of other European organizations. The Council's role in the existing institutional framework was also dealt with at the 1997 Strasbourg Summit. Co-operation in the human dimension sphere has been increasing with the relevant bodies of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), especially the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the High Commissioner on National Minorities. Relationships are also close with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and especially with the EU, in order to arrange reciprocal communication on matters of important European interest, provide for consultation and co-ordination with a view to avoiding duplication and waste of efforts, and develop joint projects. It is worth mentioning that the Assembly of the Western European Union (WEU) was composed of representatives of the Union's member countries to the Parliamentary

Assembly of the Council. Consultative status has been granted by the Council to over 350 non-governmental organizations.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Terry Davis

HEADQUARTERS: Palais de l'Europe, Avenue de l'Europe, 67075 Strasbourg, France (telephone: +33 3 8841 2000; fax: +33 3 8841 2781)

WEBSITE: <http://www.coe.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Activities Report*; *European Yearbook*; *Yearbook on the European Convention on Human Rights*; *Bulletin on Constitutional Case-Law* (three times a year)

REFERENCES: A.H. Robertson, *The Council of Europe. Its Structure, Functions and Achievements* (London, 2nd edn, 1961); A.H. Robertson, *European Institutions* (London, 3rd edn, 1973)

Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)

The Council aims to serve as an overall regional forum addressing the needs for intensified co-operation and co-ordination among the Baltic Sea countries.

Origin and development

The proposal to create the Council was launched in 1991 at a meeting of the Danish and German Foreign Ministers with a view to providing an institutional framework for economic assistance by the Nordic countries and Germany to the three Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), Poland and Russia. At the meeting held in Copenhagen on 5–6 March 1992, the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden and a member of the European Commission broadened considerably the original proposal to include additional areas of co-operation such as the environment, education and transportation. The adoption of the 'Copenhagen Declaration' establishing the Council concluded the meeting. Iceland joined the Council as a full member in 1993.

Membership

Eleven countries plus the European Commission enjoy full membership. France, Italy, the Netherlands,

Slovakia, Ukraine, the UK and the US enjoy observer status. Special participants include the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference, the Baltic Sea States Subregional Co-operation, and the Union of the Baltic Cities. More than 100 subregions (out of a total of 162) participate in the activities of the Council.

Objectives

The Council intends to foster co-operation among all countries bordering on the Baltic Sea or its main links to the open sea with a view to helping the establishment of new democratic institutions and co-ordinating policies in the fields of trade and economic development, humanitarian aid, the environment, energy, transport and communications, culture and education. Military and security matters are expressly excluded from the sphere of competence of the Council.

Structure

Summit meetings of Heads of Government take place every two years in order to give overall political guidance to the co-operation process. The Council, consisting of the Foreign Ministers of each member country (plus a representative of the European Commission), meets once a year, under a chairmanship rotating on an annual basis, to set the basic guidelines. Other ministers meet on an *ad hoc* basis according to their own decisions. The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), consisting of high-ranking representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of the European Commission, serves as a discussion forum. A number of Working Groups operate under the auspices of the CSO: the Working Group on Democratic Institutions (WGDI); the Working Group on Economic Co-operation (WGEC); the Working Group on Nuclear and Radiation Safety (WGNRS); the Working Group on Youth Affairs; the Working Group for Co-operation on Children at Risk; and the Working Group on Customs Co-operation and Border-Crossing

Aspects (WGCCBA). The permanent international Secretariat was officially inaugurated in Stockholm on 20 October 1998.

Activities

With regard to economic co-operation, progress has been made on simplification of customs procedures and border crossings as well as on regional transportation and energy projects. Initiatives have also been undertaken on the safety of shipping, maritime environmental protection, information technology and environmental technology.

The work of the human rights group paved the way to the appointment in May 1994 of a Commissioner on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Including the Rights of Persons Belonging to Minorities, operating within the framework of the Council and based in Copenhagen. The Commissioner of the Council of the Baltic Sea States on Democratic Development was called to concentrate efforts on democracy at national, regional and local levels. The office of the Commissioner was closed on 19 December 2003.

External relations

Besides the European Union (EU), the Council has developed close links with other European and pan-European institutions and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

LANGUAGE: English

DIRECTOR OF THE SECRETARIAT: Gabriele Kötschau

HEADQUARTERS: Strömsborg, PO Box 2010, 103 11 Stockholm, Sweden (telephone: +46 8 440 1920; fax: +46 8 440 1944)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cbss.st>

PUBLICATIONS: *Baltinfo* (official bimonthly journal); *Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) Annual Report*

Danube Commission

The Commission regulates navigation on the Danube in its various aspects, ensuring the application of uniform rules and providing the related services.

Origin and development

The Commission was established in 1949 according to the Convention on the regulation of shipping on the Danube which was signed in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, on 18 August 1948. The need to provide uniform navigation rules on international rivers in Europe led to the establishment of international river commissions under the Peace Treaties of Paris (1814) and Vienna (1815). A European Danube Commission was established on a temporary basis under the Peace Treaty of Paris in 1856 and reconstituted as a permanent institution in 1865. The problems concerning navigation on the Danube were again dealt with in the Peace Treaties with Austria, Bulgaria, Germany and Hungary between 1919 and 1921 and a Convention regarding the 'definitive' statute of the Danube was signed on 23 July 1921. A European Commission of the Danube was set up with jurisdiction over the maritime portion of the river while an International Commission exercised jurisdiction over the international waterway. After World War II, the navigation rules of the Danube were reconsidered in the Peace Treaties with Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania of February 1947, and subsequently became the specific object of the Belgrade Convention providing for the establishment of the present Commission.

Major political and economic events, including the break-up of countries which were original signatories of the Belgrade Convention and the emergence of newly independent states with justified interests in the Danube region, led to the adoption, on 26 March 1998, of an Additional Protocol that introduced a number of changes in the 1948 Convention. In particular, Germany was incorporated among the signatory countries to the Convention.

Membership

The Commission currently includes 11 countries with interests in the Danube region: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Ukraine. The

Czech Republic, France, the Netherlands and Turkey enjoy observer status.

Objectives

According to the 1948 Belgrade Convention, navigation on the Danube from Ulm, in Germany, to the Black Sea (with access to the sea through the Sulina arm and the Sulina Canal) was equally free and open to the nationals, merchant shipping and merchandise of all countries as to harbour and navigation fees as well as conditions of merchant navigation. The 1998 Additional Protocol stipulates that the Convention applies to navigation on the Danube from Kelheim, Germany, to the Black Sea, following the Sulina arm and the Sulina Canal.

The Commission, which enjoys legal status and has its own seal and flag, is empowered to: supervise the implementation of the provisions of the Belgrade Convention; establish the basic regulations for navigation on the river; ensure facilities for shipping; approve projects for maintenance of navigability and supervise technical services; establish a uniform buoying system on all navigable waterways; co-ordinate the regulations for customs, sanitation control, and the hydro-meteorological service; collect relevant statistical data.

Structure

The Commission is composed of one representative from each of its member countries and holds ordinary sessions twice a year. The Commission elects from among its members a President, a Vice-President and a Secretary for a three-year term. Administrative and technical functions are performed by the Secretariat, headed by a Director-General. Members of the Commission and elected officers are granted diplomatic immunity.

Activities

The hindrances to navigation on the Danube as a result of armed conflict in parts of former Yugoslavia and of international sanctions adopted against Serbia and Montenegro affected to a significant extent the activities of the Commission. After a virtual standstill in early 1993, transit traffic not subject to sanctions resumed, although with several difficulties. The end of sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia following the demise of the Milošević regime marked a new period in co-operation among countries bordering on the Danube. The opening on 21 September 1992 of the Rhine-Main-

Danube Canal between Nürnberg and Kelheim – for which charges are levied – brought about a substantial increase of traffic on the upper Danube.

At the beginning of 2000 a major project was set up, with the financial aid of the European Union (EU), for the clearance of the debris of three bridges on the Danube destroyed in April 1999. Despite political, administrative and technical difficulties, the project has been implemented and navigation on the Danube is fully ensured. The Commission is involved in the implementation of the Declaration of the Rotterdam Conference on Accelerating Pan-European Co-operation Towards a Free and Strong Inland Waterway Transport of 5–6 September 2001.

External relations

The Rhine-Main-Danube Canal has made it necessary for the Commission to intensify co-operation with the Central Commission for Navigation on the Rhine on harmonization of the shipping regimes and other priority technical, commercial and legal issues. The Commission has developed close relations with several international organizations including the EU, the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: French, German, Russian

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Danail Nedialkov

HEADQUARTERS: Benczúr utca 25, 1068 Budapest, Hungary (telephone: +36 1 461 8010; fax: +36 1 352 1839)

WEBSITE: <http://www.danubecom-intern.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Basic Regulations for Navigation on the Danube; Hydrological Yearbook; Statistical Yearbook*

REFERENCES: R.W. Johnson, 'The Danube since 1948', *Year Book of World Affairs*, 17 (1963); S. Gorove, *Law and Politics of the Danube: An Interdisciplinary Study* (The Hague, 1964)

Desert Locust Control Organization for Eastern Africa (DLCO-EA)

FOUNDED: 1962

OBJECTIVES: To promote the effective control of the desert locust in East Africa, to conduct

operational research and training programmes, and to assist member countries in the monitoring and extermination of other migratory pests.

MEMBERS: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Peter O. Odiyo

HEADQUARTERS: P.O. Box 4255, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (telephone: +251 116 461477; fax: +251 116 460296)

WEBSITE: <http://www.dlcoea.org.et>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Desert Locust Situation Reports* (monthly)

Developing Eight Economic Co-operation Group (D-8)

The Group is a forum for development co-operation among countries wishing to enhance their role in the global economy and improve their participation in decision-making at the international level.

Origin and development

The establishment of the Group was the result of the summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of the participating countries who adopted the Istanbul Declaration on 15 June 1997.

Membership

The Group is conceived as a global arrangement rather than a regional one since it includes developing countries in different continents: Bangladesh, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. Members account for approximately 13.5 per cent of total world population.

Objectives

To foster economic co-operation among members and to strengthen the role of developing countries in the world economy creating new opportunities in trade relations and providing better standards of living.

Structure

The Summit of the Heads of State and Government is the supreme organ meeting every two years. The Council, composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, is the political decision-making organ. Executive functions are performed by the Commission consisting of senior officials appointed

by their respective governments and in charge of coordination at the national level. The Secretary General, formerly called Executive Director, oversees the administrative activities carried out by the Secretariat. A Business Forum has been set up with a view to promoting co-operation in the private sector.

Activities

Six priority projects were initially selected for urgent implementation: creation of an international marketing and trading company; workshop on poverty alleviation; establishment of an industrial and technological data bank; promotion of joint ventures between insurance companies; development of aquaculture (inland and coastal); production and marketing of a multipurpose aircraft for agriculture. The Istanbul meeting in 1997 was followed by Summits in Dhaka (1–2 March 1999),

Cairo (25 February 2001), Tehran (18 February 2004) and Bali (13 May 2006). Several measures were adopted or proposed with a view to expedite co-operation in key sectors.

External relations

A relationship with the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) is gradually being built up. Other contacts are developed with international economic and financial institutions.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Ayhan Kamel

HEADQUARTERS: Müsir Fuad Pasa Yalisi, Eski Tersane, Emirgan Caddesi 90, 80860 Istinye-Istanbul, Turkey (telephone +90 212 277 5513; fax: +90 212 277 5519)

WEBSITE: <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/d-8>

East African Community (EAC)

The Organization groups five regional countries providing a framework for economic and social co-operation and integration.

Origin and development

The Treaty establishing the Community among Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda was signed in Arusha, Tanzania, on 30 November 1999 and entered into force on 7 July 2000. Before the re-establishment of the Community in 1999, the three countries had been working together under a number of regional arrangements, including the East African Common Services Organization (1961–67), the East African Community (1967–77), and the East African Co-operation (1993–99). The entry of Rwanda and Burundi into the Community on 1 July 2007 set the stage for an effective enlargement and strengthening of co-operation within the region.

Membership

Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda are full members.

Objectives

The Community's basic objectives include the establishment of a customs union and a monetary union with the ultimate goal of creating a political federation.

Structure

The general direction of the Community is provided by the Summit of the Heads of State or Government of member countries while the Council of Ministers is the main decision-making body. The Co-ordinating Committee, consisting of permanent secretaries, is in charge of the activities of the Sectoral Committees and reports to the Council.

Other key institutions include the East African Court of Justice and the East African Legislative Assembly.

The Secretariat is the executive organ; the core budget of the Secretariat is funded by equal contributions from member countries.

Autonomous institutions established by the Community include the East African Development Bank (EADB), the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization (LVFO), and the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

Activities

Initial areas for promoting co-operation cover trade, investments and industrial development, monetary and fiscal affairs, infrastructure and services, agriculture, environment and tourism and wildlife management. Further areas would include the free movement of factors of production and co-operation in political and security matters.

External relations

The Community co-operates with other African institutions, in particular the African Union (AU), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Juma Mwapachu

HEADQUARTERS: AICC Building, Kilimanjaro Wing, 5th floor, P.O. Box 1096, Arusha, Tanzania (telephone: +255 27 250 4253; fax: +255 27 250 4255)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eac.int>

PUBLICATION: *The Community* (Magazine of the EAC)

REFERENCES: C.P. Potholm and R.A. Fredland (eds), *Integration and Disintegration in East Africa* (Lanham, MD, 1980); S.E.A. Mvungi (ed.), *The Draft Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC: A Critical Review* (Dar es Salaam, 2002)

Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB)

FOUNDED: 1 October 1983

OBJECTIVES: To issue and manage a common currency (Eastern Caribbean Dollar) between members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), to promote monetary stability and a sound financial structure conducive to balanced growth, and to advise members on economic development matters

MEMBERS: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

GOVERNOR: Sir K. Dwight Venner

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 89, Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Nevis (telephone: +1 869 465 2537; fax: +1 869 465 9562)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eccb-centralbank.org>

PUBLICATION: *Annual Report*

Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (EMCCA)

[Communauté économique et monétaire de l'Afrique centrale (CEMAC)]

The Community aims to promote subregional integration within the framework of an economic and monetary union.

Origin and development

The Community was established by a treaty signed on 16 March 1994 in N'Djaména, Chad, by the Heads of State and Government of Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon; the treaty entered into force in June 1999. The new organization replaced – with the same membership – the Central African Customs and Economic Union [Union douanière et économique de l'Afrique centrale] (UDEAC) which had been created in 1964. At the summit meeting of UDEAC held in March 1994, the decision was taken to create the Community which began operations in 1998.

Membership

Six Central African countries.

Activities

All member countries of the Community use a common currency pegged to the French franc, that is the franc of the Coopération financière en Afrique centrale (CFA franc) whose issuing bank is the Banque des états d'Afrique centrale (BEAC) established in 1955 and based in Yaoundé, Cameroon. In response to repeated calls from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the French government, the countries using the CFA franc – which include all members of the Community plus seven other French-speaking countries in West Africa – devalued the currency by 50 per cent against the French

franc in January 1994. The new exchange rate was intended to alleviate balance-of-payments difficulties and restore the competitiveness of the countries involved in the devaluation. The CFA franc has been pegged to the euro, via the French franc, since 1 January 1999.

Recurring fighting among factions and civil unrest in most member countries have severely hampered efforts at co-operation.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: French

PRESIDENT OF THE EMCCA COMMISSION:
Antoine Ntsimi

HEADQUARTERS: BP 969, Bangui, Central African Republic (telephone: +236 611359; fax: +236 612135)

WEBSITE: <http://www.izf.net>

PUBLICATIONS: *Bulletin officiel*; *Echos d'aujourd'hui* (quarterly)

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

The Commission provides the only intergovernmental forum for the whole of Asia and the Pacific and fulfils a wide range of functions. It is the largest of the five regional commissions operating within the UN system under the authority of the Economic and Social Council, the other four being the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Origin and development

The Commission was founded in March 1947 by a resolution of the Economic and Social Council. Originally established in Shanghai, the Commission moved its headquarters to Bangkok in January 1949. Previously known as the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), the Commission was reorganized and renamed in 1974 so as to reflect more effectively the economic and social aspects of development and the geographic location of its members.

Initially involved in the urgent economic problems following World War II, the Commission subsequently took into consideration a wider range

of objectives in an increasing effort to cover new areas and needs as well as to intensify practical action for the benefit of the least-developed, land-locked and island countries of the region. Under the terms of reference laid down by the Economic and Social Council, the Commission is also responsible for undertaking or sponsoring investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within the region, and for evaluating and disseminating economic, technological and statistical information originating from this work.

The Commission enjoys considerable autonomy with regard to the fulfilment of its functions since the corresponding terms of reference are rather broadly formulated. These functions are related to the basic task of initiating and participating in measures with a view to facilitating concerted action for economic and social progress in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission is entitled to make recommendations to both the Economic and Social Council and the governments of member countries. Other powers conferred on the Commission include the adoption of the relevant rules of procedure, the appointment of the Chairman, and the establishment of any necessary subsidiary bodies. The Commission must submit an annual report on its activities and plans to the Economic and Social Council; the budget is sent for approval to the UN General Assembly.

Membership

The Commission's 62 members include 58 countries of Asia and the Pacific (except the Arab countries of South Western Asia pertaining to ESCWA, Israel pertaining to ECE, and Taiwan which remains outside the UN system) together with four non-regional members (France, the Netherlands, the UK and the US). Following the dissolution of the USSR, former Soviet republics in Central Asia and the Caucasus joined the Commission; Russia became a regional member in 1995. Seven non-self-governing Pacific territories, plus Hong Kong and Macao, enjoy associate membership. Members and associate members represent 3.9 billion people, that is about 60 per cent of the world's population.

Objectives

The Commission assists in the formulation and implementation of co-ordinated policies for promoting economic and technological development in the region and fosters the expansion of

trade and economic links among member countries and with other countries of the world. Besides furthering regional co-operation on economic issues and extending assistance to individual governments to formulate and implement balanced development programmes, the Commission gives increasing attention to the social aspects of economic development. Its activities are increasingly concentrated on improving the conditions of the region's some 830 million poor and promoting sustainable development.

Structure

The Commission ordinarily holds sessions at ministerial level once a year, with participation by the representatives of all member countries, to consider basic policies, set priorities and review projects and programmes which are being carried out. Decisions and resolutions are customarily adopted by consensus, without casting votes. Under no condition is the Commission allowed to take action against any member country without the latter's consent.

Committees, conferences, working groups, and other minor subsidiary bodies have been created by the Commission to provide adequate technical support for its activities. In 2002, the conference structure of the Commission was streamlined. At present there are three thematic committees (dealing respectively with poverty reduction, the management of globalization, and emerging social issues) and eight sectoral sub-committees.

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR), set up in 1974, meets almost every month and performs consultative and liaison tasks.

The Secretariat, located in Bangkok, provides the technical and administrative services for the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and is responsible for a wide range of general and specialized publications. The Executive Secretary is designated by the UN Secretary General and acts on his behalf. An ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre (UN-EPOC) was set up in 1984 to provide assistance at a subregional level and to identify the needs of island countries. Originally based in Port Vila, Vanuatu, UN-EPOC relocated to Suva, Fiji in 2005.

Activities

Since its inception, the Commission has gradually adapted its work programmes and priorities to the changing political, economic and social conditions

in the region, as well as extending co-operation to new fields. The vastness of the area concerned and the huge disparities in levels of development and available resources of member countries as well as the persistence of ideological cleavages have made it difficult to establish effective region-wide multi-lateral organizations. The Commission has therefore acted, within the UN framework, as a truly Asian-Pacific centre for furthering subregional, regional and interregional co-operation.

In recent years the Commission has made considerable efforts to implement projects of regional or subregional scope; it acts as executing agency for several programmes and projects.

A number of specialized bodies have been set up under the aegis of the Commission or with its assistance; they are located in different Asian cities and their membership varies according to their field of action. These regional bodies include the following: Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (APCAEM) based in Beijing; Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) based in Incheon, Korea; Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT) in New Delhi; Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA) in Bogor, Indonesia; and UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (UNSIAP) in Chiba, Japan.

As regards development planning, the Commission has been investigating issues relating to external debt, trade in primary commodities and foreign investment. The Commission has played an important role in the creation and subsequent improvement of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Several agencies have been created to assist member countries in the discovery and use of natural resources. In this connection the Commission is increasingly stressing the relevance of the environmental impact of the exploitation of natural resources. Other bodies have been set up in the fields of technology transfer, transport and communications, and typhoon, cyclone and flood warning systems. The Programme on Marine Affairs was set up in 1986 to advise member countries with regard to the 'exclusive economic zones' established under the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In agriculture the Commission helps to formulate regional and national policies that lead to increased agricultural production. Investigation is being carried out concerning new and renewable

energy sources in the region, with special reference to solar, wind and biomass energy. The Commission is also involved in bridging the digital divide, in health programmes covering basic community services and in health planning as part of overall development schemes.

External relations

Close relations exist between the Commission and the relevant UN specialized agencies and bodies in operation in Asia and the Pacific, as well as with the other regional economic commissions. A close co-operation has been developed with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). The high rate of population growth in the region has prompted studies on demography and the efficiency of national family-planning programmes, mostly funded by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

Co-operative links with the economic, technical and financial institutions in the region have been growing steadily with a view to co-ordinating and implementing programmes and projects of both regional and subregional scope. Assistance from the Commission was extended for the establishment of groupings dealing with commodities such as the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC), and the International Pepper Community (IPC). The Asian Development Bank (AsDB) was set up under the Commission's auspices and has been in operation since the mid-1960s; in July 1993 a memorandum was signed between the Commission and the Bank identifying priority areas of co-operation. The Commission also contributed to the establishment of the Mekong River Commission (MRC) in 1995.

LANGUAGES: Chinese, English, French, Russian

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Noeleen Heyzer

HEADQUARTERS: United Nations Building, Rajadamnern Nok Avenue, Bangkok 10200, Thailand (telephone: +66 2 288 1234; fax: +66 2 288 1000)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unescap.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* (annual); *Bulletin on Asia-Pacific Perspectives; Asia-Pacific Population Journal* (quarterly); *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific; Statistical Newsletter* (quarterly); *Trade and Investment Information Bulletin* (monthly)

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

The Commission is one of the five regional economic commissions of the UN – the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) being the other four.

Origin and development

Initially, attempts to set up an economic commission specifically responsible for the Middle East met with considerable difficulties of a political rather than economic nature. For a while the countries of the region had to be served by an *ad hoc* body, the UN Economic and Social Office in Beirut (UNESOB). In 1974 it finally proved feasible to establish a Commission in charge of the region and a resolution was adopted by the Economic and Social Council. The region included Egypt, Palestine and the Arab countries of South West Asia and excluded the remaining countries of the Middle East, that is Iran, Israel and Turkey. Actually Israel and Turkey belong to ECE while Iran belongs to ESCAP.

At a special session in September 1974, Beirut was chosen as seat of the Commission until 1979. The sixth session, held in 1979, decided to move the Commission to Baghdad where permanent headquarters were established in 1982. Following the Gulf War, temporary headquarters were established in 1991 in Amman. The decision to relocate the permanent headquarters in Beirut was adopted in 1994.

Membership

Members are 13 countries in Western Asia.

Objectives

The Commission acts within the UN framework under the authority of the Economic and Social Council; its purposes are primarily the formulation, co-ordination and implementation of policies for the promotion of economic and social development at regional level and the improvement, through individual and collective actions, of commercial and economic relations among member countries and with the rest of the world. As a body that is specifically in charge of a developing region, the Commission – under the terms of reference laid

down by the Economic and Social Council – must deal as appropriate with the social aspects of economic development and the relationship between economic and social factors. It has a broad mandate to consider any action that may be necessary for the attainment of its basic objectives. Besides its primary task of furthering through practical action the development of member countries, the Commission is responsible for promoting investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within Western Asia as well as for collecting, evaluating and disseminating the resultant economic, technological and statistical information.

The Commission is entitled to address recommendations on any matter falling within its competence not only to the Economic and Social Council but also directly to governments of member countries. Among the other powers conferred on the Commission are the following: drawing up its own rules of procedure; appointment of the Chairman of its session; establishment of subsidiary bodies appropriate for the fulfilment of its functions.

Structure

The Commission holds ordinary sessions every two years with the participation of representatives of all member countries. A Preparatory Committee meets before the Ministerial Session. Decisions and resolutions are customarily adopted by consensus, without formal voting. The Commission may act only with the agreement of the governments of the countries concerned. Subsidiary bodies consisting of government officials and experts have been set up by the Commission to consider specific issues of interest to countries of the region. Committees dealing with statistics, water resources, energy, social development and liberalization of foreign trade and economic globalization meet at biennial intervals; the Committee on Transport meets annually. The resolution to establish a Committee on Women was adopted on 1 October 2003.

The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Secretary, nominated by the UN Secretary General and acting on the latter's behalf. An annual report on its activities and plans is submitted to the Economic and Social Council; the budget is subject to formal approval by the UN General Assembly.

Activities

Since its creation, the Commission has made efforts with a view to fostering inter-sectoral co-ordination

and co-operation at the regional level, despite the serious and longstanding problems represented by marked imbalances in economic structures and large income disparities existing between and within its member countries. Because of limits on recruitment imposed during the last half of the 1980s, the Commission's programme of activities had to be substantially reduced.

In 1994, as a consequence of a fundamental reappraisal and restructuring of its programmes, the Commission adopted a 'thematic structure' allowing an interdisciplinary approach and greater mobility in the allocation of resources. Among special issues of concern to the Commission are Palestine and the situation in Iraq and Lebanon.

External relations

The Commission participates in the work of UN specialized agencies and other bodies operating in Western Asia and maintains close contacts with the other four regional economic commissions. Co-operation links have been established with Arab economic and financial institutions in the region.

LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Bader Al-Dafa

HEADQUARTERS: Riad el-Solh Square, PO Box 11-8575, Beirut, Lebanon (telephone: +961 1 981301; fax: +961 1 981510)

WEBSITE: <http://www.escwa.org.lb>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ESCWA Region* (annual); *The ESCWA Region: Twenty-five Years: 1974-1999, Political, Economic and Social Developments; External Trade Bulletin of the ESCWA Region* (annual); *Population Bulletin of the ESCWA Region* (annual); *Agriculture and Development in Western Asia* (annual); *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA Region* (annual)

Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

The Commission is one of the five regional economic commissions operating within the UN system: the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the Economic

Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), being the other four.

Origin and development

The Commission was created in 1958 by resolution of the Economic and Social Council as a subsidiary organ of the UN. Its membership has varied considerably over the years. At the very beginning six European nations (Belgium, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and the UK) with special interests in the region participated as full members alongside ten independent African countries; nine African countries not yet independent were associate members. Subsequently, Italy and Belgium withdrew, France, Spain and the UK became associate members and Portugal was excluded. As they gained independence, all other African countries joined the Commission as full members; the Republic of South Africa, suspended in 1965, resumed participation in 1994.

Membership

The Commission's present membership includes 53 African countries.

Objectives

The Commission is called upon, under the authority of the UN Economic and Social Council, to initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for economic development, to maintain and strengthen the economic relations of member countries among themselves and with other countries of the world, and to produce and disseminate economic, technological and statistical information.

The Commission was involved from the start in the problems of Africa's economic and social development; as a body specifically intended to serve a developing region and according to the terms of reference laid down by the Economic and Social Council, the Commission was also endowed with rather wide functions concerning technical co-operation and other forms of operational activity. In addition, appropriate consideration should be given to the social aspects of economic development and the relationship between economic and social factors. The basic goals of promoting self-sustaining processes of development at both regional and subregional levels, alleviating unemployment and mass poverty, protecting the environment, and establishing equitable and mutually beneficial relations between the continent and the rest of the

world, are to be achieved, *inter alia*, through: development of self-sufficiency in food; foundation and strengthening of a sound industrial base; improvement of the physical infrastructure, especially transport and communications; development of natural resources, technology and services; co-ordinated planning of economic growth; and the advancement of economic co-operation and integration within subregional groupings.

The functions of the Commission are of an operational rather than deliberative nature and are closely connected with the fundamental task of promoting sound economic and social progress in the African continent. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Commission may directly address recommendations on any matter falling within its competence to its member countries as well as to the Economic and Social Council. It is empowered to draw up its own rules of procedure, to elect the Chairman of its sessions and to create the necessary subsidiary bodies.

Structure

Until 1965 the Commission customarily held annual sessions, with participation by representatives of all member countries. Biennial sessions were subsequently held until a resolution was adopted in 1969 that these ordinary biennial sessions should be held at ministerial level; they became known as meetings of the Conference of Ministers. The Conference of Ministers, which is the highest decision-making organ, meets at biennial intervals. The Commission's Follow-up Committee on the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning meets at least once in intersessional years to review the implementation of decisions and programmes. It is the responsibility of the Conference, customarily attended by Ministers of Economic or Financial Affairs, to consider the Commission's basic policies, to set priorities, and to review the course of programmes and projects being implemented together with international economic issues of interest to Africa. Decisions and resolutions are normally adopted by consensus without any formal vote being cast. Under no circumstances is it possible to take action against any country without the latter's consent. A number of technical committees and other ad hoc subsidiary bodies composed of specialists and government officials have been created over the years by the Commission according to its needs.

The Secretariat has its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It services the meetings of the Conference of Ministers and the subsidiary bodies and performs a wide range of technical and administrative functions. The Commission's Executive Secretary is designated by the UN Secretary General.

The Commission must submit a full annual report on its activities and plans to the Economic and Social Council; the UN General Assembly is responsible for the formal approval of the Commission's budget.

Activities

The work programmes of the Commission include a wide range of fields. A strong emphasis is being laid on agricultural problems in order to expand activities in the field of food development and to co-ordinate guidelines for drawing up additional programmes and projects concerning food, livestock, fishery and forestry products. Industrial policies and strategies are especially aimed at improving co-operation between African countries for the mutual supply of raw materials, exchange of technical expertise and implementation of joint projects. Training of personnel for research and development programmes, improvement of indigenous technologies, and import of adequate foreign technologies represent other major fields of action. Assistance is provided by the Commission to enable member countries to inventory mineral, land and water resources and to develop both conventional and non-conventional sources of energy, including solar, geothermal and biogas energy. The African Regional Centre for Solar Energy started operations in 1989 in Bujumbura, Burundi. Substantial efforts are being made to expand road, rail, sea and air links between member countries and to improve the Pan-African Telecommunication network (PANAF-TEL). Efforts at facilitating development of transport and communications were carried out within the framework of the Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade for Africa. The promotion of intra-regional trade and financial relations is carried forward, *inter alia*, through the negotiation of several protocols after the completion of background technical studies on imports and exports and related production capacities.

The Commission has encouraged member countries to undertake the necessary reforms to attract private investment in the continent and has repeatedly stressed the need to promote food security and

self-sufficiency. While supporting the implementation of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, the Commission has been studying ways and means to rationalize and harmonize regional integration groupings in West and Central Africa.

External relations

The Commission works in close collaboration with the relevant UN specialized agencies operating in Africa and with the other four regional economic commissions. Effective co-operation links exist in particular with African international organizations, notably the African Union (AU), subregional integration bodies such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and financial institutions such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Association of African Central Banks (AACB). Technical support has been provided by the Commission in the establishment of several of these bodies. Ties between the Commission and Arab countries outside Africa have been growing since the late 1970s within the framework of the Declaration of Afro-Arab Economic and Financial Co-operation adopted at the first Afro-Arab Summit Conference held in March 1977. Regarding development assistance financing in particular, projects are being submitted for consideration to the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA). On the whole, the Commission has been playing a role in fostering intra-regional co-ordination and co-operation, as well as establishing mutually beneficial and equitable relations between African countries and the rest of the world.

LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Abdoulie Janneh

HEADQUARTERS: Africa Hall, PO Box 3001, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (telephone: +251 11 551 7200; fax: +251 11 551 0365)

WEBSITE: <http://www.uneca.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Economic Report on Africa* (annual); *Survey of Economic and Social Conditions in Africa* (annual); *African Statistical Yearbook; Annual Report on Regional Integration; African Trade Bulletin* (twice a year)

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Socio-Economic Development of Africa (Addis Ababa, 1979); OAU, *ECA and Africa's Development: 1983–2008. A Preliminary Prospective Study* (Addis Ababa, 1983); T. M. Shaw, 'The UN Economic Commission for Africa: Continental Development and Self-reliance', in *The United Nations in the World Political Economy*, ed. D. P. Forsythe (London, 1989)

Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

The Commission operates within the UN framework, under the authority of the Economic and Social Council, like the other four regional economic commissions, that is the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Origin and development

The Commission was established in March 1947 by a resolution of the Economic and Social Council as an operational body to deal with the urgent economic problems arising from World War II. Its full members included several European countries plus the US; a number of non-UN members in Europe, such as Switzerland, were for a while granted consultative status. Subsequently membership increased considerably, despite various obstacles of a mainly political nature that delayed the effective participation of some countries; Switzerland gained full admission in 1972. Another country outside Europe, Canada, joined the Commission in 1973 as full member, followed at the beginning of the 1990s by Israel which had never before participated in a regional economic commission. The dissolution of the USSR and the subsequent entry into the Commission of former Soviet republics in Europe, Trans-Caucasia and Central Asia have profoundly affected the nature of the body and its activities. All newly independent republics belonging to former Yugoslavia have joined the Commission, the last being Montenegro admitted as a member on 28 June 2006.

Membership

Total membership now includes 56 countries. Participation is open to all interested UN members.

The Holy See, which is not a UN member, participates in a consultative capacity.

Objectives

The Commission is charged with the promotion of concerted action for raising the levels of economic activity, expanding trade and economic relations among member countries as well as with other countries and carrying out investigations of economic and technological developments within the region. Particular emphasis was placed on assisting the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former USSR to promote trade and investment within the institutional framework of a market economy. The Commission is also responsible for undertaking the collection and evaluation and, if appropriate, the publication of economic and statistical information.

Originally devoted to the primary task of post-war reconstruction in Europe, in its early years the Commission had to face the tensions originating from the Cold War. Only gradually could the Commission take on the role of fostering economic co-operation between countries with different economic and social systems, as well as between subregional economic groupings, and forging a partnership between the two halves of the continent in a truly pan-European context. In response to the radical change initiated in the region in 1989, the Commission went through a process of restructuring and adjustment to the new needs and realities. The Commission's functions and powers, according to the rather broad terms of reference laid down by the Economic and Social Council, are essentially related to the initiation of and participation in measures for facilitating concerted action for economic progress in Europe.

Structure

The Commission normally holds an annual session in Geneva, with the participation of the representatives of all member countries, while meetings of subsidiary bodies are convened throughout the year. Decisions and resolutions (both classes of actions having identical legal effects) are customarily adopted by consensus without any formal vote being cast; abstentions are not recorded. Under no circumstances is the Commission allowed to take action against any country without the latter's consent.

Over the years a number of Principal Subsidiary Bodies have been established by the Commission

with the approval of the Economic and Social Council and after discussion with the specialized agencies operating in the same fields. At present there are several bodies performing tasks of a mainly technical nature in specific sectors or charged with the study of inter-sectoral problems. Principal Subsidiary Bodies include: the Committee on Environmental Policy; the Inland Transport Committee; the Conference of European Statisticians; the Committee on Sustainable Energy; the Trade Committee; the Timber Committee; the Committee on Housing and Land Management; and the Committee on Economic Co-operation and Integration. The work of these organs is supplemented by several minor specialized bodies and *ad hoc* groups.

The Secretariat is located in Geneva and provides the services necessary for the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. It is responsible, *inter alia*, for the publication of general and specialized periodic surveys and reviews, including statistical bulletins. The Commission's Executive Secretary is nominated by the UN Secretary General and acts on his behalf but enjoys considerable autonomy in practice. The Commission, which is entitled to draw up its rules of procedure, is empowered to address recommendations on any matter within its competence directly to its member countries as well as to the Economic and Social Council. A detailed annual report on its activities and plans has to be submitted by the Commission to the Economic and Social Council; the budget is incorporated into the overall UN budget and is subject to formal approval by the General Assembly.

Activities

Since its foundation the Commission has been deeply involved in a wide variety of activities, ranging from early reconstruction problems following World War II through to East-West economic co-operation issues. Although inevitably affected by the overall political climate prevailing during four decades in East-West relations, the Commission made substantive efforts to use the available opportunities and to adopt a realistic and essentially pragmatic approach to the most controversial issues, ultimately acting as a bridge between the two halves of the continent. In the aftermath of the profound changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s, the specific needs and priorities of the countries in transition became the central issue addressed by the

Commission attempting to develop intra-European co-operation to the fullest extent practicable within its competence and resources.

The Commission's continuing search for solutions to problems of common concern to member countries has concentrated on the areas covered by its Principal Subsidiary Bodies. A strong emphasis was placed for several decades on the expansion of trade between centrally-planned and market-economy countries on mutually favourable terms and the correlative elimination of restrictive and discriminatory practices. Facilities have been provided with regard to arbitration, insurance, standardization of general conditions of sale of goods, payment arrangements, and compensation procedures and consultations. The Commission has rendered valuable technical assistance in the field of industrial co-operation, compensation trade and inventory of obstacles to trade. Continuing attention has been given to various branches of industrial activity, particularly steel, chemicals, engineering and automation. The Commission's work has also proved fruitful with regard to problems arising from mechanization and rationalization in agriculture, and market conditions of agricultural products.

Selected problems of economic policy are considered at regular intervals by high-level governmental experts and medium and long-term projections, joint research projects and other studies are carried out with a view to facilitating the harmonization of economic policies of member countries. Scientific and technological developments and their related problems are kept under close review and proposals have been put forward towards further international co-operation.

With regard to energy problems, including energy resources and national policies, special attention has been devoted by the Commission to the economic and technical aspects of energy supplies in the face of growing demand and complex conservation and substitution problems. Rising demand for water has led the Commission to undertake a review of major trends and policies concerning use and development of water resources. With regard to environmental questions, the Commission surveys and assesses the state of the environment in the region and considers national policies, institutions and laws, as well as the international implications of environmental policies.

The Commission has drawn up more than 30

conventions and protocols and over 250 regulations and standards with a view to facilitating trade and protecting the environment. Increased attention is devoted to transport policy and infrastructure while operational projects are being carried out in conjunction with the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Improvement of national statistics in various fields, exchange of technical information and publication of general and specialized reports have also helped strengthen links between the countries of the region.

In April 1997, on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, the Commission adopted a 'Declaration on the strengthening of economic co-operation in Europe' and a Plan of Action. The Plan was guided by five fundamental concerns: (a) the concentration on areas where the Commission enjoys a recognized expertise and wide support throughout the region; (b) the streamlining of the intergovernmental machinery and the reduction of the number of subsidiary bodies; (c) the rationalization of methods of work; (d) the introduction of greater flexibility in the programme of work according to the needs and priorities of member countries; and (e) the strengthening of co-ordination and co-operation with other regional and global organizations. A major remodelling of the Commission's governance structure and a redefinition of its priorities was undertaken in 2005 and was basically implemented in 2006.

The Commission's normative activities are characterized by an increasingly global outreach, especially in the areas of transport, energy, trade and statistics where a growing number of legally binding agreements and other standards are being used also by non-member countries.

External relations

The Commission co-operates with the relevant UN specialized agencies and other international bodies as well as with the other four regional economic commissions. Effective co-operation has existed since the mid-1960s between the Commission and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); there are also close ties with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The Commission serves as executing agency for UNDP. The European Community (EC) and the Danube Commission were granted consultative status within the Commission in 1975. The Commission is also linked with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Marek Belka

HEADQUARTERS: Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 917 1234; fax: +41 22 917 0505)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unece.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *ECE Highlights* (three times a year); *UNECE Weekly*; *Economic Survey of Europe* (twice a year); *Trends in Europe and North America: Statistical Yearbook* (annual)

REFERENCES: J. Siotis, 'The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Emerging European System', *International Conciliation*, 561 (1967), 5-72; *UN ECE, Three Decades of the UN ECE* (New York 1978); F. Parkinson, 'The Role of the UN Economic Commission for Europe', in *East-West Relations: Prospects for the 1980s*, ed. G. Schiavone (London, 1982), 111-32; *UN ECE, Looking Back and Peering Forward: A Short History of the UN Economic Commission for Europe, 1947-2007* (Geneva, 2007)

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

The Commission is one of the five regional economic commissions of the UN operating under the authority of the Economic and Social Council – the others being the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

Origin and development

The Commission was established on 25 February 1948 by resolution of the Economic and Social Council as a subsidiary organ of the UN under the name of Economic Commission for Latin America. The reference to the Caribbean was added to the title in 1984.

Membership

Members include 33 countries of the region plus Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the UK and the US. There are eight associate members: Anguilla,

Aruba, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, Puerto Rico, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the US Virgin Islands.

Objectives

The Commission is responsible for facilitating and stimulating concerted action by member countries with regard to regional and national development problems, the expansion of mutual trade, and economic integration. Established under the pressure of several Latin American countries concerned about the urgency and magnitude of their economic difficulties and dissatisfied with the policies of the US towards its southern neighbours, the Commission initially considered measures for dealing with the basic problems of the period following World War II and for raising the levels of economic activity in the region. Subsequently, considerable emphasis has been given to a wide range of objectives including: systematic preparation of indicators of economic and social development at national, subregional and regional levels; improvement of planning machinery and techniques and the training of officials and experts; management of the environment and water resources; promotion and strengthening of economic integration within subregional and regional groupings and between these groupings and other organizations of the inter-American and world systems. The Commission is also responsible for dealing with the social aspects of economic development and the relationship between economic and social factors.

The Commission's mandate was strengthened by member countries in 1996 with a view to increasing the relevance of its various activities. The Commission aims to become a centre of excellence in the region to assist members in the integral analysis of the development process through the formulation, evaluation and follow-up of public policies. The Commission is also called to provide advice, training and support for regional and international co-operation and co-ordination.

Structure

The Commission normally holds biennial sessions, with participation of the representatives of all member countries, in one of the Latin American capitals; a Committee of the Whole meets between sessions. Permanent subsidiary bodies have been created by the Commission: Central American Development and Co-operation Committee; Caribbean Development and Co-operation

Committee; Committee of High-Level Government Experts; Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean; Statistical Conference of the Americas. The Secretariat is located in Santiago, Chile, with a subregional office in Mexico City, a subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port of Spain, and offices in Bogotá, Brasília, Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Washington DC.

The Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) was set up in June 1962 under the aegis of the Commission with financial support from the UN, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and several Latin American governments, and with the co-operation of the Organization of American States (OAS), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other international agencies. The Institute, whose headquarters are located in Santiago, Chile, provides training services with international and national courses and advisory assistance mainly concerning long-term strategies and medium-term plans and fosters co-operation among national planning bodies.

The Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), set up in 1957 and located in Santiago, Chile, became an integral part of the Commission in 1975. The Centre, with financial assistance from the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), investigates the determining factors and consequences of population dynamics, prepares population estimates and projections, carries out advisory activities through numerous technical assistance missions to different countries of the region and conducts postgraduate courses and seminars.

The annual report of the Commission is submitted to the Economic and Social Council; the budget is subject to the approval of the UN General Assembly.

Activities

While retaining the specific economic and social needs of Latin America as its basic priority, in recent years the Commission has approached regional issues within the broader framework of globalization with the aim of gradually reducing inequality between developed and developing countries. A major contribution has been made by the Commission in order to establish and improve the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Other fields of action are represented by the transfer of resources, international monetary reform,

science and technology, industrialization, food and agriculture.

In collaboration with the Latin American Economic System (SELA), the Commission organized the Latin American Economic Conference held in Quito, Ecuador, in January 1984, to discuss, in particular, the problems of renegotiation and service of the foreign debt. A special conference to examine national and international strategies for the region's economic recovery was held in January 1987; a regional conference on poverty took place in August 1988. The deterioration of the economic and social situation in the region throughout the 1980s prompted the Commission in May 1990 to advance proposals for overcoming the most serious obstacles to growth such as the heavy external debt, high interest rates, barriers against Latin American exports and low commodity prices. Current strategies are being developed by the Commission in the prospect of the eventual transformation of the productive structures of the region within a context of increased democracy, strengthened social protection and greater social equity, and the development of sustainable and systemic competitiveness.

External relations

The Commission works in close collaboration with UN Headquarters and with specialized agencies and other organizations. Since its establishment, the Commission has played a very active role in fostering intra-regional co-operation and integration, assisting in the creation of the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), the Central American Common Market (CACM) and SELA, and co-operating with the Andean Community and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Intra-regional co-operation has been improved and extended to cover a growing number of areas. Substantive steps have been taken to define different degrees of preferential treatment among Latin American countries according to their respective level of economic development. This concept was embodied in the treaty establishing the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) as an area of economic preferences.

LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: José Luis Machinea

HEADQUARTERS: Edificio Naciones Unidas, Avenida Dag Hammarskjöld 3477, Vitacura, PO Box 179 D, Santiago, Chile (telephone: +56 2 210 2000; fax: +56 2 208 0252)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eclac.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean* (annual); *CEPAL Review* (three times a year); *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean*; *Social Panorama of Latin America* (annual); *Foreign Investment in Latin America and the Caribbean* (annual); *Latin America and the Caribbean in the World Economy* (annual)

REFERENCE: F.H. Cardoso, *The Originality of the Copy: ECLA and the Idea of Development* (Cambridge, MA, 1977)

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

[*Communauté économique des états de l'Afrique centrale (CEEAC)*]

The Community aims to foster economic co-operation and to promote regional security among countries in Central Africa.

Origin and development

The Community was created by a treaty which was signed on 18 October 1983 at Libreville by Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Zaire (now Congo Democratic Republic) and which entered into force on 1 January 1985. Actual operations began in July 1995 when the Secretary-General was appointed and the basic co-operation programmes adopted. Angola joined the Community in 1998.

A protocol annexed to the treaty provided for the setting up of a clearing house in order to save on the use of convertible foreign exchange in settling payments among member countries. However, the clearing house arrangement which has been actually operating in the Community is that between the members of the Banque des états d'Afrique centrale (BEAC) and the Congo Democratic Republic, in effect since 1981.

Membership

Eleven Central African countries.

Objectives

The Community promotes economic co-operation, particularly with regard to free movement of citizens, removal of trade barriers and establishment of

a common external tariff, standardization of trade documents, and establishment of a development fund. Since the late 1990s, the promotion of peace, security and stability has been added to the Community's basic goals.

Structure

The Conference of Heads of State and Government of the member countries, meeting annually, is the supreme decision-making institution. The meetings of the Conference are prepared by the Council of Ministers that implements the relevant decisions with the assistance of a Secretariat and several standing directorates.

Activities

The activities and prospects of the Community have been affected, especially between 1992 and 1997, to a remarkable extent by civil wars, often spilling over national boundaries, and intra-state conflicts.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

SECRETARY GENERAL: Louis Sylvain Goma

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 2112, Libreville, Gabon (telephone: +241 444731; fax: +241 444732)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ceeac-eccas.org>

PUBLICATION: *Newsletter*

Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

[*Communauté économique des états de l'Afrique de l'ouest (CEDEAO)*]

The Community involves member countries in a wide-ranging integration scheme aimed at establishing a common market and a single currency as well as developing co-operation in the political and security fields.

Origin and development

The establishment of the Community represented a significant step towards the implementation of a flexible economic co-operation and integration scheme embracing the entire West African sub-region. The original legal instrument of the Community was the Treaty signed in Lagos, Nigeria, on 28 May 1975 by the Heads of State and Government of Benin, Burkina Faso (then known as

Upper Volta), Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. The implementation of several basic provisions of the Treaty required the subsequent adoption of five Protocols, signed in Lomé, Togo, on 5 November 1976. Cape Verde joined the Community in 1977; Mauritania withdrew in 2001. A revised Treaty for the Community was drawn up in 1991–92 and eventually signed in Cotonou, Benin, in July 1993. The Treaty of Cotonou entered into force on 30 July 1995.

Membership

Fifteen English-, French-, Portuguese- and Arab-speaking West African countries.

Objectives

The Treaty of Cotonou provides for the gradual establishment of a common market – ensuring the free movement of goods, people, services and capital – and of a monetary union and for the prevention and settlement of regional conflicts through 'solidarity and collective self-reliance'. Economic integration is to be promoted in all fields of economic activity, particularly industry, transport, telecommunications, energy, agriculture and natural resources.

Structure

The principal organs through which the Community accomplishes its purposes are the Authority of Heads of State and Government, the Council of Ministers, the Executive Secretariat, and the Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development.

The Authority is the supreme institution of the Community meeting at least once a year in ordinary session under the chairmanship of a member elected every year. It is responsible for the general direction and control of the organization and is empowered to take all measures necessary to ensure its development and the realization of its objectives. The Council of Ministers, meeting at least twice a year in ordinary session, comprises for each country the Minister in charge of ECOWAS affairs and another Minister. It is within the responsibility of the Council to make recommendations to the Authority, approve the work programmes and budget and exercise all powers delegated to it by the Authority.

The Secretariat, headed by an Executive

Secretary appointed by the Authority for a four-year term renewable only once, is assisted by Technical and Specialized Commissions and Committees.

The Fund for Co-operation, Compensation and Development, based in Lomé, Togo, provides assistance to member countries which have suffered losses as a result of the application of the provisions of the Treaty, grants loans for feasibility studies and development projects, guarantees foreign investment in enterprises established according to the rules of the Treaty and promotes development projects in the less developed member countries. The Fund is to be converted into the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID).

The Community Parliament, where seats are shared among member countries on the basis of population, and the Community Court of Justice, made up of seven judges, have been established by the Authority of Heads of State and Government. The Parliament, based in Abuja, Nigeria, held its inaugural session in November 2000; the Court of Justice, also located in Abuja, was established in January 2001. An Economic and Social Council performs consultative functions.

Activities

The Community has been based from its very beginning on the recognition of the 'realities' prevailing in the different member countries and of the existence of other intergovernmental bodies and economic groupings within the subregion.

The problems of political co-operation and security which had not been envisaged by the Treaty of Lagos are now being considered within the framework of the Treaty of Cotonou. However, even before the signature of the Treaty of Cotonou, security agreements had been concluded. A protocol on non-aggression was signed in April 1978 by the Heads of State and Government and was followed, in May 1981, by a pact on mutual defence agreed upon by 13 members. An attempt at mediating in the civil war in Liberia was made in 1990 and an ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was sent to that country in order to prevent further conflict and establish an interim government until elections could be held. Despite the increase in the number of troops participating in the peacekeeping operations, fighting continued throughout the early 1990s among rival groups. The civil war in Liberia represented a dominant issue on the agenda of the Community with repeated calls for the conclusion of

a 'workable compromise' among the warring factions. The headquarters of ECOMOG were subsequently moved to Sierra Leone to face the threats to peace arising in that country. In early 1999 ECOMOG soldiers were deployed in Guinea-Bissau to act as an interposition force. An ECOWAS military mission to monitor the situation in Côte d'Ivoire (ECOMICI) was established after the violent unrest that erupted in that country in September 2002.

The security situation in the subregion continues to dominate the political agenda of the Community and is being systematically reviewed by the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council.

The poor record of implementation of the basic economic and monetary goals of the Community may be ascribed to several causes, the major one being the lack of commitment on the part of the governments of the member countries. This has materialized, *inter alia*, in the failure to pay contributions on a regular basis and in the unwillingness to translate into effective national policies the Community's decisions. The need has emerged to improve the efficiency of the Executive Secretariat and to adopt programmes and policies that are realistic and pragmatic with the identification of priority areas of intervention.

External relations

Delicate problems have arisen in the Community's relationship with other economic and political groupings in West Africa, especially with the West African Economic Community (CEAO) until its demise in 1994 and the newly-created West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA). Contacts have been strengthened with the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) on the occasion of the crisis in Guinea-Bissau. A promising area of co-operation is represented by the Community's growing ties with the European Union (EU). Besides the EU, support to the regional integration process carried out by the Community has been provided by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the African Union (AU).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Mohamed Ibn Chambas

HEADQUARTERS: 60 Yakubu Gowon Crescent, Asokoro District, PMB 401, Abuja, Nigeria (telephone: +234 9 3147 647-9; fax: +234 9 3143 005)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sec.ecowas.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *ECOWAS Handbook of International Trade*; *ECOWAS Social and Economic Indicators*; *ECOWAS News*

REFERENCES: J.E. Okolo and S. Wright (eds), *West African Regional Cooperation and Development* (Boulder, CO, 1990); A.I. Asiwaju, *Boundaries and African Integration: Essays in Comparative History and Policy Analysis* (Lagos, 2003); K.O. Kufuor, *The Institutional Transformation of the Economic Community of West African States* (Aldershot, UK, 2006)

Economic Co-operation Organization (ECO)

The Organization provides a framework for co-operation between its three original founders and the newly independent countries of Central Asia.

Origin and development

The Organization was established as a trilateral institution in January 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey to replace a former body, the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), which had been set up on 21 July 1964 to expand economic links between the three countries. The Treaty of Izmir concluded in 1977, which provided the legal framework for the RCD, subsequently became the basic Charter of the new Organization. The Treaty of Izmir was amended by a Protocol adopted on 18 June 1990, at a Ministerial Meeting held in Islamabad, in order to ensure an appropriate basis for the transition from RCD to the new Organization which became fully operational in early 1991. The three original members of the Organization had already established a joint postal organization (the South and West Asia Postal Union) in 1988 and a joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 1990. The disintegration of the USSR and the independence achieved by the republics of Central Asia and the Caucasus made it possible to include in the Organization as full members Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as Azerbaijan. Afghanistan also joined the Organization. The seven new members started participating in the Organization's activities in the second half of 1992, after accession to the Treaty of Izmir, further amended by a new Protocol on 28 November 1992.

The Heads of State and Government of the three founder countries held their first Summit meeting on 16–17 February 1992 in Tehran and endorsed the enlargement of the Organization. The second Summit meeting took place on 6–7 May 1993 in Istanbul with the participation of the new members to endorse the Quetta Plan of Action and ECO Long-term Perspectives. The third Summit meeting was held on 14–15 May 1995 in Islamabad; several agreements were signed including those establishing several Regional Institutions and Specialized Agencies.

The need of a restructuring of the Organization to adjust to the considerable expansion in its membership and to its new role in the region led to a reappraisal of the basic documents. The relevant issues were discussed at the fourth Summit meeting, held on 14 May 1996 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. The Ashgabat Declaration was adopted concerning the development of regional transport and communication infrastructure and transnational pipelines. The revised Treaty of Izmir and the Agreement on the Legal Status of ECO were signed by the Ministers of the member countries on 14 September 1996 in Izmir. An Economic Co-operation Strategy for the ECO Region was also adopted.

Membership

Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey and the five former Soviet republics of Central Asia.

Objectives

The aims of the Organization are to encourage and strengthen economic, technical and cultural co-operation, in view of the eventual creation of a common market, and to promote the sustainable socio-economic development and welfare of the peoples of the region.

Structure

The Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries, generally held at two-year intervals, provides the guidelines for the development of co-operation. The Council of Ministers is the highest policy and decision-making body and consists of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting at least once a year; the presidency rotates among member countries. Meetings of other ministers may be convened by the Council as the need arises. Besides preparing the agenda for the Summit meetings, the Council approves policies, strategies and

work programmes of the Organization, appoints the Secretary-General and his Deputies, adopts the reports of the various bodies and approves the annual budget, deciding on the contributions of member countries. The Regional Planning Council (RPC) consists of the heads of the planning organization or equivalent ministry of the member countries and meets at least once a year prior to the annual meeting of the Council of Ministers. The RPC is responsible for annual reviews of the progress in the implementation of the various programmes of action and projects and for biennial evaluations of the Organization's priorities as laid down in the Economic Co-operation Strategy. The Council of Permanent Representatives (CPR) is composed of the Ambassadors of member countries accredited as representatives to the Organization and meets whenever necessary. The CPR carries out the policies adopted by the Council of Ministers and follows up action on the decisions of the RPC. The Secretariat co-ordinates the Organization's activities, assists all permanent and *ad hoc* organs and services all the meetings, preparing reports and documents.

Regional Institutions in various stages of implementation include the ECO Shipping Company, ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, ECO Reinsurance Company, ECO College of Insurance, ECO Trade and Development Bank, ECO Consultancy and Engineering Company, ECO Supreme Audit Institutions (ECOSAI), and the ECO News Agency (ECONA). The Specialized Agencies are the ECO Cultural Institute, ECO Science Foundation and ECO Educational Institute.

Activities

The fifth Summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government which took place on 11 May 1998 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, witnessed the approval of documents relating, *inter alia*, to customs co-operation and transit transport. At the sixth Summit meeting, on 10 June 2000 in Tehran, the Heads of State and Government called for the effective start of operations of the ECO Trade and Development Bank and other Regional Institutions and Specialized Agencies. Oil and gas pipeline routes were also discussed with a view to providing the landlocked members of the Organization with access to the world energy markets through economically viable and environmentally safe systems. The seventh Summit, held on 14 October

2002 in Istanbul, discussed the challenges facing the Organization in the light of the rapidly changing situation in the region and decided, *inter alia*, to set up a fund to channel financial resources for reconstruction in Afghanistan. The eighth Summit that took place in Dushanbe on 14 September 2004 paved the way for the adoption by the Council of Ministers of 'ECO Vision 2015', a strategy of promotion of intra-regional co-operation and enhancement of sustainable economic and social development in the region. The ninth Summit, held in Baku on 5 May 2006, adopted the 'Baku Declaration' providing guidelines in priority areas such as trade and investment, energy, minerals and environment and stressing the importance of transport and communications as the cornerstone of the Organization's policy.

The future prospects of the Organization will depend to a considerable extent on the internal situation of the member countries and the evolution of their mutual political, economic and security relations in the wider Central Asian context.

External relations

The Organization has been granted observer status by the UN, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Co-operative relations are being established or expanded with several UN agencies such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), now part of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), with the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Khurshid Anwar

HEADQUARTERS: 1 Golobu Alley, Kamranieh, PO Box 14155-6176, Teheran, Iran (telephone: +98 21 2283 1733; fax: +98 21 2283 1732)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ecosecretariat.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *ECO News Bulletin* (quarterly); *ECO Annual Economic Report*

REFERENCE: M. Jägerhorn, *Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO): Potentials and Prospects of Economic Cooperation in Central and West Asia* (Helsinki, 1993)

Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEc or EAEC)

FOUNDED: 10 October 2000, growing out of the customs union of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); treaty entered into force in May 2001

OBJECTIVES: To create a customs union and a common market among member countries, to elaborate common guidelines on border security and to implement joint programmes of economic and social development

MEMBERS: Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan. Observer status granted to Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine. Merger with Organization of Central Asian Co-operation (OCAC) decided on 25 January 2006

HEADQUARTERS: Moscow

European Atomic Energy Community

See **European Union**.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

The Bank provides multilateral financing of projects and investment programmes in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

Origin and development

The Bank was established by a treaty signed in Paris on 29 May 1990 by countries of Western and Eastern Europe along with major industrial countries outside Europe to contribute to the progress and economic reconstruction of the former socialist countries willing to respect and put into practice the principles of multi-party democracy, pluralism and a market economy. The founding treaty entered into force on 28 March 1991 and the Bank started operations at its headquarters in London on the following 15 April. The Bank has become the largest single investor in Eastern Europe and the CIS where it has established a strong presence through a network of over 30 local offices, combining sector expertise with extensive knowledge of the economic, political and social conditions prevailing in each country.

Membership

Shareholders of the Bank include 61 countries plus the European Community (EC) and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Objectives

The Bank's objectives are to provide advice, loans and equity investment and debt guarantees to qualified applicants with a view to fostering the transition towards democracy and open market-oriented economies and promoting private and entrepreneurial initiative. The Bank lends and invests exclusively in 'countries of operations', that is the nations of Central and Eastern Europe and the republics of the former USSR and former Yugoslavia. The Bank's mandate gives it a special concern for the promotion of democratic institutions and human rights as well as of environmentally sound and sustainable development in countries from Central Europe to Central Asia.

Structure

The organization of the Bank, which is largely similar to that of other international financial institutions, comprises the Board of Governors, vested with full management powers, the 23-member Board of Directors, responsible for current operations, and the President. Each member appoints a Governor, generally the Minister of Finance or an equivalent, and an alternate. Directors are appointed by Governors for a three-year term. The President, elected by the Board of Governors for a four-year term, conducts the current business of the Bank.

Activities

The Bank's resources include the subscribed capital stock and the funds borrowed in capital markets to supplement the equity capital. The initially subscribed capital of the Bank amounted to ECU (European Currency Unit) 10 billion, of which ECU 3 billion to be paid in. The ECU was replaced by the euro (€) on 1 January 1999. The EC members together with the European Commission and EIB contributed 51 per cent, Central and Eastern European countries 13.5 per cent, the US (which is the largest single shareholder) 10 per cent, Japan 8.5 per cent. At the annual meeting held in Sofia in April 1996, the decision was taken to double the Bank's capital. With a subscribed capital presently totalling €20 billion (of which €5 billion paid-in and €15 billion callable), the Bank has a solid capital base.

The Bank is a unique combination of merchant bank and development bank. Not less than 60 per cent of the Bank's funding is directed to private sector enterprises or state-owned enterprises implementing a programme to achieve private ownership and control; not more than 40 per cent is directed to public infrastructure or other projects.

Funds are granted in accordance with sound banking and investment principles and within commercial decision-making time frames. More precisely, funding is offered on a market rather than on a subsidized or concessionary basis, including: loans with a maximum final maturity of 10 years for commercial enterprises and of 15 years for infrastructure projects; equity; guarantees and underwriting. Loans are usually denominated in convertible currencies or currency units; as a matter of policy, the Bank does not accept currency risk on repayment. The Bank does not issue guarantees for export credits nor undertake insurance activities. It is important to stress that loans to commercial enterprises, including those made to state-owned enterprises implementing a programme to achieve private ownership and control, are granted without government guarantees and require a full commercial return. The Bank limits its financing normally to 35 per cent of the total cost of a borrower's total capital on a pro-forma, market-value basis. The Bank does not take controlling interests nor assume direct responsibility for the management of enterprises. In a number of cases, the Bank may offer financial advice and training and technical assistance on the basis of funds specifically provided by certain of its member governments.

Between 1991, when it started operations, and 2006, the Bank financed over 2200 projects. Cumulative commitments amounted to €33.3 billion, mobilizing €69.6 billion from other sources, for a total project value of €102.9 billion. The EC has actively supported the operations of the Bank, providing substantial amounts from the PHARE and TACIS budgets for financing technical assistance projects. The PHARE programme was originally set up in 1989 to provide aid to Poland and Hungary and was later extended to other Central and Eastern European countries. TACIS provided technical assistance to members of CIS and Mongolia. The activities of the Bank have remarkably expanded and diversified, with the private sector accounting for a greater proportion of commitments (particularly with a view to financing small and medium-sized enterprises) and special

emphasis on the development of the countries relatively less advanced in the process of transition to a market economy. The establishment of sound financial sectors, the restructuring of the Bank's large portfolio of Russian investments after the economic crisis in Russia in 1998, and assistance to countries preparing to join the European Union (EU) have been among the Bank's operational priorities over the past few years. The Bank has also played a key role in advancing the objectives of the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe by promoting private sector development in the region. On the other hand, the Bank is expected to shift its focus gradually from the relatively advanced Central and Eastern European countries to the republics of the former USSR in Central Asia.

External relations

The Bank co-operates with other international financial organizations and with a range of public and private financial institutions through co-financing arrangements.

LANGUAGES: English, French, German, Russian

PRESIDENT: Jean Lemierre

HEADQUARTERS: One Exchange Square, London EC2A 2JN, UK (telephone: +44 20 7338 6000; fax: +44 20 7338 6100)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ebrd.com>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Transition Report* (annual); *Law in Transition* (twice a year); *Environments in Transition* (twice a year)

REFERENCES: I.F. Shihata, *The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development: A Comparative Analysis of the Constituent Agreement* (London, 1990); P.A. Menkveld, *Origin and Role of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development* (London, 1991)

European Central Bank (ECB)

The Bank is intended to be the guardian of price stability in the euro area comprising the 15 members of the European Union (EU) that have adopted the single currency.

Origin and development

The Bank was formally established on 1 June 1998 and replaced the European Monetary Institute

(EMI) which had been in operation since January 1994 in Frankfurt. The Bank has the authority to issue the single currency, that is the euro (€) that replaced the European Currency Unit (ECU) on 1 January 1999, at the start of the third stage of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). On that very date, the euro became the currency of 11 EU countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain). Greece joined the euro area on 1 January 2001 followed by Slovenia on 1 January 2007 and Cyprus and Malta on 1 January 2008. Euro banknotes and coins have therefore replaced national banknotes and coins that were taken out of circulation.

Membership

Membership includes all countries of the 15-member EU minus Denmark, Sweden and the UK (availing themselves of an 'opting out' clause) plus Slovenia, Cyprus and Malta.

Objectives

The Bank has defined its primary goal, that is to maintain a stable price level over the medium term, as a year-on-year increase in consumer prices of below 2 per cent.

Structure

The highest decision-making body is the Governing Council which is responsible for formulating the monetary policy of the euro area and determining the interest rates at which commercial banks may obtain liquidity from their central bank. It usually meets twice a month and comprises the six members of the Executive Board and the governors of the national central banks of the euro area countries. The Executive Board implements the monetary policy established by the Governing Council and addresses the necessary instructions to the national central banks. The Executive Board includes the President, the Vice-President and four other members, appointed for a non-renewable eight-year term. The Bank's President chairs both the Governing Council and the Executive Board. The President also takes part in official and informal meetings of the Ecofin Council (consisting of the EU Ministers of Economics and Finance) and meetings of the Eurogroup (including the Ministers of Economics and Finance of the euro area).

The General Council consists of the President and Vice-President of the Bank and of the governors

of the national central banks of all EU member countries.

The Bank and the national central banks in the euro area together constitute the 'Eurosystem', that is the arrangement by which the European System of Central Banks (ESCB) carries out its tasks within the euro area. National central banks of countries outside the euro area do not participate in decisions concerning the single monetary policy of the area. Even though the ultimate responsibility for banking supervision remains in the hands of national authorities, the Eurosystem continually reviews developments in the banking and financial sector.

The capital of the Bank has been subscribed and paid up by the national central banks; the amount of the subscription is determined according to the share of each member in the gross domestic product and population of the EU. The Bank enjoys full freedom in the performance of its tasks and has its own budget that is independent of that of the EU.

Activities

The Bank's monetary policy strategy aims to ensure as much continuity as possible with the strategies followed by national central banks prior to monetary union. The Eurosystem's primary objective of maintaining price stability is pursued through a set of monetary policy instruments in order to influence market interest rates, manage the liquidity situation in the banking system and signal the general direction of monetary policy. The Bank conducts liquidity-providing transactions on a weekly and monthly basis, according to the needs, and offers two standing facilities for providing and absorbing overnight liquidity. The Bank also imposes minimum reserve requirements on credit institutions with a view to stabilizing demand for central bank money.

External relations

Under specific arrangements, the Bank is represented at meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with the aim of exchanging information.

PRESIDENT: Jean-Claude Trichet

HEADQUARTERS: Kaiserstrasse 29, 60311 Frankfurt am Main, Germany (telephone: +49 69 13440; fax: +49 69 1344 6000)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ecb.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Monthly Bulletin*; *Convergence Reports*; Consolidated weekly financial statements of the Eurosystem

REFERENCES: O. Issing *et al.*, *Monetary Policy in the Euro Area: Strategy and Decision Making at the European Central Bank* (New York, 2001); E. Apel, *Central Banking Systems Compared: The ECB, the Pre-Euro Bundesbank and the Federal Reserve System* (New York, 2003); D.J. Howarth and P. Loedel, *The European Central Bank: The New European Leviathan?* (New York, 2003); J. de Haan, S.C.W. Eijffinger and S. Waller, *The European Central Bank: Credibility, Transparency and Centralization* (Cambridge, MA, 2005)

European Coal and Steel Community

See **European Union**.

European Commission

See **European Union**.

European Community

See **European Union**.

European Economic Community

See **European Union**.

European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

The Association, after the achievement of the original goal of establishing free trade among member countries, is in charge of the management of the revised EFTA Convention, the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) and the EFTA free trade agreements with third countries.

Origin and development

The Association was set up in 1960 by those countries of Western and Northern Europe which wished to create a larger market for their manufactured goods through the liberalization of mutual trade but were not prepared to accept the far-reaching political and economic obligations inherent

in membership of the then European Economic Community (EEC). After the failure of the free trade area negotiations within the framework of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) at the end of 1958, the suggestion was put forward to establish a free trade zone between the countries that remained outside the EEC. Government officials of Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK met at Saltsjobaden, Stockholm, in June 1959 to draft a plan with a view to establishing a European Free Trade Association. The Convention setting up the Association was signed in Stockholm on 4 January 1960 and went into effect on the following 3 May. In March 1961 an Agreement creating an association between the 'Seven' and Finland was signed in Helsinki; the Agreement lapsed in January 1986 when Finland became a full member. Iceland became a member in March 1970 and was immediately granted duty-free entry for exports of industrial goods while being allowed a ten-year period in order to eliminate her own import duties. Two founder members, the UK and Denmark, left the Association in 1972 to join the European Communities; they were followed by Portugal in 1985 and by Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1994. Liechtenstein, formerly associated through its customs union with Switzerland, applied for full membership in March 1991 and was admitted the following September. Members of the Association, with the exception of Switzerland, have structured their relations with the European Union (EU) through the Agreement on the EEA allowing them to participate in the EU single market. The Agreement was signed in Oporto on 2 May 1992. An Adjusting Protocol, taking into account Switzerland's withdrawal after the negative result of the referendum of 6 December 1992, was signed on 17 March 1993. The EEA Agreement, in force since 1 January 1994, extends the EU single market to EFTA members (except Switzerland) and allows these members to participate in a wide range of EU programmes and projects in fields such as research and development, the environment, education and training.

At the end of the 1990s, members of the Association decided to update the original Stockholm Convention with a view to making it more responsive to the advanced level of integration among them as well as to their growing relations with third countries and within the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO). The updated charter of the Association, known under the name

of Vaduz Convention, was signed on 21 June 2001 and entered into force on 1 June 2002, in parallel with the EU-Swiss bilateral agreements. The Vaduz Convention includes the principles and rules of the EEA Agreement and of the EU-Swiss agreements covering the various aspects of trade and strengthening the ties between EFTA countries. The Vaduz Convention is updated on a continuous basis in order to follow the developments under the EEA Agreement and the bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU. Review clauses are included in the Convention to allow co-operation to extend to areas such as state aid, public undertakings and monopolies, and services, and to remove restrictions on investments.

Membership

Following the entry of most of its founders into the EU, the Association consists at present of only four countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Objectives

According to the Stockholm Convention, the original basic objectives of the Association were: to promote a sustained expansion of economic activity, full employment, increased productivity and the rational use of resources, financial stability and continuous improvement in living standards; to secure conditions of fair competition in trade between member countries; to avoid significant disparity between member countries in the conditions of supply of raw materials produced within the area of the Association; and to contribute to the harmonious development and liberalization of world trade.

Under the Vaduz Convention, the Association aims to represent a framework for trade relations among its four members, a forum where these members decide on the conclusion and management of free trade agreements with non-EU countries, and a platform for the three members participating in the EEA.

Structure

The EFTA Council is the governing body, meeting once a month at the level of officials and twice a year at ministerial level, in charge of managing relations between member countries and facilitating links with third parties. Under the Council, various committees and experts groups have been established in order to deal with specific issues. A significant role in the Association's consultation process

is played by the Consultative Committee consisting of representatives from trade unions and employers' organizations of member countries. The Parliamentary Committee represents a forum for parliamentarians of member countries.

The Secretariat, headed by a Secretary-General assisted by two Deputies (one in Geneva and the other in Brussels), administers the Association, in particular the free trade area, the Association's participation in the EEA, and the worldwide network of free trade agreements. Headquarters are in Geneva. The Secretariat also has an Office in Brussels and a Statistical Office in Luxembourg.

The EFTA Surveillance Authority and the EFTA Court are separate intergovernmental institutions. The Surveillance Authority, located in Brussels, ensures that Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway fulfil their obligations under EEA and that enterprises abide by the competition rules. The Court, based in Luxembourg, performs the judicial functions with regard to the above-mentioned countries.

Activities

From 1995 onwards, EFTA members (except Switzerland) have been able to participate in important developments concerning the EU single market, especially deregulation of telecommunications and financial services; of major importance has also been participation in several EU programmes not directly related to trade.

External relations

Since the beginning of the 1990s the Association has established an extensive network of free trade relations in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Mediterranean. The network also involves countries outside the European continent such as Chile, Mexico, Korea and Singapore. At present, about 15 free trade agreements have been concluded and seven joint declarations on co-operation have been adopted while other agreements are currently being negotiated.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Kåre Bryn

HEADQUARTERS: 9–11 rue de Varembe, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 332 2600; fax: +41 22 332 2677)

BRUSSELS OFFICE: 12–16 rue Joseph II, 1000 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 286 1711; fax: +32 2 286 1750)

WEBSITE: <http://www.efta.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *EFTA Bulletin*

REFERENCES: J.S. Lambrinidis, *The Structure, Function and Law of a Free Trade Area* (London, 1965); J. Jamar and H. Wallace (eds), *EEC-EFTA: More Than Just Good Friends?* (Bruges, 1988); H. Wallace, *The Wider Western Europe. Reshaping the EC/EFTA Relationship* (London, 1992)

European Investment Bank (EIB)

The Bank is the long-term lending institution of the European Union (EU) created in 1958 as an autonomous body responsible for financing capital investment furthering integration, balanced development and economic and social cohesion of the member countries. In 2000 the European Investment Fund (EIF) became the EIB group's specialist risk capital arm.

Origin and development

The Bank was created in 1958 under the Treaty of Rome to which its statute is annexed. It is endowed with its own legal personality and financial autonomy and has an administrative structure separate from that of the other EU institutions. In 1994 the Bank, in partnership with the European Commission and over 60 banks from member countries, set up a new guarantee instrument, the EIF. The EIF is the specialized financial institution of the EU to promote the creation, growth and development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Membership

Members of the Bank are the 27 countries participating in the EU which have all subscribed to its capital.

Objectives

The Bank's activity is aimed at advancing the EU's economic objectives, both within the Union and in an increasing range of countries outside, by providing long-term finance for specific capital projects in keeping with strict banking practice. To this end, the Bank raises on the markets substantial volumes of funds which are directed, on the most favourable terms, towards financing capital projects. Outside the Union, the Bank is in charge of the implementation of the financial components of agreements concluded under European development aid and co-operation policies.

Structure

The Bank's governing body is the Board of Governors consisting, generally, of the Finance Ministers of the 27 member countries. It lays down general directives on credit policy, approves the balance sheet and annual report, decides on capital increases and appoints members of the Board of Directors, the Management Committee and the Audit Committee.

The Board of Directors, responsible for the general management of the Bank, consists of 27 Directors nominated by member countries plus one Director designated by the European Commission. Alternates total 16 (of which one nominated by the European Commission) so that constituencies of countries have to be formed. Following nominations, members of the Board of Directors are appointed by the Governors for a renewable five-year term. The Bank's President, or in his absence one of the Vice Presidents, chairs the meetings of the Board of Directors. Decisions are taken by a majority of at least one-third of members entitled to vote, representing at least 50 per cent of the subscribed capital.

The nine-member Management Committee, comprising the President of the Bank and eight Vice Presidents, controls all current operations, recommends decisions to Directors and is responsible for carrying them out. The Audit Committee consists of three members and three observers appointed by the Board of Directors.

Activities

The initial subscribed capital, contributed by the then six member countries, amounted to ECU (European Currency Unit) 1000 million. The capital has been repeatedly increased, also in connection with the entry of new member countries; the ECU was replaced by the euro (€), with an equivalent value, from 1 January 1999. As of December 2006, the subscribed capital amounted to €163.7 billion of which €8.2 billion paid in. New missions given to the Bank, including the growing effort towards further EU enlargements, are likely to require other capital increases.

The Bank's lending activity is financed mainly from the proceeds of borrowings launched on the national and international capital markets which constitute the resources of the Bank together with its own funds. Loans may be granted to public or private-sector borrowers for financing projects in all sectors, from communications, environmental and energy infrastructure to industry, services and

agriculture. The 1992 Maastricht Treaty confirmed that the main task of the Bank was to contribute to the balanced and steady development of the common market, providing funding for economically worthwhile investment in EC regions lagging most seriously behind in their development as well as for projects of common interest to several member countries. The Bank facilitates the financing of investment programmes in conjunction with assistance from the EU's Structural Funds and other financial instruments. Moreover, the Maastricht Treaty called for a common policy in areas in which the Bank is already committed such as the creation of trans-European transport, telecommunications and energy supply networks, the increase of industrial competitiveness, environmental protection and development co-operation with non-member countries.

Large-scale projects are financed by means of individual loans concluded directly or through various financial intermediaries. Small and medium-scale ventures are funded indirectly through global loans. In all cases, the Bank finances only part of the investment costs, supplementing the borrower's own funds and other sources. Loans, as a rule, do not exceed 50 per cent of investment costs. The maturity of medium and long-term loans granted by the Bank depends on the project concerned; it may be extended to 20 years or more for infrastructural schemes, with the possibility of a grace period. Loans may be disbursed at par in a single currency or in several currencies. The method adopted for setting interest rates is the same for all countries and sectors. The Bank does not grant interest subsidies, although these may be provided by third parties. Special arrangements apply to financing made available outside the EU in accordance with the various financial co-operation agreements.

Over five decades, the Bank has adjusted to far-reaching changes in EU policies and has gradually broadened the range and nature of its operations. Within the EU, the Bank is stepping up its support for structural development by providing substantial additional funding particularly directed towards trans-European transport and energy networks, small and medium-sized enterprises and human capital formation. Outside the EU, the Bank has been closely associated since the 1960s with the implementation of co-operation and development aid policies *vis-à-vis* an increasing number of non-member countries, and since 1990 with the mobilization of financial resources for

priority projects to help Central and Eastern European countries in their transition towards a market economy.

According to the Bank's Corporate Operational Plan for the period 2007–2009, special emphasis for lending activity within the EU is placed on six strategic objectives: (a) cohesion and convergence; (b) support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); (c) environmental sustainability; (d) implementation of the Innovation 2010 Initiative; (e) development of trans-European networks of transport and energy; and (f) sustainable, competitive and secure energy. Lending activity outside the EU is based on external co-operation and development policies of the EU currently focused on: (a) private sector development; (b) infrastructure; (c) security of energy supply; and (d) environmental sustainability. The Bank's operations outside the EU currently include: candidate and potential candidate countries; the European Neighbourhood plus Russia and Eastern Neighbours; the African, Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) states plus the Republic of South Africa; the Asian and Latin American countries, where operations conducted since 1993 have developed substantially after the conclusion of several framework agreements.

In June 2000, the Bank became the majority shareholder of the EIF which, however, retains a tripartite share-ownership structure consisting of the Bank (61.65 per cent), the European Commission (30 per cent), and over 20 European banks and financial institutions (8.35 per cent). In this context, the Bank continues to support smaller businesses through medium and long-term global loan financing arranged in collaboration with the banking sector. The EIF, whose subscribed capital as of December 2006 amounted to €2 billion of which €400 million paid in, undertakes guarantee operations involving its own resources or those of the EU budget. At the same time, all venture capital activities are managed by the EIF which has become one of the leading sources of venture capital within the EU.

External relations

The Bank participates in several international co-operation programmes involving other multilateral financing institutions such as the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) as well as the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

PRESIDENT: Philippe Maystadt

HEADQUARTERS: 100 boulevard Konrad Adenauer, 2950 Luxembourg (telephone: +352 4379-1; fax: +352 4377 04)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eib.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; EIB Information*

REFERENCE: S. Lewenhak, *The Role of the European Investment Bank* (London, 1982)

EUROPEAN INVESTMENT FUND

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Francis Carpenter

HEADQUARTERS: 43 avenue J.F. Kennedy, 2968 Luxembourg (telephone: +352 426688-1; fax: +352 426688-200)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eif.org>

European Investment Fund (EIF)

See **European Investment Bank**.

European Organization for Nuclear Research

[*Organisation européenne pour la recherche nucléaire*] (CERN)

The Organization, operating the world's largest particle physics centre, fosters collaboration among European countries in nuclear research of a pure scientific and fundamental character having no concern with work for military requirements.

Origin and development

The Convention for the establishment of the Organization was signed by the representatives of 12 countries in Paris, on 1 July 1953, under the sponsorship of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and entered into force on 29 September 1954. The Organization replaced the Conseil européen pour la recherche nucléaire (CERN), a provisional body set up by 11 European governments on 15 February 1952. The Conseil was dissolved upon entry into effect of the above-mentioned Convention but the acronym was retained.

Membership

The 12 founding countries (all of them from Western Europe except Yugoslavia) were subsequently joined by other Western European and (since the early 1990s) Eastern European countries, bringing the total membership to 20. Yugoslavia withdrew from the Organization in 1961. Observer status has been granted to Israel, Japan, Russia, Turkey and the US as well as to the European Union (EU) and UNESCO.

Objectives

According to the Convention, the work of CERN is for peaceful purposes only and deals with sub-nuclear, high-energy and elementary particle physics; it is not concerned with the development of nuclear reactors or fusion devices. Moreover, the results of experimental and theoretical work must be published or otherwise made generally available.

Structure

The Council is the highest policy-making body composed of two delegates for each member country, one representing the government and the other national scientific interests. The Council is assisted by the Scientific Policy Committee and the Finance Committee. The staff are headed by a Director-General appointed by the Council for a five-year term and running the Organization through a structure of Departments.

Activities

Since its establishment, the Organization has made many important discoveries in particle physics and other branches of science and its scientists have received major awards, including Nobel prizes. The discovery of neutral currents in 1973 and the success in colliding beams of protons for the first time in the Intersecting Storage Rings (ISR) are among the most significant achievements. The research work conducted at the Organization provided the foundation for a number of inventions and technological advances, including the World Wide Web.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Dr Robert Aymar

HEADQUARTERS: European Laboratory for Particle Physics, 1211 Geneva 23, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 767 8484; fax: +41 22 767 8710)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cern.ch>

PUBLICATIONS: *CERN Courier* (monthly); *Annual Report*; *Scientific Reports*

European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites

[*Organisation européenne pour l'exploitation de satellites météorologiques*] (EUMETSAT)

The Organization is intended to establish, maintain and exploit European systems of operational meteorological satellites.

Origin and development

The Organization was established in 1986; a revised Convention, broadening the competences of the Organization, came into effect in November 2000.

Membership

The Organization includes as full members 20 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK. The status of 'co-operating countries' has been granted to Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

Objectives

Besides the original purpose of the Organization of operating a European system of meteorological satellites, a further objective has been added by the revised Convention concerning the operational monitoring of climate and the detection of global climate change.

Structure

The Council is the supreme decision-making organ presided over by a Chairman appointed for a four-year term. It meets at least twice a year and comprises representatives from all member countries, each national delegation including a participant from the respective National Meteorological Service. A number of subsidiary delegate bodies support the Council, including the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), the Scientific and Technical Group (STG), the Administrative and Finance Group (AFG), and the Working Group on Distribution and Charging Policy (WGP). The

Director-General supervises the work of the Secretariat.

Activities

The Organization has direct responsibility for the operation of its satellites in orbit and is involved in new programmes to ensure the continuity of observations. It is at present one of the major partners in satellite systems for observing the entire planet, thus enabling Europe to participate effectively in monitoring global weather and climate. Although the Organization's system is intended primarily to support the National Meteorological Services of members, access to data is also given to non-member countries, commercial organizations, universities and research institutions. Besides Meteosat satellites orbiting above the equator, the Organization has developed a programme for polar satellites orbiting the earth from pole to pole.

External relations

A close relationship exists with the European Space Agency (ESA) that has now become an important co-operation partner and procurement agency of the Organization.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Lars Prahm

HEADQUARTERS: Am Kavalleriesand 31, 64295 Darmstadt, Germany (telephone: +49 6151 8077; fax: +49 6151 807555)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eumetsat.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Image Newsletter*

European Organization for the
Safety of Air Navigation
(EUROCONTROL)

The Organization, originally intended to strengthen co-operation in its specific area of competence between Western European countries, now aims at developing a coherent and co-ordinated air traffic control system throughout the whole Europe.

Origin and development

The Organization was established by a Convention signed in Brussels on 13 December 1960 which entered into force on 1 March 1963. Since the late 1950s several meetings had been held by representatives of civil and military aviation of Western

European countries to discuss plans for the formulation of an appropriate air traffic control procedure in order to provide maximum freedom consistent with the required level of safety. The Convention was eventually signed in Brussels by Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK; the founder countries were joined by Ireland in 1965. The original Convention was amended by a protocol signed on 12 February 1981 which became effective on 1 January 1986. Portugal joined in 1986 (after a period as an associate member), Greece in 1988, Malta and Turkey in 1989, Cyprus in 1991, Hungary and Switzerland in 1992, Austria in 1993, Denmark and Norway in 1994. Other European countries have subsequently acceded to the Organization. The European Community (EC) joined in October 2002.

In June 1997, the Ministers of Transport of member countries signed a revised Convention with a view to expanding the Organization's services through the reformulation of its tasks and the creation of a new institutional structure.

Membership

Thirty-eight European countries.

Objectives

The Organization aims at expanding available airspace to meet traffic demand and achieving optimum utilization of available capacity within the framework of a uniform European Air Traffic Management System (EATMS). The development of harmonized safety regulatory objectives and requirements for the Air Traffic Management system is another goal of the Organization. Effective co-operation should also be achieved through the systematic involvement of representative organizations of airspace users and airports and the reinforcement of links between civil and military authorities.

Structure

The new institutional mechanism includes a General Assembly, a Council, and an Agency operating under the supervision of the Director General. The decision-making process has been made more effective through the introduction of majority voting.

Activities

The Organization operates: the Experimental Centre at Brétigny-sur-Orge, France; the Institute of Air

Navigation Services, in Luxembourg; the Central Route Charges Office and the Central Flow Management Unit, both in Brussels; and the Upper Area Air Traffic Control Centre, in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Dutch, English, French, German, Portuguese

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Victor M. Aguado

HEADQUARTERS: 96 rue de la Fusée, 1130 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 729 9011; fax: +32 2 729 9044)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eurocontrol.be>

PUBLICATIONS: *Skyway* (quarterly magazine); *Annual Report*; *Yearbook*

European Space Agency (ESA)

The Agency promotes co-operation among European countries in space research and technology and their application for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Origin and development

The Agency was established by an agreement signed at a meeting of the European Space Conference in Brussels on 31 July 1973 and entered into effect on 1 May 1975. The Agency, based in Paris, replaced the European Space Research Organization (ESRO) and the European Organization for the Development and Construction of Space Vehicle Launchers (ELDO), both agencies dating from the early 1960s.

Membership

Present membership includes 17 countries (among them are France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK). Canada has been a 'co-operating state' for several projects since 1979. Hungary also participates in a number of agreements.

Objectives

The Agency was formally entrusted with all the functions previously assigned to its forerunners as well as with new tasks, particularly in the space applications field. More precisely, the Agency: elaborates a long-term space policy and recommends space objectives to member countries; implements activities and programmes in the space field; coordinates the European space programme and

national programmes, integrating the latter, as completely as possible, into the European programme.

Structure

The Council, composed of the representatives of all member countries and headed by a Chairman, is the highest policy-making organ of the Agency. Specialized Programme Boards and Committees assist the Council in its work. The Director General, appointed by the Council, performs executive functions. The Agency runs several centres: the European Space Astronomy Centre (ESAC) near Madrid; the European Space Research and Technology Centre (ESTEC) at Noordwijk, the Netherlands; the European Space Operations Centre (ESOC) at Darmstadt, Germany; the European Space Research Institute (ESRIN) at Frascati, Italy; and the European Astronaut Centre (EAC) at Cologne, Germany. The Agency helps to maintain the Space Centre of Kourou, French Guiana, used for the Ariane launchers.

Contributions to the general and scientific budgets of the Agency are made by member countries on the basis of a percentage of their GNP; contributions to specific programmes are also made on an ad hoc basis by 'co-operating' non-member countries.

Activities

The activities of the Agency have covered a wide range of programmes in several major areas, especially with regard to scientific and applications satellites. Meteorological satellites have been put into orbit and are providing valuable data for meteorological research and weather forecasts. The European satellites for maritime communications provide links between ships and shore stations. To give Europe a launching capability for its own applications and scientific satellites the Ariane rocket has been developed. The rocket now commands the commercial market in space launches, in particular for communications satellites. Mention has to be made of the Spacelab, a manned and reusable space laboratory, and of the European Retrievable Carrier, a reusable payload carrier. In July 1991 the Agency launched the first European Remote Sensing (ERS-1) satellite with a view to providing weather and sea-state forecasting. The Agency has now achieved a substantial degree of self-sufficiency with regard to most aspects of space technology. It plays a leading role

in monitoring the ozone hole, ice sheets, and ocean winds and currents.

External relations

In the early 1990s the Agency reinforced its co-operation with European organizations and non-member countries following the end of the East–West confrontation. The Agency has entered into co-operation agreements with a number of international and national bodies in order to coordinate research and carry on joint efforts. A significant relationship has developed over the past few years with the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT). A joint project has been undertaken with the European Community (EC). Close ties have been established with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the US, and with Canada, China, India, Japan and Russia.

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Jean-Jacques Dordain

HEADQUARTERS: 8–10 rue Mario Nikis, 75738 Paris Cedex 15, France (telephone: +33 1 5369 7654; fax: +33 1 5369 7560)

WEBSITE: <http://www.esa.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *ESA Bulletin* (quarterly); *Earth Observation Quarterly*

REFERENCE: G. Collins, *Europe in Space* (London, 1990)

European Telecommunications Satellite Organization

[*Organisation européenne de télécommunications par satellite*] (EUTELSAT)

FOUNDED: 1977; restructured as a company, incorporated under French law, in July 2001

OBJECTIVES: To design, construct, establish, operate and maintain space segments of telecommunications satellite systems with a view to providing international public telecommunications

MEMBERS: Public and private telecommunications operations in about 50 countries. In April 2005, the principal shareholders grouped their investment in a new unit, Eutelsat Communications, which is now the holding company

CHAIRMAN AND CEO: Giuliano Berretta

HEADQUARTERS: 70 rue Balard, 75502 Paris Cedex 15, France (telephone: +33 1 5398 4747; fax: +33 1 5398 3700)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eutelsat.org>

European Union (EU)

The 27-member Union, now embracing the majority of countries of the old continent, represents the most advanced form of economic and to some extent political and legal co-operation and integration among regional organizations in the world. Two basic treaties are currently in force: the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and the Treaty establishing the European Community (TEC). The Union rests upon three 'pillars': the European Communities; the common foreign and security policy (CFSP); and police and judicial co-operation in criminal matters.

Origin and development

In order to promote post-war reconciliation between France and Germany, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Robert Schuman, proposed, on 9 May 1950, a plan to place the entire coal and steel production of the two countries under the control of an independent High Authority, within the framework of an organization open to the participation of other European members. Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany accepted the French invitation to take part in a conference to consider the Schuman Plan. Negotiations between the six countries culminated with the signing in Paris, on 18 April 1951, of the Treaty setting up the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The Treaty of Paris, effective from 23 July 1952 for a 50-year period, expired on 23 July 2002, and the ECSC's assets were transferred to the European Community (EC). It originally provided for the pooling of coal and steel production of the member countries and was regarded as a first step towards a united Europe. However, attempts to establish a political union met with overwhelming difficulties between 1952 and 1953, while plans for the establishment of a European Defence Community (EDC) eventually collapsed after rejection by the French National Assembly on 30 August 1954.

The success of the sectoral integration scheme

put into effect by the ECSC encouraged efforts to expand the common market to other major areas. At the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the ECSC member countries held in Messina, Italy, in June 1955, plans were laid down for the creation of two more communities aimed at gradually integrating the economies of the Six as well as paving the way towards closer political co-ordination. After extensive negotiations, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) were set up under separate treaties signed in Rome on 25 March 1957 and entered into effect on 1 January 1958. The Treaties of Rome contained provisions for the establishment by stages, over a transitional period, of a common market, including as its core a customs union, and the approximation of economic policies, as well as for the promotion of growth in nuclear industries for peaceful purposes. Although the three Communities were established as distinct organizations, based upon separate constituent treaties, their institutional structure was similar. Each Community was endowed with its own executive organ (called Commission in both the EEC and Euratom and High Authority in the ECSC) composed of individuals acting only in the Community's interest, and with an organ responsible for policy-making representing the governments (called Council in both the EEC and Euratom and Special Council of Ministers in the ECSC).

Simultaneously with the signing of the Treaties of Rome, a 'Convention on certain institutions common to the European Communities' was concluded, providing a single Court of Justice and a single Assembly for all three Communities. Subsequently, a 'Treaty establishing a single Council and a single Commission of the European Communities' was signed in Brussels on 8 April 1965 and entered into effect on 1 July 1967, transferring the various powers of the corresponding bodies of the ECSC, the EEC and Euratom to the new institutions.

The first unsuccessful negotiations over British entry into the Communities took place between 1961 and 1963. In June 1970 membership negotiations began between the Six and Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the UK; these four countries signed the Treaty of Accession to the EEC and Euratom in January 1972. The accession of the new members to the ECSC was enacted, in accordance with the Treaty of Paris, by a decision of the Council of the European Communities. Denmark, Ireland, and the UK became full members of the Communities on 1

January 1973 when the instruments concerning the accession entered into effect. Norway held a popular referendum in September 1972 which rejected entry into the Communities and eventually decided not to accede. The Treaty concerning the accession of Greece was signed in May 1979 and came into force on 1 January 1981. At the end of a process initiated in May 1979 with the introduction of home rule and the gradual transfer of certain powers from Denmark to the local government, Greenland left the Community on 1 February 1985 and became an overseas territory associated with the Community.

Negotiations for the entry of Portugal and Spain having been largely completed by early 1985, the instruments of accession were signed in Lisbon and Madrid in June 1985 and became effective on 1 January 1986. The enlargement of the Community was accompanied by renewed efforts to promote European integration and by a wide-ranging debate about the Community's political and institutional future which culminated in the signing, in February 1986, of the Single European Act (SEA). The SEA, which represented the first major revision of the Treaties of Rome, entered into force on 1 July 1987. Not only did the SEA constitute an expression of the willingness of the member countries to implement basic objectives – completion of the unified internal market by the end of 1992 and strengthening of economic and social cohesion – but also modified the institutional system by rehabilitating majority voting in the Council of Ministers, providing for greater involvement of the European Parliament in the decision-making process, and strengthening foreign policy co-ordination through European Political Co-operation (EPC).

Following the unification of Germany on 3 October 1990, the former German Democratic Republic became part of the Communities, although a transitional period was envisaged before certain Community legislation was fully applied.

Meeting in December 1989, the European Council decided to convene an intergovernmental conference (IGC) on economic and monetary union; in June 1990 the decision was taken to hold a second IGC on political union. As a result, two conferences opened in December 1990 in Rome and continued to work in parallel throughout 1991. The conferences ended, at the Maastricht European Council of December 1991, with an agreement on the draft Treaty establishing the European Union. After legal editing and harmonization of the texts, the Treaty – including a large number of protocols

– was actually signed on 7 February 1992 for ratification by all member countries; in some countries the Treaty was submitted to popular referendum. The first referendum, held in Denmark in June 1992, obtained a negative response from voters; a second referendum, held in May 1993, reversed the previous decision by approving the Treaty. In 1992 favourable referendums were also held in Ireland in July and in France in September (in the French case with a very narrow majority). In Germany, the Treaty was declared compatible with the German Constitution by the Federal Constitutional Court in October 1993.

With the preparations for the coming into force of the Maastricht Treaty still going on, a set of criteria was drawn up in 1992 to prepare an enlargement of the Community which had become the focus of the aspirations of many other European countries. Besides satisfying the three prerequisites of European identity, democratic status and respect for human rights, candidates for accession were requested to accept – and be able to implement – the *acquis communautaire* in its entirety, subject to transitional and temporary arrangements, as well as the provisions on the common foreign and security policy and on co-operation in the fields of justice and home affairs. The *acquis communautaire* involves not only the Treaties but the legislation, judgments of the Court of Justice, policies and practices agreed upon or developed within the Union. Official negotiations for accession, however, could start only after the Maastricht Treaty had been ratified.

In February 1993 accession negotiations began with Austria, Finland and Sweden, followed by Norway in April. The Treaties of Accession and related Final Acts were signed in June 1994 by the representatives of the 12 member countries and of the four applicants. The Austrians, the Finns and the Swedes voted in favour of their respective accessions in popular referendums held between June and November 1994, while the Norwegians rejected accession, with the result that, on 1 January 1995, the Union comprised 15 members.

As envisaged by the Maastricht Treaty, the reform of the institutions, including the weighting of votes and the threshold for the qualified majority in the Council, and the revision of policies and mechanisms of co-operation were dealt with at the IGC which opened on 26 March 1996 in Turin and concluded its work in Amsterdam on 16–17 June 1997. The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed the following October, simplified and consolidated the

Treaties but failed to address some crucial questions. A further IGC opened in Lisbon in February 2000 with the mandate to prepare the Union for Eastern enlargement by amending the Treaties in four key areas: size and membership of the Commission; weighting of votes in the Council; extension of qualified majority voting; and closer co-operation. The IGC concluded its work on 11 December 2000 in Nice, reaching an agreement on the institutional issues that had to be resolved before enlargement and on a number of other important points. The IGC also adopted a declaration on the future of the Union, calling for a deeper and wider debate, with the participation of candidate countries, about the future of the European integration process.

At the Laeken European Council, on 14 and 15 December 2001, the Heads of State and Government decided to set up a 'Convention' to consider the key issues arising for the Union's future development and make the Union itself more democratic, transparent and efficient. The European Council appointed former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing as Chairman of the Convention and Giuliano Amato and Jean-Luc Dehaene as Vice-Chairmen. In addition to its Chairman and Vice-Chairmen, the Convention was composed of 15 representatives of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries (one from each country) and 30 members of national parliaments (two from each country). The 13 candidate countries were fully involved in the Convention's proceedings on the same basis as members, amounting to 13 representatives of the governments and 26 delegates from national parliaments. The European Parliament and the Commission were also represented.

At the Copenhagen European Council of December 2002, an enlargement on an unprecedented scale was decided following the conclusion of accession negotiations with ten countries: the three Baltic nations, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and the two Mediterranean island states of Cyprus and Malta. Bulgaria and Romania as well as Turkey, although not yet qualifying for membership, participated in the Convention. The Convention met in Brussels between February 2002 and July 2003 and concluded its work, adopting by consensus a draft 'Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe' for submission to a specially convened IGC. On 4 October 2003 the IGC opened in Rome but serious disagreements made it impossible to adopt a final

version of the constitutional Treaty by December 2003 as expected. Among the main points of difference were the definition and scope of qualified majority voting and the size of the European Commission. Agreement was eventually reached on 18 June 2004 by the Heads of State or Government of 25 member countries, that is the 15 pre-existing members plus the 10 countries that had signed the Treaty of Accession in Athens on 16 April 2003 and had formally joined the Union on 1 May 2004. The constitutional Treaty, intended to replace both the TEU and the TEC, was finally signed in Rome the following 29 October. The Treaty, subject to ratification by all members through parliamentary approval and/or popular consultation, met with several difficulties and its entry into force proved impossible although 18 countries out of 27 had successfully completed the ratification process. Citizens in France and the Netherlands, on 29 May and 1 June 2005 respectively, rejected the Treaty in popular referendums. After a period of 'reflection', the Heads of State or Government, meeting on 21–22 June 2007, agreed to convene a new IGC in order to draft, on the basis of a detailed mandate, a new treaty (the 'Reform Treaty') amending (and not replacing) the existing TEU and TEC treaties. The IGC started work in July 2007 and drew up the final text of the treaty which was approved during the informal European Council held in Lisbon on 18–19 October 2007. On 13 December 2007, in Lisbon, the Heads of State or Government signed the new treaty. After ratification by all member countries, the Treaty of Lisbon is expected to enter into force in early 2009 before the European Parliament elections in June.

Membership

The Union currently consists of 27 members, the six founder countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) having been joined by Denmark, Ireland and the UK in 1973 (first enlargement), Greece in 1981 (second enlargement), Portugal and Spain in 1986 (third enlargement), Austria, Finland and Sweden in 1995 (fourth enlargement), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia in 2004 and Bulgaria and Romania in 2007 (fifth enlargement in two phases). Member countries might be joined by Croatia, whose accession negotiations began in early 2004, and by Macedonia. Negotiations with Turkey are under way but because of the Cyprus issue no positive

conclusion is expected in the near future. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo are potential candidates.

Objectives

The TEU has marked the beginning of a decisive stage 'in the process of creating an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'. The basic objectives of the Union are: to promote economic and social progress and a high level of employment and to achieve balanced and sustainable development through the creation of an area without internal frontiers, the strengthening of economic and social cohesion and the establishment of economic and monetary union, ultimately including a single currency; to assert its identity on the international scene through the implementation of a common foreign and security policy, including the progressive framing of a common defence policy; to strengthen the protection of the rights and interests of the nationals of member countries through the introduction of a citizenship of the Union; to maintain and develop the Union as an area of freedom, security and justice; and to maintain in full the *acquis communautaire* and build on it.

Structure

The Union is served by a single institutional framework ensuring the consistency and continuity of the activities carried out in order to attain its objectives while respecting and building upon the *acquis communautaire*.

Besides the European Council setting the Union's basic guidelines, the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Court of Justice of the European Communities and the European Court of Auditors exercise their powers according to the relevant provisions of the Treaties. In addition, there are a number of advisory bodies representing economic, social and regional interests.

The European Council

The European Council – providing the Union with the necessary impetus for its development and defining the general political guidelines – consists of the Heads of State or Government of the member countries and of the President of the Commission. The meetings of the European Council usually take place in Brussels, in the Justus Lipsius building.

The European Parliament

From rather modest beginnings, the powers of Parliament have been gradually expanding. The SEA introduced a 'co-operation procedure' strengthening the Parliament's role in the adoption of Community acts in a significant range of policy areas. The involvement of Parliament in the decision-making process was substantially increased by the Maastricht Treaty through the newly established 'co-decision procedure'. Co-decision, based on Parliament-Council collaboration, was further extended by the Amsterdam Treaty. The co-operation procedure has been largely superseded and currently applies only in a limited number of cases concerning the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). Under the Nice Treaty, the assent of the Parliament is necessary to establish enhanced co-operation in areas covered by the co-decision process. The Parliament's assent is also required for nearly all international agreements. Accession of new members to the Union is subject to the approval of an absolute majority of the Parliament.

Together, Parliament and the Council form the budgetary authority, with Parliament voting on the adoption of the Union's annual budget and overseeing its implementation.

Elected by direct universal suffrage since 1979, members of the European Parliament (MEPs) currently represent nearly half a billion people; the last elections were held in June 2004 for a five-year mandate. The 785 MEPs are apportioned as follows: Germany 99; France, Italy and the UK, 78 each; Poland and Spain, 54 each; Romania 35; the Netherlands 27; Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Portugal, 24 each; Sweden 19; Austria and Bulgaria, 18 each; Denmark, Finland and Slovakia, 14 each; Ireland and Lithuania, 13 each; Latvia 9; Slovenia 7; Cyprus, Estonia and Luxembourg, 6 each; and Malta 5. Members sit in Parliament in political, not national, groups.

Political parties at European level are expressly recognized as an important factor for integration within the Union, contributing to the formation of a European awareness and to the expression of the political will of the citizens. As of November 2007, party representation in Parliament was as follows: European People's Party (Christian Democrats) and European Democrats (EPP-ED) 278; Party of European Socialists (PES) 218; Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) 104; Union for Europe of the Nations (UEN) 44; Greens/European Free Alliance (Greens/EFA) 42; European United

Left/Nordic Green Left (EUL/NGL) 41; Independence/Democracy (ID) 24; Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty (ITS) 23; Non-attached (NI) 11.

Parliament holds an annual session, divided into about 12 one-week part-sessions taking place in Strasbourg with additional sittings in Brussels. Committee meetings are held in Brussels while the Secretariat is based in Luxembourg. Parliament is run by a Bureau including the President and 14 Vice-Presidents elected by secret ballot. Specialized committees deliberate on proposals for legislation put forward by the Commission before Parliament's final opinion is delivered by a resolution in plenary session.

Parliament has adopted resolutions on its own initiative not only on Community matters but on a variety of international issues of major concern to European public opinion. It also conducts an active diplomacy through exchange visits with the parliaments of many countries.

The Council of the European Union

The Council of the European Union, composed of ministers from the member countries with responsibility for the policy area under discussion at a given meeting, is the main decision-making institution representing the national as opposed to the Community interest. The Council meets in nine different configurations depending on the subjects being examined. The Council is responsible for coordinating the general economic policies of the member countries and adopting, on proposals from the Commission, the main decisions relating to the common policies in accordance with procedures which, as described above, involve Parliament in varying degrees. A predominant role is played by the Council in the two areas based on intergovernmental co-operation, that is the common foreign and security policy and justice and home affairs. The Council also adopts international agreements negotiated by the Commission.

The office of President is exercised for a six-month term (January to June; July to December) by each member of the Council. The order of Presidencies from 2008 to 2010 is the following: Slovenia, France, Czech Republic, Sweden, Spain, Belgium. Meetings of the Council are convened by the President acting on his own initiative or at the request of one of its members or of the Commission. The Council is assisted by a General Secretariat based in Brussels.

The voting procedure of the Council depends on the specific procedure required for the particular action to be taken. There are three types of voting: simple majority; qualified majority; and unanimity. At present, the total votes (345) are distributed as follows: France, Germany, Italy, and the UK, 29 votes each; Poland and Spain, 27 each; Romania 14; Netherlands 13; Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary and Portugal, 12 each; Austria, Bulgaria and Sweden, 10 each; Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovakia, 7 each; Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Luxembourg and Slovenia, 4 each; Malta 3. A qualified majority is reached when the following two conditions are met: a majority of member countries approve (in some cases a two-thirds majority); and a minimum of 255 votes (which is 73.9 per cent of the total) is cast in favour. In addition it is possible for a member country to ask for confirmation that the votes in favour represent at least 62 per cent of the total population of the Union; if this is not the case, the decision will not be adopted. Abstentions do not prevent the taking by the Council of conclusions requiring unanimity. The right of 'veto' in several areas was substantially restricted by the SEA. The range of decisions that can be taken by qualified majority now embraces a substantial proportion of the Community's new powers as well as many environmental decisions. The Treaty of Nice further expanded the provisions to which the qualified majority rule applies.

Preparation and co-ordination of the Council's work are entrusted to a Committee of Permanent Representatives, meeting in Brussels and commonly known as Coreper, which consists of the Ambassadors of the member countries and of their assistants. The work of Coreper is prepared by some 250 committees and working groups of delegates from member countries.

The European Commission

At present, the European Commission consists of 27 members, one from each country, chosen on the grounds of their general competence and appointed for a renewable five-year term. The basic task of the Commission, called to act independently in the general interest of the Community, is the implementation of the Treaties, enjoying the right of both initiative and execution. The governments of member countries nominate by common accord, after consulting the European Parliament, the person they intend to appoint as President, and – in consultation with the nominee for President –

nominate the other Commissioners. The President and the other Commissioners are subject, as a body, to a vote of approval by Parliament. The Commission may be forced to resign by a vote of censure of Parliament adopted by a two-thirds majority.

The Commission works on the principle of collegiate responsibility. Commissioners meet once a week to take policy decisions together; each member is in charge of one or more of the Commission's directorates-general (DGs) managing specific policy areas. Vice-Presidents may be appointed by the Commission. In carrying out their tasks, the members of the Commission may not seek or accept instructions from any government or other body. Any Commissioner who no longer fulfils the conditions required, or commits a serious offence, may be declared, at the request of the Council or of the Commission itself, removed from office by the Court of Justice.

The Commission performs the following functions: to ensure application of the provisions of the Treaties and the provisions enacted by the institutions of the Communities; to formulate recommendations or opinions in matters which are the subject of the Treaties; to dispose of a power of decision of its own and to participate in the preparation of acts of the Council and of the European Parliament; and to exercise the competence conferred on it by the Council for the implementation of the rules laid down by the latter. The Commission can initiate infringement proceedings against any member country and may, if necessary, refer matters to the Court of Justice. In the areas of intergovernmental co-operation, the Commission enjoys the same rights as the individual member countries with regard to making proposals.

The Court of Justice of the European Communities

The Court, composed of 27 judges assisted by 8 advocates-general and sitting in Luxembourg, bears prime responsibility for ensuring the observance of law and justice in the interpretation and application of the Treaties. The judges and advocates-general are appointed for renewable six-year terms by common accord between the governments of the member countries; they are chosen from persons whose independence can be fully relied upon and who fulfil the conditions required for the exercise of the highest judicial functions in their respective countries or are legal experts of universally recognized ability. A

partial renewal of the Court takes place every three years, affecting both judges and advocates-general. The President of the Court is appointed by the judges from among themselves for a renewable three-year term. The Court may sit as a full Court (in cases of exceptional importance), in a Grand Chamber of 13 judges (in particularly complex or important cases or when a member country or a Community institution so requests), or in Chambers of three or five judges. The Registrar is the Court's secretary general and manages the various departments under the authority of the President.

A Court of First Instance, currently comprising 27 judges (at least one judge from each member country) and also sitting in Luxembourg, was created in 1989, following a decision of the Council, with jurisdiction to hear and determine certain categories of cases which had hitherto been dealt with by the Court of Justice. These categories include cases arising under the competition rules of the EC Treaty, cases brought under the ECSC Treaty, and cases brought by Community officials. The judges of the Court of First Instance are appointed by common accord of the governments of member countries for renewable six-year terms; a partial renewal takes place every three years. The Court of First Instance sits in Chambers of five or three judges or, in some cases, as a single judge. It may also sit as a full Court or as a Grand Chamber of 13 judges. Unlike the Court of Justice, the Court of First Instance does not have permanent Advocates General.

The Court of Justice has jurisdiction to settle disputes within the Communities and may impose a lump sum or penalty payment to be paid by the member countries concerned. It may review the legal validity of acts adopted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council, of acts of the Council and of the Commission (other than recommendations and opinions) and of acts of Parliament intended to produce legal effects *vis-à-vis* third parties. The Court is competent to give judgment on actions by a member country, the Commission or the Council on grounds of incompetence, infringement of the Treaties or of any legal provision relating to their application, or misuse of powers. Any natural or legal person may, under the same conditions, institute proceedings against a decision directed to him, her or it or against a decision which, although in the form of a regulation or decision addressed to another person, is of direct and specific concern to him, her or it. After the creation

of the Court of First Instance, the Court is also empowered to hear cases concerning compensation for damage, disputes between the Communities and their employees, fulfilment by member countries of obligations arising from the Statute of the European Investment Bank (EIB), arbitration clauses contained in any contract concluded by or on behalf of the Communities and disputes between member countries in connection with the objects of the Treaties, where such disputes are submitted to the Court under a special agreement. Preliminary rulings are given by the Court, at the request of national courts, on the interpretation of the Treaties, the validity and interpretation of acts of Community institutions, and the interpretation of the statutes of bodies set up by the Council, where those statutes so provide.

The European Court of Auditors

The Court of Auditors is composed of 27 members (one from each member country), appointed for a renewable six-year term by the Council acting unanimously, after consultation with the European Parliament. The President is elected by members for a renewable three-year term. The Court, based in Luxembourg, examines the accounts of all revenue and expenditure of the Communities and of all bodies created by the Communities, and assists the Parliament and the Council in exercising powers of control over the implementation of the budget. The Court co-operates closely with the national audit bodies which supervise the national authorities responsible for enforcing Community law.

The consultative bodies

There are two major consultative bodies whose members are appointed in a personal capacity and are not bound by any mandatory instructions.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is a non-political body composed of members representing economic and social interest groups (employers, workers and other interests) appointed for a renewable four-year term by the unanimous vote of the Council. The 344 members of the Committee are apportioned as follows: France, Germany, Italy and the UK, 24 each; Poland and Spain, 21 each; Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands and Romania, 15 each; Austria, Bulgaria, Portugal and Sweden, 12 each; Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania and Slovakia, 9 each; Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia, 7 each; Cyprus and Luxembourg, 6 each; Malta 5. The Committee, meeting in Brussels, performs advisory

functions and is consulted by the Council or the Commission, particularly with regard to agriculture, free movement of workers, harmonization of laws and transport.

The Committee of the Regions is an advisory body set up under the Maastricht Treaty consisting of 344 full members and an equal number of alternate members, appointed by the Council for a four-year term, representing regional and local authorities. The number of members from each country is the same as for the EESC. The Committee of the Regions must be consulted on matters regarding education, culture, public health, trans-European networks and economic and social cohesion. It is informed of all requests for an opinion addressed to the EESC and may issue opinions on its own initiative.

Besides the bodies already mentioned, there are several hundred specialized groups, representing a wide variety of interests within the Communities, which hold unofficial talks with the Commission.

Legal instruments

The European Parliament acting jointly with the Council, the Council itself and the Commission, in order to carry out their tasks, are empowered to make 'regulations', issue 'directives', take 'decisions', make 'recommendations' or deliver 'opinions'. Regulations have a general application and are binding in every respect and directly applicable in each member country. Directives bind, as to the result to be achieved, any member country to which they are addressed, while leaving to national authorities the choice of form and methods. Decisions are binding in their entirety upon those to whom they are addressed. Recommendations and opinions have no binding force.

Budget

The structure of the budget is based, according to the new financial regulation in force since January 2003, on policy areas. This has brought about fundamental changes in the way the Union's finances are managed, including a greater transparency in the system governing contracts concluded by the Community. The largest share of the budget is now devoted to making the economy more competitive and at the same time more cohesive by narrowing the gap between richer and poorer members. Between 2007 and 2013 the relevant expenditure will account for around 38 per cent of the total budget of over €900 billion for the whole period.

The second largest share of the budget is devoted to agriculture representing around 34 per cent. Over the past 40 years the portion of the budget allocated to agriculture has dropped by half. The share of the budget used to pay for the administrative costs of all the institutions of the Union amounts to less than 6 per cent of total expenditure.

Expenditure under the general budget is financed by automatic payments made over by the member countries from the revenue they collect in agricultural levies and customs duties, from a percentage of the revenue from value-added tax (VAT) on goods and services, and on the basis of a levy on the GNP of each country. The provision of the Community's 'own resources' started in 1975 when the six original member countries began to pay a growing proportion of their contributions through the new system of automatic payments.

The general budget reflects the operational priorities: the strengthening of economic and social cohesion, the creation of an environment favourable to the improvement of the competitiveness of European industry and the stepping up of external action. The introduction of the principle of subsidiarity and the changes made to institutional arrangements (increasing the role played by the Court of Auditors and establishing the Committee of the Regions) have also had a significant impact.

The protection of the Community's financial interests is a major issue calling for closer partnership with the national authorities of the member countries. Fraud prevention, which is crucial to the effectiveness of policies, has been given a new impulse as well as a new institutional framework. Several cases of large-scale fraud and irregularities have shown the existence of well-organized smuggling networks.

Activities

The single internal market

The single internal market, representing the core of the process of economic integration, is characterized by the four fundamental freedoms with the abolition, as between member countries, of obstacles to the free movement of goods, persons, services and capital.

A complete customs union between the six original member countries of the then EEC was achieved in July 1968, covering the exchange of all goods, the removal of customs duties, charges having equivalent effect and quantitative restrictions on imports

and exports between member countries, and the adoption of a common external tariff in relations with third countries. The common customs duties have been modified several times to adjust to the concessions resulting from bilateral and multilateral negotiations, mostly conducted within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) succeeded in 1995 by the World Trade Organization (WTO). Special transitional periods have been adopted over the years as new member countries have joined the Community. However, the movement of goods between member countries remained restricted by a number of national non-tariff barriers, such as health and safety regulations and technical standards. Under the SEA, all remaining barriers to free movement of goods, persons, services and capital had to be removed by December 1992. The free movement of workers, except those employed in the public service, between member countries became effective in July 1968. Nationals of member countries are granted equal treatment in every important field relating to employment, including matters relating to taxation, social insurance and dependants. Individuals, companies and firms from one member country may establish themselves in another member country for the purpose of pursuing an economic activity under the same conditions applied to nationals of that country. Social security benefits are guaranteed throughout the Community to employees and the self-employed as well as their families. In 1990, the right of residence, originally granted only to workers and those seeking work, was extended to students, non-employed and pensioners.

The principle of equal treatment for all citizens of the Union also applies to people taking up and pursuing independent occupations such as doctors and lawyers, and those involved in technical, artistic, and craft activities. Moreover, the freedom of establishment covers the establishment and running of businesses, companies, agencies, branches and subsidiaries. The freedom to provide services regards activities which are limited in time and covers the providers as well as the recipients of services such as tourists, students and patients undergoing medical treatment.

The first steps towards an effective liberalization of capital movements were taken only in the late 1980s; since January 1993, member countries have fully liberalized capital markets and financial services and restrictions may be introduced only in exceptional circumstances.

As regards competition, the provisions embodied in the Treaties for action against practices which restrict or distort competition in the common market have been implemented to a significant degree. The Community has made extensive use of its powers to control cross-frontier amalgamations, takeovers, and other arrangements between firms likely to create abuse of market power. Conflicts between national and Community authorities have arisen in this area.

The economic and monetary union

The establishment of the single market provided the essential foundation for the next phase of integration, that is the economic and monetary union. Before the Maastricht Treaty several unsuccessful attempts had been made in that direction. Efforts undertaken between 1969 and 1972, on the basis of the Werner Report, failed for a number of reasons, notably the lack of determination of the member countries in the field of economic policy co-ordination. Plans providing for a common central bank system, invariable exchange-rate parities and Community decisions on important economic questions were shelved after the crisis of the Bretton Woods international monetary system and the first oil shock of 1973. Another major attempt to promote a convergence of economic policies of member countries was made with the establishment of the European monetary system (EMS) which formally began operations in March 1979. Unlike its predecessor, the 'snake', which had been introduced in 1972 and was merely a common exchange-rate system, the EMS was intended to keep the cross rates of exchange of the currencies of the participating countries within specific fluctuation margins, to co-ordinate intervention on the foreign exchange markets and to grant credit facilities.

Following the introduction of the EMS, the European Currency Unit (ECU) was created on the basis of a 'basket' of national currencies, 'weighted' according to the economic strength of each country. The EMS aimed to create close monetary co-operation, leading to a zone of monetary stability in Europe, chiefly by means of an exchange-rate mechanism (ERM) supervised by the ministries of finance and the central banks of member countries. Under the ERM, a central rate was fixed for each currency in ECUs, with established fluctuation margins. However, several currencies either remained outside the ERM or were allowed to fluctuate within fairly wide bands.

A new effort to be implemented through a number of stages leading to EMU was undertaken in the late 1980s. In July 1990 the first stage began through the setting up of programmes aimed at achieving convergence as well as improving economic performance of the member countries. Under the Maastricht Treaty, the second stage began in January 1994 with the establishment of the European Monetary Institute in order to create the necessary conditions for transition to the third stage, to oversee the functioning of the EMS, and to prepare the introduction of a European System of Central Banks (ECSB), the implementation of a single monetary policy and the establishment of a single currency. The third stage of EMU began on 1 January 1999 when 11 member countries (Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain) adopted the euro as their common currency; the above countries were joined by Greece on 1 January 2001. On 1 January 2002 euro banknotes and coins were introduced in the 12 participating countries and, after a very short period of double circulation, completely replaced national currencies. Slovenia adopted the euro on 1 January 2007 followed by Cyprus and Malta on 1 January 2008. The euro has established itself as one of the most significant and powerful symbols of a common 'European identity'. The national central banks of the euro area members together with the European Central Bank (ECB) are called to implement a stability-oriented monetary policy for the whole area.

The common agricultural policy

With respect to agriculture, a common policy was developed step by step from the early 1960s in order: (a) to increase agricultural productivity through technical progress and the rational development of agricultural production, and the optimum utilization of the factors of production, particularly labour; (b) to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural population; (c) to stabilize markets; and (d) to assure regular supplies as well as reasonable consumer prices. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was established on the following main elements: a single market, calling for common prices, stable currency parities and the harmonization of administrative, health and veterinary legislation; Community preference, for the protection of the Community market from imports and world market fluctuations; and common financing of the European Agricultural Guidance

and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) supporting, through its Guarantee Section, all public expenditure intervention, storage costs, marketing subsidies and export rebates. In several cases, the CAP encouraged excess production and the consequent formation of costly surpluses, originating strong public criticism. Moreover, the operation of the CAP has been characterized by serious fraud, mainly in the form of false claims for subsidies and intervention payments.

Several efforts have been undertaken with a view to reforming the CAP and reducing its share in the Community budget (nearly 70 per cent in the 1970s). In June 1992 a wide-ranging reform of the CAP was adopted by the Council; the bulk of legislation for implementing CAP reform was adopted in 1993. The main aim of the long-overdue reform was to make the agricultural sector more responsive to the level of supply and demand and to reduce agricultural subsidies, particularly in the context of the commitments resulting from the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations conducted within the framework of GATT. Agriculture and regional policy were issues of primary importance in the 1993–94 negotiations relating to the enlargement of the Union since all three applicant countries at the time used agricultural policy as an instrument of regional policy. Further proposals for reform of the CAP were presented by the Commission as part of its 'Agenda 2000'. Compromise agreements were reached on a number of sectors in 1999 and 2000 and rural development programmes were adopted for the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Structural adjustment in the agricultural sector was to be carried out under the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD) that also provided a substantial pre-accession aid. A reform of PAC was eventually adopted in July 2003 with a stronger focus on the needs of consumers, the rationalization of Community expenditure and food safety. The reform is based on decoupling subsidies and production and is expected to increase the competitiveness of European agriculture while assuring a stable income to farmers.

Fisheries

Although the need for a common policy for fisheries was acknowledged by all member countries, agreement on the main elements of such a policy did not prove easy to achieve. In principle, the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), into effect since January

1983, gave all EC fishermen equal access to the waters of member countries. From 1977 the Community has reserved a zone extending up to 200 nautical miles (370 km) from the shore around all its coastlines, within which all member countries have access to fishing and other economic uses of the sea. According to the CFP, the total allowable catch for each species in each region was to be set and then shared out between member countries according to pre-established quotas; special rules were to apply in order to conserve fish stocks, providing financial support to help fleets adjust capacity and equipment to new circumstances. The CFP includes measures in favour of the preservation of marine biodiversity and the pursuit of fishing on a sustainable basis. In 1994 common arrangements were established for the conservation and management of fishery resources in the Mediterranean, also taking into account the specific socio-economic role of fisheries in some coastal regions. As with agricultural produce, export subsidies are paid to enable the export of fish and import levies are imposed. Agreements have been signed with several countries, including Canada, Norway and the US, allowing reciprocal fishing rights and other advantages. Over the past few years, environmental concerns have gradually been integrated in the CFP ensuring the sustainable development of the industry. The reform of CFP in 2002 was followed by additional measures with a view to ensuring effective implementation and encouraging the conservation and sustainable exploitation of fish stocks, especially in the Mediterranean.

The industrial policy

The promotion of the conditions necessary for the competitiveness of the Community's industry was one of the key objectives of the Maastricht Treaty. Within a framework of open and competitive markets, the Community's industrial policy has been aimed at speeding up adjustment to structural changes, creating a favourable environment for business growth, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, and promoting innovation, research and technological development. In its White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment presented to the European Council in December 1993, the Commission had recommended practical measures to gear up European businesses for competition on world markets. Action is being taken with a view to relieving businesses of unnecessary burdens, safeguarding competition and

strengthening co-operation with non-member countries. Measures have been adopted in several areas – such as coal and steel production, the textile and clothing industry, and shipbuilding – that are seriously affected by overseas competition. Industrial policy is also being targeted on such growth areas as the markets in information and culture.

Research and technological development

Since the early 1980s 'framework programmes' have been adopted by the Community to foster research and technological development (RTD) activities. A shift is gradually taking place towards better co-ordination of the European research effort and a more effective focusing of RTD activity on social problems. The Fourth Framework Programme for RTD for the period 1994–98 was adopted by Parliament and the Council in April 1994. The European Science and Technology Assembly (ESTA), consisting of 100 scientists and representatives of the world of industrial research, was created in 1994 in order to assist the Commission in implementing all aspects of the RTD policy. The Fifth Framework Programme for RTD for the period 1998–2002 was adopted by the Parliament and the Council on 22 December 1998 and was launched, in operational terms, in 1999 with the formal adoption of the specific programmes. The Fifth Framework Programme contained several innovations, concentrating on a smaller number of research programmes, integrating the Union's social and economic needs in a number of 'key actions', and co-ordinating the various activities in a more effective way. The European Council, meeting in March 2000, adopted the 'Lisbon Strategy' for the economic, social and environmental renewal of the Union, with the objective of transforming the Union itself into the most competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy in the world. According to the Strategy, a stronger economy will drive job creation along with social and environmental policies ensuring sustainable development and social inclusion. A European Research Area (ERA) was to be created in order to promote the more effective use of scientific resources with the support of the Sixth Framework Programme for the period 2002–2006. The Sixth Programme was aimed at integrating research capacities in Europe focusing on areas such as genomics, food safety and information technology, also taking into account needs and priorities of the new member countries. The Seventh Framework Programme, extended to cover seven

years (from 2007 to 2013) and taking over many features from previous programmes, offers an opportunity to match the research policy to goals in terms of economic and social policy through the consolidation of ERA. The Seventh Programme is organized around four main programmes and has been significantly simplified in order to be more effective and more accessible to researchers.

Transport and trans-European networks

Progress towards a common transport policy had been remarkably slow until the mid-1980s when the Court of Justice ruled that firms anywhere in the Community should be free to provide goods and passenger services in the member countries, irrespective of nationality or place of establishment. The SEA envisaged transport as an essential element of the single market and listed measures to be adopted in order to develop a common policy in the area. The new overall approach to the transport policy went beyond the mere elimination of artificial barriers to the provision of services through the promotion of an integrated transport system which was environmentally and socially acceptable, providing a high level of safety. Under the Maastricht Treaty, the Community must contribute to the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructures. An action programme had been adopted by the Commission setting the guidelines for a common approach to transport for the period 1995–2000. The Instrument for Structural Policies for Pre-accession (ISPA) was launched in 2000 to help candidate countries of Eastern Europe implement infrastructure projects in the transport and environment sectors. Several measures with a view to increasing security in the field of air, sea and inland transport are gradually being put into practice. The Union's goal of an information society, based on advanced information and communications technologies and services, will require changes in the regulatory frameworks to encourage expansion of the market and to ensure interconnection of networks and inter-operability of services. In its White Paper of September 2001, the Commission proposed about 60 measures with a view to developing a transport system capable of shifting the balance between modes of transport, revitalizing railways, promoting transport by sea and inland waterways and controlling the growth in air transport. Changes since 2001, such as the Union's enlargement, the acceleration of globalization, inter-

national commitments on global warming, the considerable increases in oil prices and security fears are calling for significant adjustments to the European transport policy.

Energy

The completion of the internal energy market and the development of trans-European gas and electricity networks are among the Community's major tasks, along with the integration of energy policy and environment policy. The European Communities were among the signatories, in December 1994, of the European Energy Charter Treaty and the Protocol on energy efficiency and related environmental aspects; the Treaty entered into force in April 1998. Mounting import dependence and high energy prices as well as the still limited use of renewable power are the problems that confront virtually all the Union's members and make of paramount importance the co-ordination of national approaches on energy sources and market liberalization. The energy import dependence of the Union reaches at present around 50 per cent of total consumption and is bound to increase; reliance on imports of oil is over 80 per cent and reliance on imports of gas nearly 60 per cent. The Union badly needs an effective and coherent policy towards Russia and the countries of Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa.

Binding EU-wide targets concerning a long-term energy policy have been set at the European Council held in March 2007. The package includes commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions, develop renewable energy sources and increase the use of biofuels. However, much remains to be done as regards, *inter alia*, the dismantling of heavily-protected national energy markets.

In international negotiations the EU is endorsing the objective of a 30 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by developed countries by 2020 compared to 1990 in order to face the challenges of climate change and slow down the pace of global warming. Should other industrialized countries refuse to agree on such ambitious goal, the EU is in any case committed to achieve at least a 20 per cent reduction of greenhouse gases by 2020 compared to 1990, going well beyond the 8 per cent target by 2012 established in the Kyoto Protocol.

Citizens' rights and social dimension

One of the major goals of the EU is to build an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe, in which

decisions are taken as openly as possible and as closely as possible to the citizen. The principle of subsidiarity ensures that anything carried out at Community level is justified by the fact that the objectives pursued cannot be sufficiently achieved by the member countries and can be better achieved by the Community as such. In the light of the subsidiarity principle, existing legislation has been reviewed and a number of instruments have been recast, simplified or repealed. Measures to improve transparency have been adopted to strengthen democratic control over European institutions.

European citizenship, supplementary to national citizenship, is a concept introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, according to which every person holding the nationality of a member country becomes a citizen of the Union and enjoys the relevant rights. These include the right to move and settle freely in any member country and to vote and stand as a candidate at municipal elections in the country of residence. Any resident has also the right – exercised for the first time in the June 1994 European elections – to vote and stand as a candidate for the European Parliament in the country of residence. In the territory of a foreign country in which his own country is not represented, any citizen of the Union enjoys the protection of the diplomatic or consular authorities of any other member country.

Any citizen of the Union has the right to address a petition to Parliament on a matter coming within the Community's fields of activity and which affects him directly. This rule also applies to any natural or legal person residing in a member country. An Ombudsman, appointed by Parliament, is empowered to receive complaints from any citizen of the Union or any natural or legal person, residing or having its office in a member country, concerning instances of maladministration in the activities of the Community institutions or bodies.

The promotion of close co-operation between member countries in the social field was from the very beginning among the Community's basic aims, particularly in matters relating to employment, labour legislation and working conditions, occupational and continuation training, social security, protection against occupational accidents and diseases. The SEA emphasized the need for 'economic and social cohesion' and granted the Community extensive powers in the social field. A Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers – covering freedom of movement, fair remuneration, improvement of working conditions,

right to social security, freedom of association and collective wage agreements, and development of participation by workers in management – was adopted in December 1989 by 11 Community members, with the only exception of the UK. Subsequently the same 11 countries adopted the Protocol and the Agreement on Social Policy annexed to the Maastricht Treaty covering workers' health and safety, information and consultation, fair pay, better working and living conditions, proper social protection, freedom of association and collective bargaining, vocational training, equal opportunities for men and women in the labour market, industrial democracy, and protection of children, the elderly and the disabled. In the Amsterdam Treaty, member countries confirmed 'their attachment to fundamental social rights as defined in the European Social Charter signed at Turin on 18 October 1961 and in the 1989 Community Charter of the Fundamental Social Rights of Workers'. A streamlined and more effective European employment policy has been formulated and member countries are encouraged in their efforts to reform present social protection systems.

The rights and freedoms recognized by the Union have been incorporated in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, proclaimed in Nice on 7 December 2000. The 54-article Charter deals with the whole range of civil, political, economic and social rights of European citizens and persons resident in the Union.

Economic and social cohesion

The strengthening of economic and social cohesion – with a view to narrowing the gap between the levels of development of the different regions, promoting job creation and helping workers to adjust to industrial change – was reaffirmed as a major goal of the Community by the Maastricht Treaty. The policy was no longer defined in financial terms but on the basis of five priority objectives regarding regions and subregions lagging behind or affected by industrial decline, long-term unemployment and the integration of young people into working life, the adjustment of farm structures and the development of rural areas. The main instruments were the 'structural funds' – the Guidance Section of the EAGGF, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), and the European Social Fund (ESF) – and the EIB. In 1988 the Council of Ministers approved a reform of the structural funds with a view to selecting priority targets and

concentrating action in the least-favoured regions. In the second phase of the implementation of the reform (1994–99), the rules and operating provisions governing the structural funds were improved, Community support frameworks and single programming documents were adopted, and the financial allocation and geographical coverage of the eligible areas were increased.

The EAGGF, established in 1962 under the administration of the Commission, contributes, through its Guidance Section, credits for structural reforms in the agricultural sector. The ERDF, in operation since the mid-1970s, is responsible for encouraging investment and improving infrastructure in depressed regions as a means of compensating for the unequal rate of development in different areas of the Community. In 1993 the scope for assistance was extended to take better account of the specific needs of the regions involved, including investment in education and health and stressing the importance of certain priority areas. The ESF was originally set up in 1960 under the EEC Treaty with a view to improving opportunities for employment within the Community by assisting training and workers' mobility; the scope of ESF was subsequently modified several times. The objectives of ESF were redefined in 1993, in order to facilitate the integration of young people, to assist the adaptation of workers to industrial changes and to boost human potential in research, science and technology. Also in 1993, a Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) was created with a view to bringing together the resources allocated to structural measures in the fisheries sector. The structural funds co-ordinate their activities between themselves and with the operations of the EIB and the other existing financial instruments.

According to the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty, a new Cohesion Fund was established in May 1994 to help finance projects in the fields of transport infrastructures and environmental protection in member countries (Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain) having a per capita GNP of less than 90 per cent of the Community average.

Following the decision of the European Council of December 1992, the European Investment Fund (EIF) eventually started operations in 1994 in Luxembourg with a view to financing investment projects associated with the trans-European networks and funding small and medium-sized enterprises. The EIB became in 2000 the major shareholder of the EIF.

The Agenda 2000 reform package contained regulations concerning the legal framework for the operation of the Structural Funds during the period 2000–2006 with funding concentrated on three objectives and four Community initiatives. The three objectives of 2000–2006 have been superseded by three new objectives: convergence; regional competitiveness and employment; and European territorial co-operation. The reformed cohesion policy for 2007–2013 aims to target structural actions more focused on the Union's strategic guidelines (for cohesion, growth and employment) and more concentrated on the most disadvantaged regions while being more simplified and decentralized at the same time.

Environment, consumer and education policies

The Community's environment and consumer protection policy was launched in 1972. The SEA gave environmental policy its proper place with a view to making the protection of the environment an integral part of economic and social policies. The Community aims at preventing pollution (prevention principle), rectifying pollution at source wherever possible, and imposing the costs of prevention, cleaning up and compensation upon the polluters themselves (polluter-pays principle). The European Environment Agency was officially inaugurated in Copenhagen in October 1994 in order to help base the Community's environment policy on reliable scientific data. The Fifth Action Programme regarding the environment and sustainable development, entitled 'Towards Sustainability', covered the period 1993–2000. Besides the implementation of a strategy for integrating environment into the Union's policies, in line with the provisions introduced by the Amsterdam Treaty, growing attention has been paid to active participation in the relevant international negotiations. The Sixth Environment Action Programme, approved in July 2002 and covering a period until December 2010, is focused on four priority areas: climate change, environment and health, nature and biodiversity, and natural resources and waste.

Consumer protection policy was expressly envisaged by the Maastricht Treaty with a view to protecting the health, safety and economic interests of consumers and to providing them with adequate information. Any member country is allowed to maintain or introduce protective measures which are more stringent than the ones adopted at Community level. A series of action programmes

have been adopted dealing, *inter alia*, with safety of products and services, the protection of consumers' economic and legal interests and the promotion of consumer associations.

Community action in the area of public health is mainly directed towards the prevention of major diseases, including drug addiction, by promoting health information and education as well as research. Action programmes have been adopted in order to combat rare diseases, to prevent injuries and to reduce pollution-related diseases.

Although member countries retain full responsibility for the content of teaching and the organization of education and vocational training systems, the Community develops the European dimension encouraging mobility of students and teachers (including the academic recognition of diplomas and periods of study), improving initial and continuing vocational training and encouraging mobility of instructors and trainees, and stimulating co-operation and exchanges of information and experience.

Euratom and the role of nuclear power

The establishment of Euratom took place at a time when it was widely believed that nuclear power would become the foundation of European energy resources and that it would therefore be crucial to create the conditions necessary for the speedy establishment and growth of nuclear industries. Agencies were created under the Euratom Treaty to secure supplies of nuclear materials to member countries and to avoid diversion of these materials for unintended purposes. However, the development of nuclear energy met with growing hostility within several member countries which closed down existing plants and refused to proceed with the construction of new ones. In the late 1960s, first the Euratom budget for administration and later the budget for research and investment were incorporated in the budget of the then EEC. Several co-operation agreements on the use of nuclear materials have been concluded by Euratom with third countries, including the US.

Justice and home affairs

The achievement of the objectives of the Union requires the extension of co-operation to the fields of justice and home affairs which, under the Maastricht Treaty, were basically dealt with at the intergovernmental level. The Amsterdam Treaty reinforced the means of action of the Union in this field, above all through the incorporation of the

questions of visas, asylum, immigration and judicial co-operation in civil matters into the TEC. The European Council held a special meeting on 15–16 October 1999 in Tampere, Finland, specifically dedicated to the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice in the Union. This was to involve a common asylum and migration policy, a European area of justice including mutual recognition of judicial decisions and greater convergence in civil law, a Union-wide fight against crime as well as stronger external action. The Seville European Council, in June 2002, established as a priority the fight against illegal immigration as well as the common management of the Union's external borders. Minimum standards have been defined for the reception of asylum seekers and for the granting and withdrawal of refugee status. Cross-border judicial co-operation in civil, commercial and criminal matters is gradually being strengthened. The extension of the area of freedom, security and justice to include the member countries that joined in 2004 and 2007 represents a major challenge in order to ensure that the policies which apply to EU nationals, visitors and immigrants from other parts of the world – as well as to criminals and terrorists – are uniformly implemented across the territory of the Union.

Common foreign policy and defence

European political co-operation – involving regular consultation and co-ordination efforts on major external relations issues among Foreign Ministers of the member countries – had been in place since the early 1970s and obtained full recognition in the SEA. The Maastricht Treaty established a common foreign and security policy (CFSP) with the following objectives: to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests and independence of the Union; to strengthen the security of the Union and its member countries; to maintain peace and international security according to the principles of the Charter of the UN as well as the principles and aims of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE); to advance international co-operation; to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law and to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Most decisions in the area of CFSP are taken at the intergovernmental level, although they may be closely related to specific Community instruments such as economic co-operation and financial assistance. After the European Council has provided the general guidelines, the Council decides on joint actions to be taken – laying

down objectives and procedures for implementation – and defines the matters on which joint action may be carried out by qualified majority voting instead of unanimity. The Amsterdam Treaty further strengthened the CFSP through the introduction of new provisions. The first High Representative for the CFSP, Javier Solana, was appointed in 1999. The first common strategies have been adopted along with the gradual intensification of the common European policy on security and defence. The Union has been actively involved in political dialogue with countries and groups of countries, especially with regard to human rights and fundamental freedoms, and has continued to promote dialogue between parties in conflict and to provide humanitarian aid for civilians.

Within this framework, the Union has carried out several joint actions in respect of the former Yugoslavia, the peace process in the Middle East, Russia, South Africa, the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe, and nuclear non-proliferation. As regards control of exports to non-member countries of goods which can be used for both civil and military purposes, the Union participates in the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.

The intention has been expressed by the European Council to give the Union the military and decision-making capacity to play its role on the international scene, especially in conflict prevention, crisis management and peacekeeping operations. The relevant functions have been transferred to the Union from the Western European Union (WEU). New political and military bodies have been set up within the Council.

The objective of common defence should also be reconciled with the obligations arising from a significant number of member countries of the Union from their participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Under consultation arrangements concluded by NATO and the Union in January 2001, meetings between the two organizations were to take place three times per semester at ambassadorial level and twice a year at the level of foreign ministers. The EU-NATO Declaration on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), adopted on 16 December 2002, opened the way for closer co-operation in the areas of crisis management and conflict prevention. Besides delineating the formal basis for closer links between the two organizations, the Declaration gives the Union

assured access to NATO's planning and logistics capabilities for its own military operations. In January 2003 a Police Mission of the Union was deployed for the first time in an international peace-keeping operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also in the western Balkans, the Union took over from NATO a military operation code-named Concordia in Macedonia, followed by the Police Mission code-named Proxima which continued through to the end of 2005. The 'Artemis' military operation was launched by the Union in the Ituri region of the Congo Democratic Republic in order to stabilize the security and humanitarian situation. A European security strategy was adopted in December 2003 establishing four priorities: an effective multilateralism with the UN at its core; the fight against terrorism; a comprehensive policy *vis-à-vis* Bosnia and Herzegovina; a strategy towards the Middle East.

External relations

International relations are maintained by the Communities (EC and Euratom) – each having a distinct international personality of its own – with non-member countries and other international organizations. Over 160 countries of the world have accredited permanent missions in Brussels while the Commission has been steadily opening new delegations abroad, currently numbering about 130. Representations of international organizations and bodies to the Commission number over 20.

As regards its European neighbours, the Community has established very close economic and political ties with the member countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) through the creation of a European Economic Area (EEA), in operation since 1 January 1994, involving the free movement of goods, services, people and capital as well as participation in several Community programmes. However, the EEA basically appears a transitional arrangement, since most of its former member countries have joined the Union and Switzerland has refused to take part in the Area.

The dramatic changes in political and economic systems in Central and Eastern European countries gradually led to ever closer forms of association between these countries and the Community. 'Europe Agreements' covering economic, financial and cultural co-operation as well as political dialogue were signed by the Community with these countries. Full membership of the Union became possible for these associated countries as soon as they satisfied the appropriate economic and

political conditions. Turkey has been recognized as a candidate country. In June 1999, the Union's common strategy on Russia was adopted, representing the first-ever use of the common strategy instrument according to the Amsterdam Treaty. The dialogue with Russia has been strengthened through the creation of a Permanent Partnership Council.

A Euro-Mediterranean partnership, based on a global approach involving political and economic co-operation and an eventual free trade area as well as substantial financial assistance and technical co-operation, has been launched by the Union since the early 1990s. A Euro-Mediterranean ministerial conference took place in Barcelona in November 1995 with the participation of the Union and its 12 Mediterranean partners. The three key components of the partnership are: reinforced and regular political dialogue; enhanced economic and financial co-operation with a view to creating a free trade area; further strengthening of the social, cultural and human dimension.

Co-operation agreements are currently in force with the Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), the Mashreq countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria) and Israel. An agreement will be concluded in due time with the Palestinian Authority. As the biggest donor to the Palestinian Territories, the Union is making a contribution to the development of the Middle East peace process.

The strengthening of the multilateral trade system – through the creation of the WTO as an outcome of the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round – and the challenges of job creation, growth and competitiveness are the major issues which characterize the Union's relationship with other industrial countries. These issues are regularly debated at the summits held by the Group of Eight (G-8)/Group of Seven (G-7).

In 1976 the Community signed its first Framework Agreement for Commercial and Economic Co-operation with an advanced industrial country, Canada, covering not only trade promotion but also wide-ranging collaboration in the economic sphere; a Declaration on EC-Canada Relations was adopted in 1990.

The economic relationship between the Community and the US is currently the most important in the world and a system of consultation between the two sides has come into existence since the adoption, in November 1990, of the EC-US Transatlantic Declaration. Over the years EU-US

summits held within the context of the Transatlantic Declaration have become more effective and wide-ranging. A breakthrough took place with the adoption, at the EU-US summit held in December 1995, of an important statement of political commitment, the New Transatlantic Agenda, and a comprehensive EU-US Action Plan identifying over 150 specific actions to be implemented by the parties, both bilaterally and multilaterally. The transatlantic partnership was affected in early 2003, owing to the diverse choices made by the Union's member countries *vis-à-vis* the US-led intervention in Iraq. Despite persistent differences of opinion between its members, a constructive and balanced transatlantic relationship, founded on shared values and common interests, has always been considered by the Union as being of the utmost importance. A Transatlantic Economic Council was established within the Framework for Advancing Transatlantic Economic Integration between the EU and the US adopted in April 2007. The Framework confirmed a multi-year programme of co-operation between the two parties.

Relations with the countries of Asia have been redefined by the Union in the early 1990s in the light of the increasing economic and political importance of the Asia-Pacific region. Besides strengthening bilateral and regional relations, backing co-operation schemes for the safeguard of peace and security, and improving co-ordination in the management of development aid, the Union aims to ameliorate Europe's image in Asia and to create a climate conducive to the development of trade and investment. In July 1991, a first summit meeting was held between the Community and Japan and a Joint Declaration was adopted calling for greater co-operation and dialogue. Annual high-level summits between the Union and Japan deal with bilateral economic relations, including the disputes connected with access to the Japanese market. The EU strategy regarding China focuses on the support for the country's transition towards a plural society, the promotion of sustainable development, the improvement of trade and economic relations and the strengthening of bilateral and regional co-operation.

The Union has remarkably improved the political and economic dialogue with the Latin American countries, strengthening existing ties and developing financial and technical co-operation, besides promoting democratization and respect for human rights.

ACP countries

Relations between the Community and sub-Saharan Africa date back to the late 1950s when most countries in the region had not yet attained sovereignty. The 1957 Treaty of Rome expressly envisaged the association of the 'overseas countries and territories' with the then EEC. After a series of international instruments, the two Yaoundé Conventions and the four successive Lomé Conventions, a new Partnership Agreement between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries and the Union was signed in Cotonou, Benin, on 23 June 2000, and entered into force in 2003. Taken together, the 77 countries of the ACP Group and the 25 countries of the Union represent almost one billion people. The Cotonou Agreement closely links the political dimension, trade and development, and is based on five pillars: reinforcement of the political dimension of relations between ACP countries and the Union; closer involvement of civil society, the private sector and the economic and social actors; poverty reduction; a new economic and trade co-operation framework; and the rationalization of financial instruments. The Agreement has been concluded for twenty years, with a clause allowing for revision every five years and a financial protocol for each five-year period. The first revision of the Agreement took place in 2005 and includes, *inter alia*, provisions for enhanced political dialogue and references to the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Besides the Cotonou provisions, other instruments for aiding the developing countries have been gradually built up in the form of specific budget headings or components of other Union policies. Humanitarian aid to ACP and other developing countries has been provided through the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), set up in 1992 to assist victims of conflicts and natural disasters worldwide.

Development co-operation

The objectives of the development co-operation policy are set by the TEU: sustainable economic and social development of the developing countries, particularly the most disadvantaged among them; the smooth and gradual integration of developing countries into the world economy; and the campaign against poverty. The Union's policy in this area pursues the broad aim of contributing to the progress and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law and to the respect for human rights

and fundamental freedoms. The development policies of the member countries should complement one another and be co-ordinated with the Union's policy both in international forums and in individual countries.

To assist the trade of developing countries, the then EEC introduced, in July 1971, a Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) to over 90 developing nations, later extended to include additional countries. The scheme was subsequently revised with a view to granting varying preferential advantages, according to the degree of competitiveness of the beneficiary countries. Since 1977 the Union has progressively liberalized GSP access for the least-developed countries by according duty-free entry on all products as well as exemption from virtually all preferential limits. Since the late 1980s the GSP was gradually extended to countries in Central and Eastern Europe and to republics of the former USSR; South Africa became a beneficiary country in 1994. A GSP strategy for 1995–2004 was launched in 1994 with a view to introducing, in addition to the standard scheme, special incentive arrangements granting further tariff reductions if more enlightened social and environmental practices were adopted by the beneficiary countries. Sectors and/or countries having already achieved a certain level of development are gradually excluded from preferential treatment.

Relations with international organizations

The Community maintains relations with several UN organs and specialized agencies; it has observer status at the UN and was made a full member of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) in November 1991. Thus the EC became the first regional economic integration organization to join a UN specialized agency.

Close links, expressly envisaged by the Treaties, have been established between the Community and the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the WEU. The Community co-operates closely with other European regional organizations such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the OSCE.

As regards relations with non-European international organizations specifically concerned with economic co-operation and integration, the Community has developed close relations with regional groupings in Asia, notably the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian

Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC); Latin America, from the Andean Community and the five countries of Central America and Panama to the Rio Group and Mercosur; the Middle East, especially the Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf; and Africa, in particular the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Bulgarian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, Gaelic, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT:
Hans Gert Poettering (German)

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, SECRETARIAT: Centre Européen, Plateau du Kirchberg, 2929 Luxembourg (telephone: +352 43001; fax: +352 4300 7009)

WEBSITE: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu>

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION, GENERAL SECRETARIAT: 175 rue de la Loi, 1048 Brussels (telephone: +32 2 285 6111; fax: +32 2 285 7397)

WEBSITE: <http://www.consilium.europa.eu>

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION:
José Manuel Durão Barroso (Portuguese)

EUROPEAN COMMISSION: 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels, Belgium (telephone +32 2 299 1111; fax: +32 2 295 0138)

WEBSITE: <http://ec.europa.eu>

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES: Boulevard Konrad Adenauer, 2925 Luxembourg (telephone +352 43031; fax: +352 4303 2600)

WEBSITE: <http://www.curia.europa.eu>

EUROPEAN COURT OF AUDITORS: 12 rue Alcide de Gasperi, 1615 Luxembourg (telephone: +352 43981; fax: +352 439342)

WEBSITE: <http://www.eca.europa.eu>

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE: 99 rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels (telephone: +32 2 546 9011; fax: +32 2 513 4893)

WEBSITE: <http://eesc.europa.eu>

COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS: 101 rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels (telephone: +32 2 282 2211; fax: +32 2 282 2325)

WEBSITE: <http://cor.europa.eu>

PUBLICATIONS: *Bulletin of the European Union* (10 issues a year plus supplements); *General Report on the Activities of the European Union* (annual); *The Agricultural Situation in the European Union* (annual); *Report on Competition Policy* (annual); *Report on the Application of Community Law* (annual); *European Economy* (two a year plus supplements); *The Courier ACP-EU* (every two months); *Official Journal of the European Union* (in three series: Legislation; Information and notices; Supplement on public works and supply contracts); *Reports of Cases before the Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance of the European Communities*; *Energy Statistics* (monthly); *Eurostatistics: Data for Short-term Economic Analysis* (11 issues a year); *Monthly External Trade Bulletin*

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Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)

[*Groupe d'action financière sur le blanchiment des capitaux*] (GAFI)

The Task Force is an intergovernmental body set up to develop and promote policies, on the national as well as on the international plane, to combat money laundering and terrorist financing.

Origin and development

The summit of the Group of Seven (G-7), held in Paris in 1989, decided the establishment of the Task Force entrusted with the function of studying money laundering techniques and trends, reviewing the action taken both at national and international levels, and elaborating appropriate measures. Members of the G-7, the European Commission and eight other countries were called to participate in the Task Force whose membership increased substantially in the early 1990s.

The Task Force prepared in April 1990 a report containing 'Forty Recommendations' that provided a complete set of counter-measures on money laundering, covering the criminal justice system and law enforcement and the financial system and its regulation. A first revision of the document took place in 1996 to adapt to changes in the money laundering process.

The mandate of the Task Force is subject to periodic review and has been renewed until the end of 2012.

Membership

The Task Force currently includes 31 countries in all continents plus the European Commission and the Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC). China, India and South Korea enjoy observer status.

Objectives

The Task Force has the responsibility of examining money laundering techniques and trends, reviewing the action taken at the national or international level, and combating the flow of money to terrorist organizations, listing countries failing to co-operate.

Structure

The Task Force meets on a regular basis several times a year. The Presidency of the Task Force is a one-year position (from July to June of the following

year) held by a high-level government official. A specialized Secretariat provides the necessary assistance to the Task Force and its President. The Secretariat is housed at the headquarters of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Paris but the Task Force remains an independent international body and is not a part of OECD. Decisions within the Task Force are taken by consensus.

Activities

After the attacks of 11 September 2001, the need for a co-ordinated approach to detect the misuse of the international financial system by terrorists became manifest. The mission of the Task Force was therefore extended, in October 2001, beyond money laundering to include and concentrate on terrorist financing. New standards to combat terrorist financing were adopted with the 'Eight Special Recommendations' designed to deny access to terrorists and their supporters to the international financial system. A Ninth Special Recommendation was added in October 2004. A thorough review and update of the 'Forty Recommendations' was completed in 2003, clarifying the application of specific measures and providing additional guidance.

Each country participating in the Task Force responds annually to a standard questionnaire providing information on how the 'Forty Recommendations' and 'Eight Special Recommendations' have been carried out. A mutual evaluation procedure is followed in order to assess the extent to which the various recommendations have been implemented, both by individual countries and by the group as a whole.

External relations

The Task Force co-operates with a number of regional bodies involved in the combat against money laundering. Some countries participate in both the Task Force and the relevant regional bodies. The following bodies have observer status with the Task Force: Asia-Pacific Group on money laundering (APG); Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF); Council of Europe Select Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures (MONEYVAL); Eurasian Group on combating money laundering and the financing of terrorism (EAG); Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF); Intergovernmental Action Group

against money laundering in Africa (GIABA); Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG); Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering in South America (GAFISUD). Close relations have also been established by the Task Force with other international organizations carrying out initiatives to fight money laundering.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

HEADQUARTERS: 2, rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris Cedex 16, France (telephone: +33 1 45248200; fax: +33 1 45248500)

WEBSITE: <http://www.fatf-gafi.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *FATF Annual Report*; *FATF e-news* (three times a year)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)

The Organization is the largest specialized agency in the UN system and the lead agency in charge of all matters relating to food and agriculture; the term 'agriculture' and its derivatives include fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forestry products.

Origin and development

The creation of the FAO was recommended by the UN Conference on Food and Agriculture held at Hot Springs, Virginia, US, between 18 May and 3 June 1943 with the participation of representatives of 34 countries; an Interim Commission was set up to plan the new international agency and draw up its Constitution. The Constitution establishing the Organization was signed on 16 October 1945 at Quebec, Canada. The Constitution has subsequently been amended on a number of occasions. Headquarters of the Organization were first in Washington, DC and moved to Rome in 1951. Under a Protocol signed in March 1946, the International Institute of Agriculture, founded in Rome in 1905, was dissolved and its functions and assets were transferred to the new Organization. A relationship agreement was concluded with the UN and entered into force on 14 December 1946.

Any nation submitting an application for membership as well as a formal declaration that it will accept the obligations of the Constitution may be admitted to the Organization by a two-thirds

majority vote of the Conference. The Twenty-sixth Conference approved amendments to the Basic Texts allowing regional economic integration organizations to become members of the Organization. Thus the European Community (EC) was made a member and became the first regional organization to join a UN specialized agency. Territories or groups of territories not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be granted associate membership, again by a two-thirds majority vote, upon application made on their behalf by the full member having responsibility for their international relations, which must also submit a formal declaration of acceptance of the relevant obligations. The right to withdraw is allowed upon submission of notice to the Director-General; withdrawal takes effect one year thereafter.

Membership

The Organization has 190 members (189 countries and the EC which was granted full membership on 26 November 1991). Puerto Rico is an associate member.

Objectives

The Organization aims to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples of member countries; secure improvement of production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; better the conditions of rural populations; contribute to an expanding world economy, ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger; and act as a co-ordinating agency for development programmes in the whole range of food and agriculture, including forestry and fisheries.

The Organization is empowered to promote and, where appropriate, recommend national and international action with respect to: scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture; the improvement of education and administration, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice; the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production; the improvement of the processing, marketing and distribution of food and agricultural products; the adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international; and the adoption of international policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements.

Other functions of the Organization include the

extension of such technical assistance that governments may request as well as the conduct, in co-operation with the governments concerned, of expert missions. The Organization is also entrusted with the task of collecting, interpreting and disseminating information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture.

Structure

The work of the Organization is carried out by three principal organs: the Conference, the Council, and the Secretariat. The Conference, composed of one representative from each member, normally meets biennially to formulate overall policies, determine the programme of work and approve the budget. It elects the Director-General of the Secretariat and the independent Chairman of the Council, the latter for a renewable two-year term. The Conference may, by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, make recommendations to members, either full or associate, concerning questions relating to food and agriculture, for consideration by them with a view to implementation by national action. The Conference is also empowered to review any decision taken by the Council or by any commission or committee of the Conference or Council or by any other subsidiary body.

The Council, consisting of representatives of 49 member countries elected by the Conference for staggered three-year terms, meets at least four times between the Conference sessions under the independent Chairman and serves as the interim governing body of the Organization. The Council has three small elected committees: the Programme Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

The Council also has five major committees which are non-elective and open to all members: the Committee on Commodity Problems (CCP) with several specialized intergovernmental groups; the Committee on Fisheries (COFI); the Committee on Forestry (COFO); the Committee on Agriculture (COAG); and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) keeping under continuous review supplies and stocks of basic foodstuffs.

The Director-General enjoys full power and authority to direct the work of the Organization under the general supervision of the Conference and the Council.

The basic Regular Programme budget of the Organization is voted by the Conference and paid by all member countries in shares relating to their

GDP. The Regular Programme covers internal operations, including support for field work, advice to governments on policy and planning and a wide range of development needs.

The Field Programme implements the Organization's development strategies, providing assistance chiefly through projects undertaken in co-operation with national governments and other agencies. Additional funds come from a variety of sources, the most important being the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Other funds are received from several agencies to cover the cost of specialist services provided by the Organization.

Since 1994, the Organization has undergone an in-depth restructuring with a view to decentralizing operations, streamlining procedures and reducing costs.

Activities

The action of the FAO over six decades has covered several areas of paramount importance and has in many ways helped to increase the productivity of agriculture, fisheries and forestry and improved the conditions of that very large part of the world population whose livelihoods come from these basic activities. However, longstanding problems and difficulties continue to beset food production and agriculture, particularly in the developing countries where production increases have been offset by growing population, thereby aggravating dependence on world markets. Moreover, abnormal food shortages, mainly caused by drought and bad weather in some major grain producing and exporting countries, have adversely affected the perspectives of world food and agriculture since the beginning of the 1980s. On the other hand, the remarkable increase in the value of world exports of agricultural, forestry and fishery products has been predominantly price-based rather than due to an increased volume of products.

In its action to improve the quality of life and the economic returns of rural populations, the FAO has attacked the problem of widespread hunger not as a mere result of inadequate food production but as the most critical element of an overall situation of poverty. In carrying out its aims, the Organization encourages the development of basic soil and water resources, improved production and protection of crops and livestock, the transfer of technology to agriculture, fisheries and forestry in the developing countries, as well as the promotion of agricultural research. It also promotes the preservation of plant

genetic resources and the rational use of fertilizers and pesticides; combats epidemics of animal diseases; promotes effective utilization of resources of the seas and inland waters; provides technical assistance in such fields as nutrition, food management and processing, soil erosion control and irrigation engineering; encourages co-operation among developed and developing countries to achieve stable commodity markets and improve the export earnings of the poorest nations.

The Organization responds to the urgent need for capital for agricultural development by helping developing countries to identify and prepare investment projects that will attract external financing. To this end, it works closely with a number of international and national financing institutions, such as the World Bank, regional development banks, Arab funds and national development banks. Joint activities with regional development banks increased during the 1980s. In conformity with the strategy currently followed by many investment financing institutions, increasing emphasis is being placed on projects directly affecting the lives of the poorer farmers in developing nations. A special watch is kept on the food situation of the countries experiencing food shortages through an Early Warning System on areas where famine situations are likely to develop.

In the early 1970s, the Organization put forward proposals to maintain minimum world food security by building up national food reserves to be used in the event of crop failure or high prices under an internationally co-ordinated plan. The World Food Conference, held in Rome in November 1974, endorsed the proposals and requested the Organization to act accordingly. The Food Security Assistance Scheme, set up in 1976, intended to help developing countries strengthen their food security by creating food reserves as well as by developing national and regional early warning systems. The Organization is engaged in an action programme for the Prevention of Food Losses, launched in 1977. It also attempts to ensure that national nutrition strategies are incorporated by developing countries into their development plans.

The first global International Conference on Nutrition (ICN), jointly organized by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) in December 1992 in Rome, unanimously adopted a World Declaration on Nutrition stressing the 'determination to eliminate hunger and to reduce all forms of malnutrition' and recognizing that 'access to nutri-

tionally adequate and safe food is a right of each individual'. The ICN also adopted a Plan of Action for Nutrition and affirmed a determination to revise or prepare national plans of action.

The Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), launched in 1994, is targeted to the low-income food-deficit countries where the vast majority of the world's chronically undernourished people live. The Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES), also set up in 1994, is intended to strengthen the Organization's efforts in the areas of prevention, control and, when possible, eradication of diseases and pests.

The World Food Summit, held in November 1996 in Rome, approved the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and a Plan of Action with a view to halving the incidence of undernutrition, afflicting at the time an estimated 830 million people, by 2015. The commitment was solemnly reaffirmed at the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, held in June 2002.

The FAO is a sponsor, together with the UN, of the World Food Programme (WFP) which became operational in January 1963 and uses food commodities, cash and services (particularly shipping) contributed on a voluntary basis by member countries to back programmes of economic and social development as well as for emergency relief for victims of natural and man-made disasters.

The governing bodies of the Organization and of the WHO established in 1962 the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade by guiding the preparation and revision of international food standards and by promoting the co-ordination of all the relevant work undertaken by international organizations. In 2001 the Commission defined the first global principles for the assessment of the safety of genetically modified foods and approved a number of maximum levels of environmental contaminants in food.

World Food Day (WFD) was established by the Organization in November 1979 with the goal that 'food for all' should become a human right for present and future generations; the date chosen – 16 October – is the anniversary of the FAO. It has since been observed every year throughout the world, providing a reminder of the Organization's constant search for a long-term solution to the problems of hunger and poverty.

A Strategic Framework serving as a blueprint for

the Organization's programmes and activities until the year 2015 was approved by the Conference in 1999. Additional reforms, including further decentralization of staff, were approved by the Conference in 2005 when the sixtieth anniversary of the Organization's founding was solemnly celebrated.

The Organization collects the latest information on food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries from all over the world and makes it available to all member countries; statistical yearbooks, surveys and scientific monographs cover a very wide range of agricultural questions. Every ten years the Organization co-ordinates and publishes the results of a census of world agricultural resources.

External relations

The Organization has entered into formal agreements with the specialized agencies of the UN and with other international institutions, both intergovernmental and non-governmental. Close relations exist with the relevant UN bodies; in particular, the Organization acts as an executing agency of the UNDP.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Jacques Diouf

HEADQUARTERS: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 57051; fax: +39 06 57053152)

WEBSITE: <http://www.fao.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *The State of Food and Agriculture* (annual); *The State of the World's Forests* (every two years); *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* (every two years); *Food Outlook* (five a year)

REFERENCES: R.B. Talbot, *The Four World Food Agencies in Rome: FAO, WFP, WFC, IFAD* (Ames, IA, 1990); S. Marchisio and A. Di Blase, *The Food and Agriculture Organization* (Dordrecht, 1991)

Forum for East Asia-Latin America Co-operation (FEALAC)

The Forum is an informal mechanism for dialogue and co-operation aiming to bridge the 'missing link' between East Asia and Latin America through the

improvement of mutual understanding and multi-disciplinary co-operation.

Origin and development

Originally proposed in the late 1990s, the inaugural Ministerial Meeting of the Forum took place on 29–30 March 2001 in Santiago, Chile. The establishment of the Forum was considered as a natural response to the processes of globalization and the need to strengthen relations between East Asia and Latin America.

Membership

The Forum consists of 32 countries, of which 15 are from the Asia-Pacific – including the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plus Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea – and 17 from Central and South America.

Objectives

To increase mutual understanding, trust, political dialogue and friendly co-operation among countries of East Asia and Latin America with a view to developing new partnerships; to draw on the potential of co-operation in the areas of economics, trade, investment, finance, science and technology, culture and the environment; to work together in different international forums with a view to safeguarding common interests.

Structure

Ministerial Meetings provide the basic guidelines for the Forum's activities. Beside meetings of Senior Officials, practical issues are being considered by Working Groups for: economy and society; politics, culture and education; and science and technology.

WEBSITE: <http://www.dest.gov.au/fealac> (site established by the government of Australia)

Francophonie, International Organization of the

[*Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*]
(OIF)

The Organization promotes cultural, technical, economic and political co-operation among countries throughout the world where French is either the official language or is widely spoken.

Origin and development

Originally established by a Convention signed on 20 March 1970 at Niamey, Niger, during the Second International Conference of Francophone Countries, the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation [Agence de coopération culturelle et technique (ACCT)] was gradually strengthened in the early 1990s and renamed Agence de la Francophonie in 1996 and subsequently upgraded to Organisation internationale de la Francophonie. The draft Charter of Francophonie was adopted at the Ministerial Meeting in Marrakesh in December 1996 and approved at the seventh summit of the Heads of State and Government held in Hanoi on 14–16 November 1997. A further reform was undertaken with the adoption, on 23 November 2005, of a new Charter of Francophonie at the Ministerial Meeting held in Tananarive.

Membership

The Organization currently groups 68 members, in all continents but particularly in Africa, of which French is the official or habitual language, including governments representing the French Community of Belgium and the Canadian Provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec respectively. Cyprus and Ghana are associate members. Armenia, Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Lithuania, Mozambique, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine enjoy observer status. Practically all major French-speaking countries (with the notable exception of Algeria) belong to the Organization, along with other countries (such as Bulgaria, Cambodia, Laos, Romania and Vietnam) where French culture is important, though not dominant.

Objectives

The Organization aims to promote and develop multilateral co-operation among French-speaking countries in the fields of education, culture and science, trade and economic development as well as in the spheres of international policy working for peace, democracy and human rights.

Structure

The supreme authority of the Organization is the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of Countries Using French as a Common Language, also known as the Francophone Summit. It meets every two years to lay down policy guidelines for the French-speaking world. The Ministerial

Conference of the Francophonie comprises Ministers of Foreign Affairs and/or Francophone Affairs and is charged with the implementation of the decisions adopted at Francophone Summits. The Standing Committee of the Francophonie, consisting of the personal representatives of the Heads of State and Government, is responsible for the organization of Summits. The Secretary-General, elected for a four-year term by the Heads of State and Government, is the executive chairman of the Standing Committee and the most senior official of the Organization. The post of Secretary-General of the Francophonie was created at the 1997 Summit in Hanoi.

The Intergovernmental University Agency of La Francophonie is the main agency in charge of the implementation of the programmes adopted by the Summits. Specialized agencies include: the Agency of Francophone Universities, based in Montreal; the TV5 World television network, based in Paris; the Senghor University of Alexandria, Egypt; and the International Association of Francophone Mayors, based in Paris and grouping around 100 cities in 45 countries. The Parliamentary Assembly represents the consultative body of the Organization, based in Paris and holding a plenary session annually.

Activities

The first Summit of the Heads of State and Government 'partaking the use of the French language' was held at Versailles (Paris) on 17–19 February 1986 at the initiative of the then President of France Mitterrand. The second Summit took place in Quebec on 1–4 September 1987. The following Summits were convened at Dakar in 1989, Chaillot (France) in 1991, Grand-Baie (Mauritius) in 1993, Cotonou (Benin) in 1995, Hanoi in 1997, and Moncton (Canada) in 1999. The ninth Summit, scheduled to take place in Beirut in 2001, was postponed because of the terrorist attacks of 11 September, and was eventually held on 18–20 October 2002. The Beirut Summit stressed the fundamental role of the 'dialogue among cultures' and called for a strong commitment in the fight against terrorism. The tenth Summit that took place in Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) in November 2004 focused on the need to strengthen solidarity and the fight against inequalities. The focus of the eleventh Summit, held in Bucharest on 28–29 September 2006, was on the role of information technologies in education and the North–South digital divide.

The progressive strengthening of Summit meetings has broadened the scope of co-operation among French-speaking countries throughout the world. This has brought about a gradual shift from the initial emphasis on essentially cultural aspects to the political, economic, scientific and technological dimensions.

A Permanent Francophone Council was established at Chaillot in 1991 to co-ordinate the institutional activities of the francophone community and to make 'political decisions' on behalf of francophone countries. Canada and France have long been the major supporters, both politically and financially, of the Agency, despite occasional conflict between them over the role and functions of the Organization.

External relations

The Organization has been granted observer status by the UN General Assembly in 1998. Besides those

at the UN in New York and Geneva, the Organization has permanent missions to the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). Co-operative links are being developed with other linguistic areas, notably the Commonwealth, through the joint organization of missions, meetings and seminars. Six members of the Organization, among them Canada, also belong to the Commonwealth.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Abdou Diouf

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL: 28, rue de Bourgogne, 75007 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4411 1265; fax: +33 1 4411 1280)

WEBSITE: <http://www.francophonie.org>

PUBLICATION: *Lettre de la Francophonie* (monthly)

Gambia River Basin Development Organization

[Organisation de mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie] (OMVG)

The Organization groups four countries with a view to developing the resources of the river Gambia.

Origin and development

The Organization was set up by Senegal and the Gambia on 30 June 1978; the founder countries were joined by Guinea in 1981 and Guinea-Bissau in 1983.

Objectives

The basic aims of the Organization are the co-ordination of the development of the Gambia river basin and the preparation of plans for integrated projects, with special regard to irrigation and hydroelectricity.

Activities

Current activities include projects for the construction of a bridge over the Gambia and the agricultural development of the Kayanga/Geba and Koliba/Corubal river basins. Studies are under way concerning the integration of energy production and transmission among member countries. In May 2002 a loan was granted by the African Development Bank (AfDB) to the Organization to finance the management and development of natural resources in areas located on the borders of the four member countries with a view to increasing agro-forestry and pastoral output.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Justino Vieira

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 2353, 13 passage Le Blanc, Dakar, Senegal (telephone: +221 223159; fax: +221 225926)

General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM)

The Commission (originally called Council) is a regional fisheries organization promoting the development, conservation and management of living marine resources in the Mediterranean, Black Sea and connecting waters.

Origin and development

The Commission was set up by an international Agreement concluded on 24 September 1949 under the aegis of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and in force since 1952; the founding Agreement has been amended in 1963, 1976 and 1997.

Membership

Membership consists of 24 contracting parties, including the European Union (EU).

Objectives

The Commission promotes the full and proper utilization of living aquatic resources by the development and management of fishing and aquaculture operations and of related processing and marketing activities.

Activities

Priority is currently being given by the Commission to improving the application of existing measures, enhance the development of reproductive aquaculture, continue to support regional projects and develop new initiatives to foster co-operation in fisheries management in the Black Sea.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Spanish

HEADQUARTERS: c/o FAO, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 5705 6441; fax: +39 06 5705 6500)

WEBSITE: <http://www.fao.org/fi/body/rfb/GFCM>

PUBLICATIONS: Scientific and technical reports and papers

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Facility was created as an independent international financial institution to channel scientific and financial resources to middle and lower-income countries in order to help finance programmes and projects affecting the global environment.

Origin and development

The GEF was originally established in 1991 as a pilot programme; it was subsequently restructured and replenished with over \$2 billion in 1994 (GEF-1), \$2.7

billion in 1998 (GEF-2), and \$3 billion in 2002 (GEF-3). The third replenishment covered the period 2002–06. The GEF, replenished for the period 2006–2010 for \$3.13 billion (GEF-4), is undergoing major institutional changes. A far-reaching Sustainability Compact was announced in December 2006 with a view to relaunching and revitalizing GEF.

GEF operations are implemented through three agencies: the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The World Bank administers the facility, the UNDP is responsible for technical assistance and UNEP provides environmental expertise. Besides the above-mentioned implementing agencies there are seven executing agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (AsDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Membership

The GEF currently includes 178 countries.

Objectives

The GEF was originally intended to cover four main areas: (a) protection of the ozone layer; (b) limitation of greenhouse-gas emissions; (c) protection of biological diversity; and (d) protection against degradation of international water resources. In October 2002, the GEF Assembly approved the inclusion of two new focal areas: land degradation and persistent organic pollutants. The move has now begun towards a programmatic approach away from the traditional project-driven approach.

Structure

The GEF Assembly, meeting every four years, consists of representatives of all participating countries. The Council, meeting twice a year, consists of 32 members of which 16 represent developing countries, 14 represent developed countries, and two represent economies in transition. The Secretariat monitors the management of projects.

Activities

GEF has provided financial support to a variety of projects intended to improve the global environment. More precisely, the GEF has allocated \$6.8 billion, supplemented by more than \$24 billion in

co-financing, for more than 1900 projects in over 160 developing countries and countries with economies in transition. At present, demand for GEF resources greatly exceeds available resources.

The GEF has been designated as the financial mechanism serving the Convention on Biological Diversity, in force since December 1993, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in force since March 1994, and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), in force since December 1996. In addition, the GEF serves as the interim financial mechanism for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

External relations

The GEF has established links with several international organizations, regional development banks, bilateral development agencies, national bodies, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities and academic institutions.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND CHAIRPERSON:
Monique Barbut

SECRETARIAT: 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 473 0508; fax: +1 202 522 3240)

WEBSITE: <http://www.gefweb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Talking Points* (quarterly newsletter); *GEF Annual Report*

Greenpeace International

FOUNDED: 1971

OBJECTIVES: To campaign actively for the protection of the environment, against nuclear energy and toxics leading to environmental destruction and to demonstrate solutions for change

MEMBERS: About 2.8 million supporters worldwide; national and regional offices in 41 countries.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Gerd Leipold

HEADQUARTERS: Ottho Heldringstraat 5, 1066 AZ Amsterdam, The Netherlands (telephone: +31 20 7182000; fax: +31 20 5148151)

WEBSITE: <http://www.greenpeace.org>

REFERENCE: M. Ostopowich, *Greenpeace* (Mankato, MN, 2003)

Group of Eight (G-8)/Group of Seven (G-7)

The Group has been operating over three decades, with a gradually increasing membership, as a forum for consultation and policy co-ordination, at the highest level, on major political, security and economic issues among the largest industrial economies. At present, Finance Ministers continue to discuss issues 'at seven' rather than 'at eight', that is without the participation of Russia. At the October 2004 meeting of G-7, for the first time China's Finance Minister and Central Bank Governor were invited to attend.

Origin and development

The first Summit took place at Rambouillet (France) on 15–17 November 1975 on the initiative of the French President, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and the German Chancellor, Helmut Schmidt, to discuss the economic crisis following the oil-price shock of 1973–74. Four other Heads of State and Government from Italy, Japan, the UK and the US attended the meeting which concentrated on the world economic situation, on the human, social and political implications of economic problems and on plans for resolving them.

Less than a year later, on 27–28 June 1976, the Six met again at San Juan, Puerto Rico, and were joined by the Prime Minister of Canada; the Group of Seven (G-7) then officially came into existence. The third Summit was held at Downing Street, London, on 7–8 May 1977, by the Seven with the participation of the President of the European Commission. The final Declaration announced measures to maintain the momentum of economic recovery and was supplemented by an Appendix dealing with world economic prospects, balance of payments financing, the international trading system, energy, and North–South relations. The meeting in Bonn, on 16–17 July 1978, produced an agreement on economic and trade policy co-ordination as well as a statement on air-hijacking.

The Declaration adopted at the conclusion of the Tokyo Summit, on 28–29 June 1979, contained, *inter alia*, figures indicating the ceilings on oil imports agreed upon by the participating countries; statements on Indochinese refugees and on hijacking supplemented the Declaration.

The 22–23 June 1980 Summit, held in Venice, focused on the price and supply of energy and their implications for the level of economic activity, but

other topics were also considered such as the situation in Afghanistan, hijacking, the taking of diplomatic hostages and the ever-increasing number of refugees. The following Summits held on 20–21 July 1981 in Ottawa, 4–6 June 1982 in Versailles, 28–30 May 1983 in Williamsburg (Virginia), 7–9 June 1984 in London, 2–4 May 1985 in Bonn, 4–6 May 1986 in Tokyo, and 8–10 June 1987 in Venice were largely devoted to monetary and financial problems, but contained several references to non-economic issues covering terrorism, drugs, arms control issues, and refugees.

International economic policy co-ordination was again discussed by the Summit held on 19–21 June 1988 in Toronto which considered the issue from the standpoint of macro-economic and exchange-rate policies and also from the angle of structural reform. As to the developing countries' problems with foreign debt, the Summit called on the Paris Club to work out a formula for comparing the different options available for reducing the debt service burden on the poorest countries. An economic declaration and political declarations on East–West relations, China, human rights and terrorism were the outcome of the summit held in Paris on 14–16 July 1989; a renewed debt strategy applied on a case-by-case basis and environmental problems were given prominence. The European Commission was asked to co-ordinate aid for economic restructuring in Poland and Hungary under the Phare programme. In response to growing concern over money laundering, the 1989 summit established the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF) to review terrorist financing techniques and promote the adoption and implementation of appropriate measures.

Membership

Membership includes the G-7 members (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the UK and the US) plus Russia. The European Union (EU) also participates and is represented by the President of the European Commission and by the leader of the country that holds the rotating presidency of the Council of the EU at the time of the summit.

Objectives

The Group aims at holding regular and relatively informal discussions on major economic and political international issues and at intensifying efforts for closer co-operation within existing institutions and other international forums. The Group has

become closely involved with international financial issues and the work of the relevant multilateral institutions, notably the International Monetary Fund (IMF), multilateral trading relations and policies towards the developing world. Summits have gradually lost their strictly economic character and non-economic issues of paramount importance and urgency are regularly discussed by the Heads of State and Government. The far-reaching implications of the matters under consideration and of the objectives to be pursued required the participation of Russia in the summits, eventually changing the G-7 into a G-8.

Structure

The Group, although lacking a formal structure, represents a significant opportunity for the Heads of State and Government of the participating countries and for the representatives of the EU to discuss major international economic and political issues. At the 1979 Tokyo Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Seven were joined by two representatives of the European Community, that is the President of the Commission and the President of the Council of Ministers, for discussion of matters within the Community's competence. The participation of the Head of the Government holding the six-month rotating presidency of the Council – in cases when that Head of Government does not belong to a member country of the Group – ensures the representation of other EU members.

The 1986 Tokyo Summit decided to form a new Group of Seven Finance Ministers (consisting of the Group of Five Finance Ministers plus Canada and Italy) to work in the periods between the annual summit meetings and to report progress to such meetings. The 1987 Venice Summit asked again the Finance Ministers and the governors of the central banks to improve the effectiveness of the co-ordination process with regard to economic policies.

Senior officials (the so-called sherpas) and experts from economic and foreign affairs ministries prepare the agenda for the Group's meetings with the aim of working out more detailed commitments.

Activities

The 1990 Summit, held in Houston, Texas, on 9–11 July, discussed the continuation of aid to Central and Eastern European countries and the possibility of extending economic assistance to the USSR, the still-unresolved Uruguay Round issues, and several political matters such as terrorism and the non-

proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

An economic declaration, a political declaration on the international order and a declaration on sales of conventional weapons and the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons resulted from the Summit held in London on 15–17 July 1991. The issue of encouraging economic transformation in the USSR and Eastern Europe was considered, especially in view of the fact that the Soviet leader Gorbachev was in attendance. A decision was adopted to hold an annual high-level meeting with the USSR.

The Summit held in Munich on 6–8 July 1992 was aimed at defining a new economic and political partnership with the rest of Europe and the rest of the world, and discussing the measures needed to ensure stronger, sustainable, non-inflationary growth based on sound monetary and financial policies.

At the Summit convened on 7–9 July 1993 in Tokyo, measures were agreed upon in order to bring about a rapid reduction in European interest rates, to ensure a reduction in the US budget deficit, and to achieve growth led by strong domestic demand in Japan. Special measures were adopted to support the privatization and restructuring programme in Russia whose President participated in the last day of the meeting.

The following Summit took place in Naples on 8–10 July 1994 with the participation in political discussions of the Russian President. The Heads of State and Government considered measures to maintain the momentum of liberalization of international trade, to strengthen international co-operation on environmental matters, to fight transnational crime and money-laundering, and to intensify assistance to developing and transition economies.

At the Summit held in Halifax, Canada, on 15–17 June 1995, the Russian President participated in political discussions on the role of the UN, arms control and the extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the fight against terrorism and organized crime. With regard to economic matters, the Summit stressed the importance of the role of international economic organizations, recommending improvements to the early warning and surveillance system for economic policies and financial markets of the IMF, the strengthening of the role of the newly created World Trade Organization (WTO), and

the development of activities by multilateral agencies to promote sustainable development, combat poverty and provide humanitarian and emergency aid.

Many of the issues of the preceding summit were again considered by the summit held in Lyons, France, on 27–29 June 1996. The economic declaration dealt, *inter alia*, with trade and investment issues, stating the commitment of the Seven to the rules of WTO and the ‘codes’ of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The Summit also launched the first Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative. The political declaration, adopted with the participation of Russia, stressed the commitment of the parties to support the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, recognized the gravity of the financial crisis of the UN and the necessity to review the scale of individual contributions, and reaffirmed the willingness of the G-7+1 to conclude negotiations in Geneva on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the nuclear field. A G-7+1 Summit specially devoted to nuclear safety and security had been held on 19–20 April 1996 in Moscow adopting a declaration, two statements and a programme for preventing and combating illicit trafficking in nuclear material.

At the Summit held in Denver, Colorado, on 20–22 June 1997, with Russia participating in all but financial and economic discussions, it proved impossible to reach agreement on action to be taken with regard to environmental issues. Disagreements also emerged concerning the role of governments in guiding their respective economies. The Group adopted, *inter alia*, a statement on Bosnia and Herzegovina making assistance dependent on the full application of all aspects of the Dayton peace agreement.

On 15–17 May 1998, the Summit held at Birmingham, UK, addressed the major challenges facing the world on the threshold of the twenty-first century, from environmental protection and good governance to combating unemployment and fighting organized crime and drugs trafficking. Before starting the Summit with Russian participation, the G-7 discussed the consequences of the financial crisis in Asia and recommended a number of steps to be taken in order to avoid such crises recurring in the future.

At the Summit held in Cologne, Germany, on 18–20 June 1999, Russia again took part in all the meetings and endorsed all statements, except the

economic statement that was adopted at the G-7 level. The G-7 leaders welcomed the creation of the Financial Stability Forum and the IMF’s International Financial and Monetary Committee (IFMC) and declared their commitment to establish ‘an informal mechanism for dialogue among systemically important countries’ which a few months later materialized in the Group of Twenty (G-20). Among the questions dealt with in the 1999 communiqué of G-8 were the need to carry out structural reforms, support for economic recovery in Russia, the launch of a new round of multilateral negotiations within the WTO framework, the strengthening of social safeguards and the promotion of a debt-reduction programme, and the presentation of the Enhanced HIPC Initiative, with substantial debt cancellation by international and national creditors.

The challenges of globalization and of new technologies, including information and communications technologies, debt reduction, and intensified international action concerning health and access to key medicines and supplies were among the key issues at the Summit that took place in Okinawa, Japan, on 21–23 July 2000. Declarations on regional conflicts and the Korean peninsula were also adopted.

The following Summit – held in Genoa, Italy, on 20–22 July 2001 – launched a \$1.3 billion health fund for poor countries and endorsed a plan for development in Africa; however, no significant steps forward were made on a number of major issues, from debt relief to ratification of the Kyoto protocol on global warming.

The riots and mass protests which dominated the Genoa Summit and the little progress achieved on several important topics caused leaders to rethink the formula of future gatherings and to choose locations away from any major urban centre. The 2002 meeting, held in Kananaskis, Canada, on 26–27 June, discussed the challenges of fighting terrorism after the events of 11 September 2001, the need to strengthen global economic growth and sustainable development, and the financial commitment to Africa. A new ‘G-8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction’ was launched with a view to undertaking co-operative projects on the basis of agreed guidelines. Another initiative was also agreed upon to strengthen the security and efficiency of the global transportation system. Members of the Group met with the leaders of Algeria,

Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa and the Secretary-General of the UN to discuss the situation in Africa and adopted the 'G-8 Africa Action Plan' to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). As a recognition of the 'remarkable economic and democratic transformation' that had occurred in Russia, the Group decided on an eight-year summit cycle beginning again in 2003 in France, with Russia hosting the 2006 Summit. The G-7 Finance Ministers, continuing to meet regularly, adopted in Kananaskis a statement on the Enhanced HIPC Initiative.

At the following Summit that took place in Evian, France on 1–3 June 2003, members of the Group met with leaders of emerging and developing countries (Algeria, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Africa) and with representatives of international financial institutions. With regard to negotiations within the WTO framework, the Group reaffirmed its commitment to the objectives and timetable set in the Doha Development Agenda adopted in 2001. The prevention and resolution of financial crises and the need to respond to debt problems with a new and more effective approach were also dealt with, taking into account debt problems of both HIPC and non-HIPC nations. Regarding the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals adopted within the UN framework, the Group considered the progress of NEPAD and issues concerning emergency food aid, access to water and health with special focus on AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

The 2004 Summit was held at Sea Island, Georgia, US, on 8–10 June. Leaders from Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen and Turkey were also present. Specific attention was devoted to issues regarding the Broader Middle East and North Africa with the establishment of a Forum for the Future to provide for an enduring dialogue with countries of the region. A G-8 Plan of Support for Reform was envisaged with a view to launching new initiatives and strengthening efforts towards democracy and development. The Group also agreed to launch the Secure and Facilitated International Travel Initiative (SAFTI) to improve the security and efficiency of air, land and sea travel. New commitments to support Africa's efforts to achieve lasting progress were adopted when the Group met with the leaders of Algeria, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Uganda. The 2005 Summit was convened at Gleneagles,

Scotland, on 6–8 July 2005 just after the terrorist attacks in London. Besides condemning the attacks and stressing the resolve to fight against terrorism, the Group adopted a communiqué on Africa, climate change, clean energy and sustainable development and issued statements, *inter alia*, on non-proliferation and Sudan. Discussions on climate change and the situation in Africa took place with the participation of Brazil, China, India, Mexico and several African countries. St. Petersburg, Russia, was the venue of the Summit held on 15–17 July 2006. Participants were joined by leaders of Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa and by heads of several international organizations when debating collective approaches to issues such as global energy security, development of modern and effective education systems, fight against infectious diseases, globalization, international trade and Africa. The 2007 Summit was held at Heiligendamm, Germany, on 6–8 June, with as core theme 'Growth and Responsibility'. Key challenges of the world economy, climate change and Africa were given once more pride of place. The role of major emerging world economies and the need to develop common solutions were again discussed with the contribution of representatives from Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa. Statements were adopted, *inter alia*, on counter-terrorism, nuclear safety and security and non-proliferation.

Over the past three decades, the Group has made a contribution to policy co-ordination among its member countries, trying to build consensus on several issues, strengthening common principles and values, paying increasing attention to political and security matters and gradually involving Russia in the decision-making process. The Group's agenda has gradually broadened to address global topics such as employment and the information highway, environment and development, conflict prevention, arms control and non-proliferation, peacekeeping, terrorism and transnational organized crime. On the other hand, the lack of a proper institutional framework has hindered effective supervision over the implementation of the commitments undertaken by the various members.

The precise identification at the 2002 Summit of the countries called to host the summits for the next eight years, until 2010, seemed to imply that the composition of the Group would not be called into question, with neither additions nor withdrawals being envisaged in the foreseeable future.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

WEBSITE: <http://www.g7.utoronto.ca>

REFERENCES: C. Merlini (ed.), *Economic Summits and Western Decision-Making* (London, 1984); R. Putnam and N. Bayne, *Hanging Together: Co-operation and Conflict in the Seven-Power Summits* (London, 1987); P. Hajnal, *The G7/G8 System: Evolution, Role and Documentation* (Aldershot, UK, 1999); E. Kokotsis, *Keeping International Commitments: Compliance, Credibility, and the G7, 1988–1995* (New York, 1999); N. Bayne, *Hanging in There: The G7 and G8 Summit in Maturity and Renewal* (Aldershot, UK, 2000); J.J. Kirton, J.P. Daniels and A. Freytag (eds), *Guiding Global Order: G8 Governance in the Twenty-First Century* (Aldershot, UK, 2001); J.J. Kirton and J. Takase (eds), *New Directions in Global Political Governance: The G8 and International Order in the Twenty-First Century* (Burlington, VT, 2002)

Group of Fifteen (G-15)

The Group consists of an important cross-section of countries from Latin America, Africa and Asia, most of them well endowed in natural resources, aiming to promote South–South co-operation and North–South dialogue.

Origin and development

The Group was set up by 15 countries, during the Ninth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) held in Belgrade in September 1989, as a forum for regular consultation with a view to co-ordinating policies and actions. Yugoslavia, a founder member, subsequently withdrew. The Group has broadened its membership, although retaining its original title, and now includes several relatively developed economies with large and diversified industrial bases.

Membership

Membership currently consists of seven countries from Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru and Venezuela), six from Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe) and five from Asia (India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia and Sri Lanka).

Objectives

Besides acting as a forum for consultation, the Group aims to identify and implement concrete

schemes for South–South co-operation, mobilizing the necessary support, as well as to pursue a more positive and productive North–South dialogue dealing with problems in a constructive and mutually supportive way.

Structure

The highest decision-making body is the Summit Meeting of the Heads of State and Government, held annually under the chairmanship of the host country; the venue is rotated among the three developing regions of the South (Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean). The Foreign Ministers usually meet twice a year to co-ordinate the work of the Group and to prepare the annual Summit. Personal Representatives of the Heads of State and Government, meeting at least four times a year, are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Group, under the supervision of a *troika* consisting of the current, the previous and the future Chairmen of the Group. Ministers of Trade and Economics and other Ministers of member countries meet whenever necessary.

A Technical Support Facility (TSF), based in Geneva, works under the direction of the current Chairman and provides administrative and technical assistance. A Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Services (FCCIS) and a Committee on Investment, Trade and Technology (CITT) have been created to facilitate interaction between the private and public sectors, and between the business communities of member countries, respectively. The G-15 Commission was set up in 2001 with a view to ensuring effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out the Group's decisions.

Activities

In addition to its consultative activities, the Group is involved in a wide range of economic and technical co-operation projects; each project is funded and co-ordinated by the initiating country. Trade and investment, technology, environment and education are among the sectors where projects are being implemented. In principle, projects are open to participation by all interested developing countries. A comprehensive and effective reform of the international financial system and its institutions, to be undertaken within a North–South framework, is among the Group's longer-term goals.

External relations

Besides the NAM, the Group co-operates with several bodies of the UN, such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and with specialized agencies including the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the World Bank.

HEADQUARTERS: Group of Fifteen: The Summit Level Group of Developing Countries, 1, route des Morillons, Case postale 2100, 1218 Grand Saconnex, Geneva, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 7916701; fax: +41 22 7916169)

WEBSITE: <http://www.g15.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Fact Sheets; The Current Status of G-15 International Trade*, vol. 1, January 2007

Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries

[*Grupo de Países Latinoamericanos y del Caribe Exportadores de Azúcar*] (GEPLACEA)

FOUNDED: 27 November 1974

OBJECTIVES: To serve as a forum of consultation on the production and sale of sugar, to exchange scientific and technical knowledge related to the sugar industry and to co-ordinate policies in order to achieve fair and remunerative prices

MEMBERS: 22 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, representing about 45 per cent of world sugar exports and 66 per cent of world cane sugar production

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: José Félix García

HEADQUARTERS: Paseo de la Reforma 1030, Lomas de Chapultepec, 11000 México DF, Mexico (telephone: +52 55 5520 9711; fax: +52 55 5520 5089).

WEBSITE: <http://www.geplacea.ipn.mx>

Group of Seven (G-7)

See **Group of Eight (G-8)/Group of Seven (G-7)**.

Group of Seventy-Seven (G-77)

The Group is the largest forum for consultation and policy co-ordination on major international economic and social issues among the developing countries.

Origin and development

The emergence of the Group took place at the first session of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva. On 15 June 1964, at the conclusion of UNCTAD I, the then 77 developing countries adopted the 'Joint Declaration of Seventy-Seven Developing Countries' originating from the common interest in a new international trade and development policy to be articulated through a permanent instrument. Although lacking a proper institutional machinery, the Group managed to take advantage of the existing regional groups which had already established permanent co-ordination links between themselves.

Being focused on mainly economic and commercial matters – without taking a stand on highly controversial political issues – the Group has been able to enlarge its membership so as to include nearly all developing countries in the world, unlike the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) whose often 'aligned' positions have sometimes discouraged moderate pro-Western developing nations from participation.

Membership

The Group currently includes 130 countries of which well over one-third are in Africa and the rest almost equally distributed between two regions, Latin America and the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific, with only one member in Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina). Although the membership has increased considerably, the Group has retained the original name because of its historic significance.

Objectives

The Group's main goal is the elaboration and implementation of common strategies on all major international economic issues in international forums, with a view to enhancing the bargaining power of developing countries *vis-à-vis* the industrialized nations. It also promotes economic and technical co-operation among developing countries (ECDC/TCDC) through funding from the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund (PGTF).

Structure

The South Summit is the highest decision-making body of the Group convened once in every five years. The annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member countries is summoned at the beginning of the regular session of the UN General Assembly. Other ministerial meetings are called in preparation of sessions of UNCTAD and of the general conferences of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Special ministerial meetings were convened to celebrate the Group's 25th anniversary (Caracas, June 1989), the 30th anniversary (New York, June 1994) and the 40th anniversary (São Paulo, June 2004).

In April 2000 the Group's annual meeting in Havana was attended, for the first time, by Heads of State or Government, thus raising the decision-making process at the highest political level. This was the first South Summit, followed on 12–16 June 2005 by the second Summit in Doha, Qatar. The third South Summit will be held in 2010 in Africa.

The Group has chapters in New York, Geneva, Nairobi, Rome, Paris, Vienna and Washington DC. The Chairman of the New York Chapter acts as General Co-ordinator and Chairman of the Group. The Joint Co-ordinating Committee (JCC), established in New York in partnership with NAM, operates under the chairmanship of the presidents of the two movements and plays a significant role in harmonizing their respective positions on North–South as well as on South–South issues. Other subsidiary structures have been established in order to conduct periodical reviews of the state of implementation of the Group's programmes. The activities of the Group are financed through contributions by member countries.

Activities

Over the past decades the Group's policies have been dictated, at different times, by 'moderates' or by 'radicals', depending on the prevailing balance of power within the 77. Unity of intent has often been achieved at the highest level of demand *vis-à-vis* the developed world, thus making it extremely difficult to achieve concrete results. The Group, then consisting of nearly 90 countries, met in 1967 in Algiers to prepare for UNCTAD II to be held in New Delhi in 1968; as a result of the meeting the 'Charter of Algiers' was approved, expressing the Group's position before UNCTAD II. Attempts to

work out a common and realistic approach towards the developed nations were made in 1971 in Lima, Peru, by the 77 (which numbered at that time nearly 100) in preparation for UNCTAD III scheduled for 1972 in Santiago, Chile. Many divisions emerged within the Group on major issues, the only significant result of UNCTAD III being the proposal for a 'Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States', later approved by the UN General Assembly. However, the implementation of a 'New International Economic Order' proved impossible during the second half of the 1970s while the South–South gap widened, with a number of developing countries attaining remarkable rates of growth and other developing countries dramatically affected by the sudden rise in oil prices. The fragmentation of the developed world and the diverging interests of major regions – Africa, Asia and Latin America – made it difficult to articulate clearly defined goals concerning the international debt of developing countries and the lowering of tariff barriers of developed nations.

The mandate of the Group was enhanced in May 1981 with the adoption of the 'Caracas Programme of Action' which envisaged an integrated programme for South–South co-operation. However, new sources of dissension arose within the Group after the Cancún meeting of 22 Heads of State in October 1981 failed to become a permanent forum for North–South dialogue. The growing difficulties surrounding a meaningful North–South dialogue in the 1980s called into question the bloc-to-bloc approach to international trade and development issues while the continuation of the activities of UNCTAD itself seemed in jeopardy. The emergence of regional and subregional integration groupings with their own specific interests and goals, and the end of the Cold War and the anti-colonial struggle seemed to deprive the Group of its original *raison d'être*. However, the Group continued its activities and its 30th anniversary was commemorated by the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration in 1994. Subsequent documents – notably the San José Declaration and Plan of Action on South–South Trade, Investment and Finance of 1997, and the Bali Declaration and Plan of Action on Regional and Subregional Economic Co-operation of the Developing Countries of 1998 – tended to focus on specific issues reflecting a more pragmatic approach to economic and technical co-operation issues. The 27th annual meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, held on 25 September 2003 in New

York, emphasized the need to work towards a decisive role of the UN in international economic policy-making and global economic development issues. In other following meetings the necessity was again stressed for a regular review of the progress made in the implementation of the commitments undertaken in major UN conferences and summits, with special reference to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF 77: c/o UN Secretariat, Room S-3953, New York, NY 10017, USA (telephone: +1 212 963 0192; fax: +1 212 963 3515)

WEBSITE: <http://www.g77.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Journal of the Group of 77* (periodical newsletter); *The Third World without Superpowers: The Collected Works of the Group of 77* (20 volumes) (Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1983 onwards)

REFERENCES: R.L. Rothstein, *Global Bargaining* (Princeton, NJ, 1979); K.P. Sauvant, *The Group of 77: Evolution, Structure, Organization* (New York, 1981); M. Williams, *Third World Cooperation: The Group of 77 in UNCTAD* (London, 1991); *30 Years of the Group of 77: 1964–1994* (Geneva, 1994); D. Benn, *Multilateral Diplomacy and the Economics of Change: The Third World and the New International Economic Order* (Miami, 2003)

Group of Three (G-3)

The Group aims to liberalize trade and to strengthen economic ties among its member countries.

Origin and development

The Group was originally formed by Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela which concluded in December 1993 a trade pact dealing with access to markets, rules of origin, trade in services, intellectual property, and government purchases. A free trade agreement was signed by the Heads of State of the member countries on 13 June 1994 and entered into effect on 1 January 1995; it envisaged the gradual elimination of most tariff and non-tariff barriers over a ten-year period and the setting-up of a dispute resolution body. Venezuela withdrew in 2006.

Membership

Colombia and Mexico.

Objectives

The Group aims primarily to further economic co-operation among member countries by removing restrictions on trade as a first step. Co-operation is also envisaged with regard to employment, health and energy issues as the key to fostering economic and social development and reducing poverty.

Activities

The free trade agreement has not been fully implemented because of the difficulties met during tariff reduction negotiations and of the continuing disagreements over 'rules of origin'. Efforts to revive the Group's activities and to relaunch subregional economic integration were undertaken by the Heads of State of the three countries meeting in April 2001 in Caracas. The creation of a Social Fund was also considered. In 2006 Venezuela left the Group, as well as the Andean Community, claiming that free-trade agreements concluded by member countries with the US undermined genuine efforts at pursuing South American integration.

External relations

A framework trade agreement was concluded by the Group with El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras in February 1993. At an important meeting of the Group with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Suriname in October 1993 joint agreements were signed to combat drug-trafficking and to promote environmental protection activities. In July 1994 members of the Group were among the signatories of the founding agreement of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

CONTACT ADDRESS: Grupo de los Tres, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1 Tlatelolco, Delegación Cuauhtémoc 06995, México, DF, Mexico

Group of Twenty (G-20)

The Group consists of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of major economies (both industrial and emerging) meeting periodically to review key economic and financial policy issues with a view to developing common standpoints and objectives and promoting international financial stability.

Origin and development

Before the establishment of the G-20, a number of other *ad hoc* groupings such as the G-22 (set up in 1998) and the G-33 (set up in 1999) had been convened to deal with topics concerning the financial crisis of the emerging markets in the late 1990s. The commitment to work together to set up 'an informal mechanism for dialogue among systemically important countries, within the framework of the Bretton Woods institutional system' appeared in the Statement of the Group of Seven (G-7) at the June 1999 Summit held in Cologne. At the meeting of the G-7 Finance Ministers on 25 September 1999 the creation of the G-20 was announced; the new forum involved the Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors of 19 countries plus representatives of the European Union (EU).

The first meeting of the newly created Group took place on 15–16 December 1999 in Berlin under the chairmanship of the Finance Minister of Canada; the second meeting was held on 24–25 October 2000 in Montreal. Both meetings confirmed the importance of regular consultations within a broad-based framework including G-7 members as well as major emerging-market economies.

Membership

Besides members of the G-7 and Russia, the Group includes Australia and major developing countries in all continents (Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea and Turkey). The EU is also a full member. Other countries have occasionally expressed interest in joining the Group; however, the composition of the Group has remained unchanged since its establishment. The Group represents a large share of global population (about two-thirds) and about 90 per cent of world GNP.

Objectives

The Group has a mandate to promote international financial stability through dialogue and informal consultations among industrial and emerging-market economies securing consensus and the adoption of common positions on major policy issues. This should lead, *inter alia*, to expediting the decision-making process in the relevant international forums. The Group also aims to contribute to the establishment of internationally recognized

standards and to encourage initiatives regarding national fiscal and economic policy.

Structure

The Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meet at annual intervals under a rotating chairmanship. Deputies convene twice a year to prepare and support the ministerial meetings. All resolutions are adopted by consensus without resorting to formal vote.

Working parties may be established to deal with specific issues with the help of outside experts from academic circles and the private sector. In keeping with its peculiar characteristics, the Group has no permanent secretariat; the necessary technical and organizational support is provided by the country holding the chair in annual rotation. Continuity in the Group's work and management is ensured by a revolving three-member troika of past, present and future chairs.

Co-ordination of the Group with the activities of the relevant international institutions is secured through the ex-officio participation in the discussions of the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the President of the World Bank, the Chairperson of the IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC), and the Chairperson of the Development Committee of the IMF and the World Bank. The Finance Minister of the country holding the rotating Presidency of the EU and the President of the European Central Bank (ECB) are also invited.

Activities

The Group was initially concerned with the analysis of the financial crises and their consequences. At its third meeting, held in Ottawa, Canada, on 16–17 November 2001, the Group adopted a comprehensive Action Plan for multilateral co-operation to combat the financing of terrorism through the freezing of terrorist assets and the implementation of the relevant international standards concerning money laundering and financial sector regulation and supervision. Close attention is being given to the building-up of national capital markets, the development of forms of financing in national currency and the adoption of the necessary instruments for effective government debt management. The last meeting was held in Melbourne, Australia, on 18–19 November 2006. The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Cape Town, South Africa, on 15–16 November 2007.

External relations

The Group is deeply involved in the work of other international organizations, especially the international financial institutions, and informal groups such as the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF).

WEBSITE: <http://www.g20.org>

Group of Twenty-Four (G-24)

See **Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four on International Monetary Affairs and Development (G-24)**.

Gulf Co-operation Council

See **Co-operation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf**.

GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development

The GUAM Organization, known between 1999 and early 2005 as GGUAM, represents a political, economic and strategic alliance among a number of former Soviet republics (at present Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova) with a view to developing co-operative links and jointly creating new transport and energy corridors.

Origin and development

Co-operation among delegations of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Moldova began in May 1996 in Vienna – at the first Review Conference of the 1990 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) – when the four countries, using the acronym GUAM, issued joint statements and put forward common proposals. The Presidents of these countries, meeting in Strasbourg on 10 October 1997 during a Summit of the Council of Europe, issued a declaration on the importance of strengthening mutual co-operation with special focus on the setting up of a Europe-South Caucasus-Central Asia transport corridor. Another Summit meeting of the four countries plus Uzbekistan – which joined the original group, renamed GGUAM, as a new member – was held on 24 April 1999, in Washington, DC, during the session of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC), the body responsible for dialogue between the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO) and its Co-operation Partners. At the meeting on 6 September 2000 in New York, in connection with the UN Millennium Summit, the Presidents of the five countries decided to intensify co-operation at the various levels and agreed on a basic institutional structure. The GUAM Charter stating the basic principles, objectives and areas of co-operation was adopted on 7 June 2001 at Yalta. Uzbekistan deserted the GGUAM's meetings over the following years and officially announced in May 2005 its decision to withdraw from the group which returned to its original acronym of GUAM. In May 2006 the current designation – GUAM Organization for Democracy and Economic Development – was adopted.

Membership

Besides the current participants (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine), membership remains open to countries sharing the principles and objectives of the Group. Latvia and Turkey have been granted observer status.

Objectives

GUAM basically aims to promote the expansion of trade and economic links among members, the development of the relevant transport, energy and telecommunication infrastructure, and joint investment and financial projects. The strengthening of regional security, including co-operation in combating separatism and the peaceful resolution of conflicts in member countries, as well as the struggle against terrorism, organized crime and drug-trafficking are among GUAM's essential goals.

Structure

The supreme body is the Meeting of the Heads of State, convened at annual intervals under a presidency that rotates in alphabetical order. The Heads of State decide on the main orientations of co-operation, establish the necessary specialized bodies, and co-ordinate positions on international issues of common interest. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, meeting twice a year, represents the executive organ. The Committee of National Co-ordinators (CNC), consisting of representatives appointed by the respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs, conducts quarterly sessions to co-ordinate activities and prepare meetings of Heads of State and Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The GUAM Information Office, based in Kiev, acts as a

Secretariat. A Parliamentary Assembly has been established along with a Business Council.

Activities

The Meeting of the Heads of State on 6–7 June 2001 focused on the main issues of co-operation, in particular the development of an effective and secure transport infrastructure. Besides the adoption of the Yalta GUUAM Charter, the Convention on Rendering Mutual Assistance in Consular Matters was signed in order to protect rights and interests of individual and legal entities of members in the territories of third countries. The Heads of State meeting in Yalta on 3–4 July 2003 stressed the need for the resolution of ongoing conflicts in the region, respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states concerned, and agreed to foster co-operation to combat terrorism, separatism and other challenges to international security. Participants in the Summit also signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Trade and Transportation Facilitation Project, noting the importance of strengthening the economic dimension of mutual co-operation. GUAM's new Charter was approved on 23 May 2006 at a Summit meeting in Kiev.

Several meetings have taken place at the level of foreign and defence ministers or their deputies in a number of major areas and joint protocols and other documents have been signed. The implementation of the Eurasian transit corridor project, the

development of oil and gas resources of the Caspian Sea region and the creation of multiple pipelines to bring those resources to world markets and the struggle against aggressive nationalism and separatism are viewed by member countries as an important factor for strengthening their economic and political sovereignty. The establishment of a joint peace-keeping unit is under consideration.

External relations

GUAM is becoming involved in the work of major international organizations and bodies such as the UN, where it enjoys observer status, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). Since 2002 co-operation has been developing with the US for the implementation of GUAM's programmes and projects.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Azerbaijani, English, Georgian, Moldavian, Russian and Ukrainian

WORKING LANGUAGES: English and Russian

SECRETARY GENERAL: Valery Chechelashvili

GUAM INFORMATION OFFICE: ul. Melnikova 36/1, Kiev 04119, Ukraine (telephone: +380 44 483 7457; fax: +380 44 481 4428)

WEBSITE: <http://www.guam.org.ua>

PUBLICATION: *Newsletter of the GUUAM Countries*

Human Rights Watch (HRW)

FOUNDED: 1978 as Helsinki Watch; 'Watch' committees throughout the world united in 1988 to form Human Rights Watch

OBJECTIVES: To end a wide range of abuses, including summary executions, torture, arbitrary detention, restrictions on the freedom of expression, association, assembly and religion, violations of due process, and discrimination on racial, ethnic and religious grounds

MEMBERS: The largest US-based human rights organization, investigating human rights abuses in over 70 countries, supported by contributions from private individuals and foundations throughout the world; no government funds are accepted

HEADQUARTERS: 350 Fifth Avenue, 34th floor, New York, NY 10118-3299, USA (telephone: +1 212 290 4700; fax: +1 212 736 1300)

WEBSITE: <http://www.hrw.org>

PUBLICATION: *HRW World Report* (annual)

Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

[*Commission de l'Océan Indien (COI)*]

The Commission fosters economic co-operation among Indian Ocean island countries.

Origin and development

Madagascar, Mauritius and the Seychelles announced the establishment of the Commission in July 1982; the following December the Foreign Ministers of the three countries agreed upon the basic features of the new body. A general agreement on regional co-operation was signed in January 1984 (the Victoria Agreement). France (representing Réunion) and the Comoros joined the Commission as full members in January 1986.

Membership

Five countries in the Indian Ocean region.

Objectives

The purpose of the Commission is to promote regional co-operation in all sectors, with special emphasis on economic development, fisheries, protection and management of environmental resources, tourism, telecommunications and strengthening of meteorological services.

Structure

Annual ministerial sessions, under a rotating chairmanship, represent the policy-making body. The first meeting of Heads of State or Government of the member countries took place in 1991. The Secretary-General, elected for a four-year term by the ministerial session, is charged with the implementation of projects. Permanent committees cover the main areas of co-operation.

Activities

Programmes implemented by the Commission are in the areas of research on new and renewable energy systems, the development of tuna fishing, the encouragement of regional tourism, the promotion of industrial co-operation, and the exchange of information on cyclones. Substantial financial assistance is being provided by the European Union (EU). Attempts are also being made to stimulate and intensify trade links among member countries.

External relations

The Commission has established close links with other regional institutions, in particular the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Monique Andreas
Esoavelomandroso

HEADQUARTERS: Q4 avenue Sir Guy Forget, PO Box 7, Quatre Bornes, Mauritius (telephone: +230 425 9564; fax: +230 425 2709)

WEBSITE: <http://www.coi-info.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Gazette de la Commission de l'Océan Indien*; *Guide Import/Export*

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC)

The Association is an economic forum promoting dialogue and co-operation among countries of the Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) with a view to expanding trade and investment and developing human resources.

Origin and development

The IOR region covers East Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Australia; on a geographical basis, 48 countries are considered to be part of IOR.

The need for the establishment of a grouping of the countries in the Indian Ocean had been stressed on several occasions but only in the early 1990s did the idea materialize, notably at the initiative of Australia, India and South Africa. A number of meetings involving in various degrees not only government representatives but also businessmen and academics of the seven 'core' countries of IOR (that is the three countries already mentioned plus Kenya, Mauritius, Oman and Singapore), culminated in the Mauritius declaration of March 1995 stating the main objectives of the IOR initiative.

The charter of the Association was eventually drawn up in 1996 and formally adopted at an Intergovernmental Meeting held in Mauritius, on 5-7 March 1997, with the total participation of 14 countries. The seven original 'core' countries had in fact been joined by Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and

Yemen. Subsequently also Bangladesh, Iran, Seychelles, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates became members; However, Seychelles withdrew on 1 July 2003. Further expansion of the Association to include all major economies of the region is under consideration.

China, Egypt, France, Japan and the UK are 'dialogue partners' of the Association. The Indian Ocean Tourism Organization (IOTO) has observer status.

Membership

Eighteen countries enjoy full membership.

Objectives

The main objectives of the Association are the promotion of the sustained growth and balanced development of the region and of member countries and the formulation and implementation of programmes for economic co-operation, including trade liberalization, direct investment, infrastructure, scientific and technological exchanges, tourism and human resources development.

Structure

The Association follows a tripartite model with business and academic networks feeding into an intergovernmental process. The Council of Ministers is convened every two years to adopt, on the basis of consensus, major decisions concerning the Association's activities; extraordinary sessions are held whenever required. Meetings of senior officials and working and experts groups – also at the business and academic levels – take place more or less regularly as the Association steadily moves towards a larger work programme. The Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) holds annual meetings. The Secretariat co-ordinates and services the implementation of policy decisions and work programmes. The Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) and the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) report to the CSO.

Activities

Drawing on the experience of 'open regionalism' of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum, the Association is expected gradually to build mutually beneficial co-operation among participating countries and with 'dialogue partners' closely involving in the process business and academic networks. At the Ministerial Meeting held in Mozambique in March 1999, agreement

was reached on a work programme concerning trade and investment facilitation, trade liberalization and economic and technical co-operation. An Extraordinary Ministerial Meeting took place in Muscat, Oman on 22–23 January 2000 and adopted a plan of action on customs and investment regulations; a number of institutional issues were also dealt with, including the rights and obligations of the Association's Secretariat. An Agreement on Co-operative Activities in the field of defence, technical assistance and supply of defence equipment was adopted in 2001. At the seventh Ministerial Meeting, held in Tehran in March 2007, severe shortcomings on the institutional and operational planes as well as the lack of a realistic programme of action were denounced stressing the need to relaunch the Association on a sounder basis.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Tuan Zarook Samsudeen

HEADQUARTERS: 14 Angus Road, Vacoas, Mauritius (telephone: +230 697 7046; fax: +230 697 5390)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iornet.com>

REFERENCES: G. Campbell (ed.), *The Indian Ocean Rim: Southern Africa and Regional Cooperation* (London, 2003); M.M. Alam, *Economic Development and Contemporary Geopolitics: The Indian Ocean Rim* (New Delhi, 2004); S.K. Tiwari, *Indian Ocean Rim – Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC): Problems and Prospects* (Delhi, 2004)

Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC)

[Commission des thons de l'Océan Indien]

FOUNDED: Agreement signed on 25 November 1993 and entered into force on 27 March 1996

OBJECTIVES: To promote co-operation with a view to ensuring the conservation and optimum utilization of tuna stocks and to encourage sustainable development of fisheries

MEMBERS: 24 countries (including Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and the UK) and the European Community (EC)

SECRETARY: Alejandro Anganuzzi

HEADQUARTERS: IOTC Secretariat, PO Box 1011, Victoria, Seychelles (telephone: +248 225 494; fax: +248 224 364)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iotc.org>

Inter-African Coffee Organization (IACO)

[*Organisation inter-africaine du café*] (OIAC)

FOUNDED: 7 December 1960

OBJECTIVES: To further the study of common problems concerning African coffee, including production, processing and marketing, in order to ensure the smooth disposal of production and the optimum level of selling prices

MEMBERS: 25 countries that account for almost the entire African coffee production

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko

HEADQUARTERS: CAISTAB Building, 3rd floor, BP V210, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (telephone: +225 20 216131; fax: +225 20 216212)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oiac-iaco.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *African Coffee* (quarterly); *Directory of African Exporters* (every two years)

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

The Bank, which is the oldest and largest regional institution in the world in the field of development financing, aims to accelerate through its operations the economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Origin and development

Recurring Latin American proposals to the US for the creation of an inter-American agency contributing capital resources and technical assistance on flexible terms and conditions were eventually accepted in 1958 within the framework of an overall plan (Operation Pan America) to further economic co-operation in the western hemisphere. The agreement establishing the Bank was signed in April 1959 in Washington DC by the

representatives of the member countries of the Organization of American States (OAS), at that time the US and 20 Latin American republics; it entered into effect in December 1959. The Bank actually began operations in Washington DC in October 1960; over the next several decades numerous countries outside the western hemisphere joined the Bank.

Membership

At present, membership includes 47 countries, of which 26 are borrowing members in Latin America and the Caribbean. Most countries in North and South America and the Caribbean (except Cuba) belong to the Bank, along with countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Regional developing countries, considered as a group, hold the position of majority stockholder.

Objectives

According to the Charter, the Bank's basic goal is to contribute to the acceleration of development of member countries, individually and collectively, through financing economic and social development projects and provision of technical assistance. To achieve its aims, the Bank promotes public and private investment for development purposes; uses its own capital, the funds borrowed in the world capital markets, and other resources for high-priority economic and social projects; extends financial assistance to encourage private investment in cases where private capital is not available at reasonable terms; and provides technical assistance with regard to resource surveys, feasibility studies and professional training. Loans are usually granted for specific development projects to governments, public agencies and private enterprises, without requiring a guarantee from the government concerned; since 1990 loans are also granted for the implementation of economic adjustment programmes.

Structure

The Bank's structure includes the Board of Governors, the Board of Executive Directors, and the President. All the powers are vested in the Board of Governors, which consists of one governor and one alternate governor for each member country and meets once a year, usually in March or April. Each member country appoints a governor whose voting power is proportional to the capital in the Bank subscribed by his own country. The US

holds about 30 per cent of total votes. Most powers are delegated by the Board of Governors to the Board of Executive Directors, whose members, permanently residing in Washington DC, are elected or appointed for three-year terms by the Governors. The Board of Executive Directors conducts the Bank's general operations, approves loan and technical co-operation proposals, sets interest rates and approves the budget. There are at present fourteen Executive Directors, nine elected by Latin American and Caribbean countries, three by member countries outside the region, one appointed by the US and one by Canada. In December 2006, the Board of Executive Directors approved changes to the Bank's structure including the creation of three new Vice President positions: for Countries; for Sectors and Knowledge; and for Private Sector and Non-Sovereign-Guaranteed Operations.

The President of the Bank is elected by the Board of Governors for a renewable five-year term and acts as Chairman of the Executive Directors; the Executive Vice-President is nominated by the Executive Directors. The Bank maintains country offices in all of its borrowing member countries; it also has offices in Paris and Tokyo.

Activities

The Bank operates with its ordinary capital resources and Funds in Administration entrusted to it by several donor countries (both member and non-member) for financial assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean. The Bank also has a Fund for Special Operations in order to lend on concessional terms for projects in less developed countries.

The ordinary resources of the Bank are made up of the subscribed capital stock and retained earnings, and, to a very large extent, of the funds raised in the capital markets through the issue of securities and the sale of short-term bonds to central banks. The resources are also replenished through the flow of repayments. The capital stock initially authorized by the Charter amounted to \$850 million, divided into 85,000 shares having a par value of \$10,000 each. The shares originally subscribed by the US amounted to \$350 million. Due to repeated general increases in the shares and the doubling of the Bank's members, the size of the capital stock has grown substantially. At the end of 2006, the subscribed ordinary capital stock, including inter-regional capital, amounted to \$101 billion, of which

\$4.3 billion had been paid in. The remainder was subject to call if required to meet the obligations assumed by the Bank in order to increase its lendable ordinary resources.

Lending from the Bank's ordinary capital resources, that is hard loans made on commercial terms, may not exceed the net amount of subscribed capital. Loans are not tied to the purchase of goods and services in any specific country and are repayable in the currencies lent over a period ranging from 15 to 25 years.

In cases where lending of the more traditional type cannot be effective, the Bank makes concessional loans through the Fund for Special Operations (FSO) whose resources are made up of the contributions of all members. The assets of FSO amounted to \$9.5 billion at the end of 2006. Concessional loans are granted under terms and conditions which take into account the particular constraints arising in specific countries or with respect to specific projects. Lower interest rates are charged and longer repayment terms are allowed than those applied to loans from the ordinary resources. In most cases loans may be repaid in whole or in part in the currency of the borrower. Several donor countries have been providing aid through the agency of special funds entrusted to the Bank; loans from these funds are extended under terms mutually agreed between the Bank and the countries providing the funds.

From 1961 to 31 July 2007, the Bank approved loans amounting to \$24.5 billion. Almost all the developing member countries of the region have obtained the Bank's loans: among the largest recipients are Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia and Peru. The sectoral distribution of loans has covered all major areas: reform and modernization of the state, energy, social investment, transportation, agriculture and rural development, and industry have been the most significant. In recent years, the Bank has financed sectoral reform loans and debt reduction programmes in order to encourage developing member countries to introduce policy changes and improve institutions. Current lending priorities include support for policies and programmes that encourage global competitiveness, poverty reduction and social equity, state modernization and sector reform, and economic integration. Technical co-operation has been provided in conjunction with specific loans or arranged independently.

The Bank's attention is being increasingly

focused on integrating the poorest sections of population in the development process through an expansion of productive work opportunities and an effort to manage the continuing rapid shift from rural to urban areas. On the whole the Bank has had a remarkable impact on Latin American economic and social development, despite the inadequacy of its resources in relation to the magnitude of the problems which face the poorer developing countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

In addition to the Bank, the IDB Group also includes the Inter-American Investment Corporation (IIC) and the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) which promote private sector development in the region. The IIC, created on 23 March 1986 as an autonomous affiliate of the Bank with a view to encouraging private investment especially in small and medium-sized enterprises, started operations in 1989. The initial capital stock of IIC amounted to \$200 million, of which 55 per cent was contributed by developing member countries, 25.3 per cent by the US, and the remainder by members outside the region. In 2001 the decision was taken to increase the capital of IIC by \$500 million. The IIC makes direct investments such as equity participation and purchase of debt instruments as well as indirect investments through other financial institutions. Since its inception, the IIC has provided or mobilized funding for several thousand small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the productive and service sectors in the region. The MIF, aimed at providing technical assistance and facilitating private investment, was established in 1992 by 21 Bank members, pledging to contribute \$1.2 billion, and started operations in 1993. The last capital replenishment (MIF II), amounting to \$500 million, was agreed upon in 2005. At present, the MIF, with contributions from 38 countries, designs and finances projects in partnership with local organizations. It encourages entrepreneurial activities and fosters development of human resources in the private sector. By the end of 2005, the MIF had approved 1000 projects, primarily grants, with more than 800 partners, providing over \$1 billion in resources.

The Bank provides financing for the Institute for the Integration of Latin America and the Caribbean (INTAL) which was created in 1964, under the auspices of the Bank, as an international agency with headquarters in Argentina (Esmeralda 130 16°, 1035 Buenos Aires). The

Institute has provided technical co-operation services concerning the various aspects of the integration process to the Bank units, individual developing member countries, organizations for regional co-operation and other public and private institutions; a new and more focused strategy was adopted in 1996.

The Inter-American Institute for Social Development (INDES), created in 1994 by the Bank and part of it, organizes training programmes in modern techniques for the improvement of social policies and services. INDES has been training public sector decision-makers and managers and officials from non-governmental organizations at the Bank's headquarters and in the member countries.

External relations

The Bank maintains close working relations with the World Bank and other international and regional agencies in order to assure the co-ordination of technical and financial development assistance activities. Co-financing with the World Bank has been taking place since the early 1990s for programmes of sector-adjustment and structural-adjustment lending. Besides supporting regional integration organizations, the Bank participated in several major conferences.

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

PRESIDENT: Luis Alberto Moreno

HEADQUARTERS: 1300 New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20577, USA (telephone: +1 202 623 1000; fax: +1 202 623 3096)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iadb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Annual Report on the Environment and Natural Resources; Economic and Social Progress in Latin America* (annual survey)

REFERENCES: S.S. Dell, *The Inter-American Development Bank: A Study in Development Financing* (New York, 1972); J.A. White, *Regional Development Banks: The Asian, African, and Inter-American Development Banks* (New York, 1972); D. Tussie, *The Inter-American Development Bank* (London, 1995)

Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

[*Comisión Interamericana del Atún Tropical (CIAT)*]

The Commission groups countries interested in the proper conservation of tropical tuna.

Origin and development

Established by an international Convention signed on 31 May 1949 and entered into force on 3 March 1950, the Commission has the Eastern Pacific Ocean as its area of competence.

Membership

Membership currently includes Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Spain, US, Vanuatu and Venezuela.

Objectives

The purposes of the Commission are to study the biology, ecology and population dynamics of the tropical tuna and related species of the eastern Pacific Ocean with a view to determining the effects of fishing and natural factors on stocks and to recommend joint action for appropriate conservation measures.

Structure

Each member country is represented by up to four Commissioners appointed by the respective government.

Activities

Countries participating in the surface fishery for tunas in the Eastern Pacific Ocean reached in 1992 an Agreement on the conservation of dolphins (La Jolla Agreement) intended to reduce gradually the mortality of dolphins. The 1992 Agreement was replaced by a new legally-binding Agreement which entered into force in February 1999. The Commission provides the Secretariat for the International Dolphin Conservation Programme (IDCP).

DIRECTOR: Robin L. Allen

HEADQUARTERS: 8604 La Jolla Shores Drive, La Jolla, California 92037-1508, USA (telephone: +1 858 546 7100; fax: +1 858 546 7133)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iattc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Bulletin* (irregular); *Quarterly Reports*

Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

The Authority groups countries of Eastern Africa with a view to co-ordinating socio-economic development efforts and implementing regional development programmes and projects.

Origin and development

As a response to the severe drought which had affected their respective countries, the Heads of State and Government of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda decided on the creation of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) at a conference held in January 1986 in Djibouti. The Authority was entrusted with the co-ordination of measures to combat the effects of drought and desertification. Organizational and financial rules were established the following April at a meeting of the Council of Ministers of the member countries with a view to attracting the interest of potential international donors. Eritrea became the seventh member of the Authority in September 1993 shortly after having achieved independence.

On 21 March 1996, a new name – Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) – was adopted for the organization which was endowed with a broader mandate and structure.

Membership

Seven East African countries.

Objectives

The aims and objectives of the Authority are: to promote joint development strategies and the harmonization of macroeconomic policies and programmes in the social, scientific and technological fields; to initiate programmes and projects to achieve regional food security and sustainable development of natural resources and environment protection; to develop a co-ordinated and complementary infrastructure in the areas of transport, telecommunications and energy; and to create mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of interstate and intra-state conflicts within the subregion.

Structure

The principal organs of the Authority comprise: the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, which is the highest policy-making body, meeting at least once a year; the Council of Ministers, in charge of implementing decisions, composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and one other 'Focal Minister' designated by each member country, and meeting at least twice a year; the Committee of Ambassadors, comprising the Ambassadors of the member countries accredited to Djibouti, with the task of advising and guiding the Secretariat in the implementation of the work plan adopted by the Council of Ministers; and the Secretariat, headed by an Executive Secretary appointed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for a four-year term renewable only once. The Secretariat has four Divisions in charge of: Economic Co-operation and Social Development; Agriculture and Environment; Peace and Security; and Administration and Finance.

Activities

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, implementation of projects concerning the creation of an early warning system for drought, proper storage and distribution of food, and promotion of agricultural research and water resources management had been severely hindered by widespread domestic unrest, including rebel activity, and by large-scale civil wars in countries such as Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan. Difficulties for the Authority were further exacerbated by substantial arrears in the payment of members' contributions.

At an Extraordinary Summit Meeting held in April 1995 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the expansion of the goals of the Authority were considered in order to improve the co-ordination of development and trade policies and food security strategies as well as to create favourable conditions for foreign investment. In March 1996, the Second Extraordinary Summit Meeting of the Heads of State and Government held in Nairobi, Kenya, approved the new Charter of the Authority, renamed Intergovernmental Authority on Development, dropping any explicit reference to drought. The following April, in conformity with the recommendation of the Second Extraordinary Summit, the Council of Ministers selected three priority areas for co-operation for the period 1997–2001: (a) food security and environment protection; (b) infrastructure development (roads, ports and railways and telecommunications); and (c) conflict prevention,

management and resolution (with special regard to the situation in Somalia and Southern Sudan) and alleviation and mitigation of humanitarian crises.

In the second half of the 1990s, armed confrontation between the Sudanese central authorities and opposition movements, continuing unrest in Somalia, and large-scale fighting between Eritrea and Ethiopia have been the object of peace initiatives undertaken by the Authority.

A protocol to the Authority's founding agreement was adopted in January 2002 with a view to establishing an early warning and response mechanism (CEWARN) to anticipate and avoid the outbreak of armed conflicts in the region. In 2003 the IGAD Strategy was elaborated with a view to providing a coherent framework for priority development programmes concerning agriculture and environment, political and humanitarian affairs, and economic co-operation.

External relations

The 'IGAD Partners', a complementary organization of donor countries including Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the UK, the US and the European Commission, has been established in order to institutionalize and effectively co-ordinate co-operation.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Dr Attalla Hamad Bashir

HEADQUARTERS: Avenue Georges Clemenceau, PO Box 2653, Djibouti (telephone: +253 354050; fax: +253 356994)

WEBSITE: <http://www.igad.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Council of Ministers Report; Summit Proceedings; Food Situation Report* (quarterly)

Intergovernmental Group of
Twenty-Four on International
Monetary Affairs and Development
(G-24)

The Group aims to co-ordinate and advance the position of developing countries on monetary and development finance issues.

Origin and development

The creation of the Group took place in late 1971 against the background of the international monetary

crisis aggravated by the measures adopted by the US in the summer of that year. The need of developing countries to be associated in the reform of the international monetary system for the safeguard of their specific interests *vis-à-vis* industrialized countries led participants in the ministerial meeting of the Group of Seventy-Seven (G-77) held in Lima in November 1971 to establish G-24.

Membership

Members include developing countries of three major areas: Region I: Africa (Algeria, Congo Democratic Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Nigeria and South Africa); Region II: Latin America and the Caribbean (Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela); Region III: Asia (India, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Syria). The status of 'special invitee' has been granted to China. Countries belonging to G-77 are invited to attend the meetings of G-24 as observers.

Objectives

The Group is intended to encourage a greater role for its member countries in multilateral economic and monetary policy co-ordination through a co-operative approach to major outstanding issues. In particular, the Group aims at introducing a development dimension into the discussion of international financial and institutional reform.

Structure

The highest decision-making body is represented by the meeting of Ministers of Finance and Central Bank Governors of member countries. The meeting is convened twice a year, before the spring and autumn gatherings of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC) and the Joint Development Committee of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Plenary meetings of the Group are addressed by the heads of the IMF and the World Bank and by senior officials of the UN system. Meetings at ministerial level are prepared by meetings of Deputies. All decisions are taken by consensus.

The Bureau of the Group consists of the Chair, the First Vice Chair and the Second Vice Chair, each one representing a major region. An elected country takes up the Second Vice Chair position for a one-year period, becomes First Vice Chair the following year and assumes the Chair in the year thereafter.

A Washington Liaison Office was established in 1997 to facilitate contacts with the IMF, the World Bank and other international agencies.

Activities

At the ministerial meetings of the Group the main problems of developing economies have been regularly brought to the attention of the industrialized world, stressing the need for strengthened participation of developing countries in the decision-making processes of the IMF and the World Bank. Ministers have noted in their most recent gatherings the positive developments taking place in global growth prospects, although gains have been unevenly spread. In particular, growth in sub-Saharan Africa remains well short of the requirements for achieving sustained poverty reduction.

SECRETARIAT: 1900 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Room 12-083, Washington, DC 20431 (telephone: +1 202 623 6101; fax: +1 202 623 6000)

WEBSITE: <http://www.g24.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *G-24 Discussion Paper Series* (collection of research papers); Books on the reform of international financial institutions

REFERENCE: E. Mayobre (ed.), *G-24: The Developing Countries in the International Financial System* (Boulder, CO, 1999)

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

The Panel has been established by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in order to assess all the available facts and data relevant to climate change which is attributed, directly or indirectly, to human activity.

Origin and development

The Panel was created as a joint undertaking by WMO and UNEP in 1988. Following the first report of the Panel, the WMO and UNEP worked together to prepare the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), signed on 9 May 1992 and entered into force on 21 March 1994.

Membership

Membership is open in principle to all member countries of WMO and UNEP.

Objectives

The basic task of the Panel is that of assessing, on a comprehensive, objective, open and transparent basis, the scientific, technical and socio-economic information related to understanding the scientific basis of risk of human-induced climate change, its potential impacts and options for adaptation and mitigation. The UNFCCC makes a distinction between 'climate change' attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition and 'climate variability' attributable to natural causes.

Structure

All major decisions are taken by the Panel meeting at the plenary level of government representatives approximately once a year. The Plenary session elects the Chair and the Bureau. Members of the Bureau (presently numbering 30) are normally elected for the period necessary for the preparation of an IPCC Assessment Report (generally five to six years). Three Working Groups and the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories complete the structure of the Panel along with the Secretariat entrusted with planning, overseeing and managing all activities.

Activities

Review by experts and governments is an essential part of the process conducted by the Panel. The Panel as such does not carry out new research, monitor climate-related data or recommend specific policies. It bases its assessment mainly on peer reviewed and published scientific/technical literature. In 2007 the Panel shared the Nobel Peace Prize with former US Vice President Al Gore for raising awareness of the risks of climate change.

External relations

Relevant international, intergovernmental or non-governmental institutions participate in different degrees in the work of the Panel.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

CHAIRMAN: Rajendra K. Pachauri

SECRETARIAT: c/o World Meteorological Organization, 7 bis Avenue de la Paix, PO Box 2300, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 730 8208; fax: +41 22 730 8025)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ipcc.ch>

PUBLICATIONS: *Assessment Reports; Special Reports; Technical Papers*

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

The Agency seeks to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world and to ensure that the assistance provided to that effect is not used for the furtherance of military purposes.

Origin and development

The text of the Statute of the Agency was unanimously adopted on 26 October 1956 by a UN International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held in New York, and entered into force on 29 July 1957. A relationship agreement linking the Agency with the UN came into effect on 14 November 1957. According to the agreement, the Agency has a special status *vis-à-vis* the UN: it is 'under the aegis of the UN' and functions 'as an autonomous international organization' reporting annually to the UN General Assembly and, as appropriate, to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The Agency is not, therefore, a 'specialized agency' according to the UN Charter, though administratively it is part of the UN system.

Each member should make available such information as it judges to be helpful to the Agency. Any member or group of members wishing to set up research projects for peaceful purposes may request the assistance of the Agency in securing special fissionable and other materials.

With respect to any of its projects or other arrangements where it is requested by the parties concerned to apply safeguards, the Agency has the right to examine and approve the design of specialized equipment and facilities, including nuclear reactors, to require the observance of health and safety measures as well as the maintenance and production of operating records, to call for and receive progress reports, to approve the means for the chemical processing of irradiated materials and to send into the territory of the recipient country inspectors having access at all times to all places and data and to any relevant person. In the event of non-compliance and failure by the recipient to take corrective steps within a reasonable time, the

Agency is authorized to suspend or terminate assistance and withdraw any materials and equipment made available.

Membership

The Agency currently has 144 members and includes all countries with significant nuclear programmes and activities. North Korea joined the Agency in 1974 and withdrew on 13 June 1994. Cambodia joined in 1958 and withdrew with effect from 26 March 2003.

Any sovereign country, whether or not a member of the UN or of any of the specialized agencies, may be admitted to participation in the Agency, provided that approval has been secured by the General Conference upon the recommendation of the Board of Governors. Any member may withdraw from the Agency by giving written notice to that effect. Provision is made for the suspension from the exercise of the privileges and rights of membership of any country that has persistently violated the Statute.

Objectives

According to the Statute, the Agency is authorized: (a) to encourage and assist research on, and development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful purposes; (b) to make provision for materials, services, equipment and facilities to meet the needs of research and practical application; (c) to foster the exchange of scientific and technical information on peaceful uses of atomic energy; (d) to encourage the exchange and training of scientists and experts; (e) to establish and administer safeguards designed to ensure that special fissionable and other materials, services, equipment, facilities and information made available are not diverted to military use; (f) to establish, in consultation or collaboration with the competent organs of the UN and the specialized agencies concerned, standards of safety for protection of health and minimization of danger to life and property; and (g) to acquire or establish facilities, plant and equipment which are deemed useful for the implementation of its tasks.

The Agency is also authorized to provide for the application of safeguards and standards, at the request of the parties, to operations under any bilateral or multilateral arrangement or, at the request of any country, to any of that country's activities in the field of atomic energy. Activities are to be conducted by the Agency in conformity with UN policies furthering the establishment of 'safe-

guarded worldwide disarmament'. Moreover, resources must be allocated in such a manner as to secure efficient utilization and the greatest possible general benefit in all areas of the world, bearing in mind the special needs of the developing nations.

Structure

The Agency's structure is made up of three principal organs: the General Conference, the Board of Governors, and the Secretariat. The General Conference, consisting of representatives of all member countries, meets in regular annual sessions (typically in September) and in such special sessions as may be necessary. It is empowered to discuss any questions within the scope of the Statute and may make recommendations to the membership of the Agency and/or the Board of Governors. The General Conference establishes the Agency's policies and programmes, approves the budget, considers the annual report of the Board of Governors, decides on applications for membership and suspends member countries from the privileges and rights of membership, elects members of the Board of Governors and approves the appointment of the Director-General. Decisions of the General Conference on financial questions, amendments to the Statute and suspension from membership require a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting; decision on other questions is made by simple majority.

The Board of Governors currently consists of the representatives of 35 member countries; however, membership of the Board is to be expanded to 43 seats. It meets about five times a year and carries out the executive functions. The General Conference elects 22 of the Board members and 13 are designated by the Board itself. The designation criteria, such as the level of advancement in nuclear technology and equitable geographical distribution, ensure adequate representation and continuity of membership. Under its own authority, the Board approves all safeguard agreements, important projects and safety standards. Decisions of the Board are made by a majority of the members present and voting, with the exception of decisions on the Agency's budget which require a two-thirds majority.

The Secretariat is headed by the Director-General who is appointed by the Board of Governors for a renewable four-year term and is responsible for the administration and implementation of the Agency's programme.

Annual budget estimates for the expenses

of the Agency are prepared by the Director-General and submitted for approval, through the Board of Governors, to the General Conference. Administrative expenses are apportioned by the Board of Governors among member countries in accordance with a scale fixed by the General Conference. The Board of Governors is responsible for establishing periodically a scale of charges, including storage and handling charges, for materials, services, equipment and facilities furnished to member countries by the Agency.

Activities

The Agency has made a substantial contribution to the development of the peaceful uses of atomic energy on a worldwide scale and has assumed increased responsibilities in the area of nuclear safety. It has formulated basic safety standards for radiation protection and issued regulations and codes of practice on specific types of operations, including the safe transport of radioactive materials. A system has been established by the Agency to facilitate emergency assistance to member countries in the event of radiation accidents. Codes of practice and safety guides have been prepared in the areas of governmental organization, siting, design, operation and quality assurance with regard to nuclear power reactors. In 1961, the Agency adopted a safeguard system for small research reactors. Subsequent amendments have expanded the system to cover all types and sizes of nuclear plants. In 1982, with a view to providing member countries with advice on the safe operation of nuclear power plants, the Agency set up the Operational Safety Review Team (OSART) programme to review safety of power plants upon request of member countries. After the accident to the nuclear power plant at Chernobyl, Ukraine, in April 1986, proposals were put forward in order to reinforce the Agency's role in developing safer plants and preventing nuclear terrorism. Two conventions were drawn up in 1986 under the auspices of the Agency: the first commits parties to provide early notification and information about nuclear accidents with possible trans-boundary effects; the second commits parties to endeavour to provide assistance in the event of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency.

Assistance is also provided to member countries on technical, safety, environmental and economic aspects of nuclear fuel cycle technology, including uranium prospecting and radioactive waste management. In co-operation with the Organization

for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Agency prepares every two years estimates of world uranium resources, demand and production. The Waste Management Advisory Programme (WAMAP) was created in 1987. A code of practice to prevent the illegal dumping of radioactive waste was drawn up in 1989, and another code on the international trans-boundary movement of waste was drawn up in 1990.

In March 1970 the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force. It requires the 'non-nuclear-weapon' countries to conclude safeguard agreements with the Agency covering all nuclear materials in all their peaceful nuclear activities. Between 1978 and 1981, three nuclear-weapon countries (the UK, the US and France) concluded safeguard agreements with the Agency. Another nuclear-weapon country, the then USSR, had concluded in 1985 an agreement with the Agency on the application of safeguards to certain Soviet peaceful nuclear installations. A safeguard agreement with China was signed in 1988. The Agency administers full applications of safeguards in relation to the 1967 Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (Tlatelolco Treaty) on the basis of a co-operation agreement concluded in 1972 with the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). The Agency has also been given responsibility for drawing up and implementing the safeguard provisions of the Treaty of Pelindaba, of the Treaty of Bangkok and of the Treaty of Rarotonga, establishing nuclear-free zones in Africa, in Southeast Asia and in the South Pacific respectively.

A significant role has been played by the Agency's teams in inspecting Iraq's nuclear research facilities according to the terms of the UN. Inspectors of the Agency started monitoring in May 1994 the freeze of the graphite moderated reactor programme in North Korea; the Agency has been able to verify the shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facility. The Agency also verified the abandonment by South Africa, in 1993, of its nuclear weapon capacity, the first such instance in the world. As regards Iran, while the Agency has been unable to verify important aspects concerning the nature and scope of that country's nuclear programme, a work plan was agreed upon in August 2007 between Iran and the Agency with a view to resolving all outstanding verification issues.

A Convention on Nuclear Safety was adopted under the auspices of the Agency in 1994 and

entered into force on 24 October 1996. The Agency administers the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material of 8 February 1987 and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage of 12 November 1977. The Protocol to amend the Vienna Convention was opened for signature on 29 September 1997. A Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was adopted on 5 September 1997.

The Agency's safeguards system is primarily based on nuclear material accountancy, with containment and surveillance as important complementary measures. About 1100 nuclear installations and other locations are currently under the Agency's safeguards, representing around 95 per cent of the world's nuclear facilities and materials outside the five nuclear-weapon countries. In 2007 there were about 440 nuclear power reactors in 30 countries supplying over 15 per cent of the world's electricity.

The Agency co-operates with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) in an information system for agriculture (AGRIS). Over the years a large number of international conferences and symposia, as well as smaller panel and group meetings, have been organized by the Agency to enable scientists and experts to discuss new ideas and developments.

A remarkable contribution of the Agency in the field of pure science was the establishment in 1964 of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy – now operated by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Centre offers seminars followed by a research workshop, as well as short topical seminars, training courses, symposia and panels.

The Agency's programme in physical sciences is concentrated on practical problems arising from the use of atomic energy, radiations and isotopes, particularly in developing countries. With regard to life sciences, the Agency co-operates with the World Health Organization (WHO) in the fields of medical applications of radioisotopes and instrumentation, dosimetry for intentional radiation applications and radiation biology.

In its technical co-operation programme, the Agency seeks to promote the transfer of skills and knowledge relating to the peaceful uses of atomic energy to enable the recipient developing countries to carry out their atomic energy activities more safely and efficiently. Since 1958, the Agency has

provided technical assistance to developing countries in the form of services of advisers, fellowships, training opportunities and equipment. In collaboration with FAO, the Agency conducts programmes of applied research on the use of radiation and isotopes.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 2005 to the Agency and its Director-General who remarked on that occasion that 'a durable peace is not a single achievement but an environment, a process and a commitment'.

External relations

Since the very beginning of its activities, the Agency has entered into co-operation agreements with many specialized UN institutions such as UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the WHO, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the FAO. In 1964 the Agency and the FAO combined forces in a Joint Division of Atomic Energy in Food and Agriculture. An International Consultative Group on Food Irradiation (ICGFI), currently consisting of 29 countries, was established in May 1984 for an initial period of five years subsequently extended several times. Technical assistance programmes are carried out within the framework of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and many large-scale projects are in operation. Several projects are also being implemented jointly with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP). The work of the Agency is carried out in co-operation with dozens of other bodies, both non-governmental and intergovernmental such as the OECD.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Mohamed El Baradei

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5, PO Box 100, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 2600-0; fax: +43 1 2600-7)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iaea.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Nuclear Safety Review* (annual); *IAEA Newsbriefs* (every two months); *IAEA Bulletin* (quarterly); *Nuclear Fusion* (monthly); *Meetings on Atomic Energy* (quarterly); *INIS Atomindex* (fortnightly)

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International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)

The Bank, a specialized agency of the UN, is the leading organization in the field of multilateral financing of investment and technical assistance and, due to the increase in its membership, has become a truly global institution.

Origin and development

Together with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Bank originated from the UN Monetary and Financial Conference held at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire (US), in 1944, with the participation of 44 countries. According to the 'division of labour' between the two institutions envisaged at Bretton Woods, the Bank was to be essentially concerned with long-term project and economic development finance, while the Fund's activities were primarily intended to provide temporary balance-of-payments assistance.

The Bank, whose Articles of Agreement were signed on 22 July 1944 and entered into force on 27 December 1945, began operations in Washington, DC, on 25 June 1946. The Bank became a specialized agency of the UN on 15 November 1947. Although initially concerned with the reconstruction of Europe after World War II, the Bank has essentially been providing funds and technical assistance to developing nations and underdeveloped areas of the industrialized world. Only members of the IMF are eligible for membership in the Bank; in turn, the latter is a prerequisite for membership of the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The Bank and IDA, although legally and financially distinct, are from an operational standpoint a closely integrated unit, sharing the same staff.

The 'World Bank', as it is commonly known, comprises the IBRD and IDA; these two institutions,

together with the IFC, MIGA and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) form the 'World Bank Group' whose common objective is to meet the entire range of the financial and technical requirements of development by channelling financial resources from industrial countries to the developing world. ICSID operates, as a distinct international organization, at the Bank's headquarters.

The first operations of the Bank included the lending of \$497 million to West European countries to facilitate the importation of essential goods. After the launching of the Marshall Plan and the assumption by the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) of the task of economic recovery in Western Europe, the Bank has concentrated essentially on assisting the economic development of its member nations.

Membership

Membership of the Bank totals 185 countries of the industrial and developing world in widely different stages of economic development and representing a variety of economic systems from centrally planned to market economies. Among non-members mention must be made of Cuba, North Korea and Taiwan, the last having been replaced as a member by the People's Republic of China in 1980. Russia and the other former Soviet republics joined in early 1992.

Objectives

The Bank extends financial assistance in cases where private capital is not available at reasonable terms, promotes private investment loans through guarantees or participations and provides technical assistance in the field of overall development plans and specific investment projects. Project loans may include funds earmarked for resource surveys, feasibility studies and training. The Bank is attempting to increase the proportion of its lending which directly assists the poorest people in the developing countries.

Structure

The organization of the Bank, which is similar to that of the IMF, comprises the Board of Governors, the Executive Directors and the President.

The Board of Governors is vested with full management powers and consists of one governor and one alternate appointed by each member country. Governors generally are Ministers of Finance or

Ministers of Development. The Board of Governors normally holds an annual meeting to consider the Bank's operations and set down the basic guidelines to be implemented by the Executive Directors, to whom the Board delegates many of its powers. The powers that cannot be delegated by the governors concern, *inter alia*, the admission of new members, changes in the capital stock and the distribution of the net income of the Bank. The Board's decisions are adopted by a majority of the votes cast, except as otherwise specifically provided. Each member has 250 votes, plus one additional vote for each share of stock held; voting rights are therefore related to the amount of each country's quota in the Bank's capital stock.

The largest shareholder is the US, holding 16.38 per cent of the total voting power. Japan holds 7.86 per cent of the voting power, followed by Germany (4.49 per cent) and France and the UK (4.30 per cent each).

There are at present 24 Executive Directors, who permanently reside in Washington DC, meet as often as required and are responsible for the Bank's general operations under the powers delegated to them by the Board of Governors. Each of the five largest shareholders (that is the US, Japan, Germany, France and the UK) appoints a single Executive Director who casts the votes to which each country is entitled. The remaining 19 Directors are elected for a two-year term by the other member countries, grouped according to geographic and other criteria. Each Director casts all the votes of the countries which contributed to his election. It should be noted, however, that the present practice is that most decisions are taken on the basis of consensus, rather than votes cast formally.

The President of the Bank serves as Chairman of the Executive Directors by whom he is elected, conducts the ordinary business of the Bank and is responsible for the organization, appointment and dismissal of the officers and staff. According to a consolidated tradition, the President of the Bank is a national of the largest shareholder, the US.

Activities

The Bank, using its own capital and funds raised through borrowing in the world capital markets, lends only for productive projects within the territories of its members and pays due regard to the prospects of repayment. Since July 1982, loans have been made at variable interest rates; before then, they were made at fixed rates.

The Bank's resources include the subscribed capital stock and its retained earnings and, primarily, the funds borrowed in capital markets. The resources are replenished through the flow of repayments and the sale of portions of outstanding loans, mostly without the Bank guarantee. The capital stock initially authorized by the Articles of Agreement amounted to \$10 billion, divided into 100,000 shares with a par value of \$100,000 each and available for subscription only by members. The shares subscribed by the original members amounted to \$9100 million, the balance of \$900 million having been left available for further subscriptions by the founders and by new member countries. Beginning in 1959, due to repeated general increases in the shares and the admission of new members, the Bank's capital stock has been substantially increased. In April 1988 the Board of Governors approved a further increase of about 80 per cent in the Bank's authorized capital to \$171 billion. As of 30 June 2006, the subscribed capital amounted to \$189.7 billion, with an authorized capital of \$190.8 billion. Of the subscribed capital, \$11.5 billion was actually paid in, partly in gold or dollars and partly in national currencies. The remainder \$178.2 billion was subject to call if required to meet the Bank's obligations.

The Bank makes its loans at terms which are fair but sufficient to earn a profit in the form of interest and commission fees. The principal amounts of loans are repayable in the currencies lent. The Bank has not suffered any losses on loans receivable, although from time to time certain borrowers have found it difficult to make timely payments for protracted periods, resulting in their loans being placed in non-accrual status. As at 30 June 2006, countries with loans or guarantees in non-accrual status included Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Seychelles and Zimbabwe. In any case, the Bank maintains a provision for loan losses. Since 1964, it has been the Bank's policy to transfer to IDA part of the year's income which was not needed for allocation to reserves. No dividends are distributed by the Bank to member countries.

The Bank's largest resource is made up by its borrowing operations, including public issues or private placements throughout the world. As at 30 June 2006, the Bank's outstanding short-term and medium- and long-term borrowings, denominated in different currencies, amounted to \$91.6 billion. The Bank's securities have been placed with investors in more than 100 countries. This diversity

allows the Bank flexibility in selecting the markets that will allow optimum borrowing conditions; the same diversity lessens its dependence on any specific market.

The Bank's lending is limited to member countries; the total amount of loans outstanding may not exceed the net amount of subscribed capital stock plus reserves. Each loan must be guaranteed by the government concerned, thus limiting the eligibility for loans to governments and to public bodies and corporations, and virtually excluding private companies.

The Bank's decision to lend should be based only on economic considerations. The general requirements concern the borrower's ability to meet its obligations and the profitability of the projects to be financed, priority being given to those that appear to be most useful. Loans had to be made in principle only for specific development projects which could not be financed from other sources at reasonable terms. The Bank usually finances part of the investment required for each project, and specifically the expenditure in foreign currencies on purchases from other countries of goods and services required for the project, the borrower being required to cover the expenditures in local currency. Each project is closely followed and audited by the Bank in all stages of its implementation. As Bank loans are not tied, borrowers are not required to purchase goods and services in any particular member country. The Bank makes medium- and long-term loans, usually 10 to 20 years, with repayments generally beginning after a grace period of five years. The Bank may make, participate in, or guarantee loans to the IFC for use in its lending operations.

The breadth of the Bank's functions and the multiplicity of the organizations operating in the field of technical and financial development assistance require close interagency co-ordination to prevent overlapping and waste of resources.

Guidelines for collaboration between the Bank and its sister Bretton Woods institution, the IMF, have been in place since 1966 and have been periodically reviewed in order to make procedures and practices more effective and systematic. Both organizations share the basic objective of promoting sustained growth and development of member countries, and fulfil differing but complementary roles in the pursuit of that objective. The Bank has primary responsibility for development strategies,

structural adjustment programmes and efficient allocation of resources, whereas the Fund is mainly concerned with the aggregate aspects of macroeconomic policies. Positive results have so far been achieved in a number of areas, including that of debt strategy and arrears.

The Bank is engaged in providing training for government officials at the middle and upper levels of responsibility who are involved in development programmes and projects through the World Bank Institute (WBI). The WBI was founded in March 1999 by merging the Bank's Learning and Leadership Centre, originally in charge of internal staff training, and the Economic Development Institute (EDI), set up in 1955 to train government officials. Courses and seminars are held at headquarters in Washington DC, or in developing countries. In keeping with the Bank's increased focus on a growth process promoting both equity and financial and environmental sustainability, the WBI concentrates on the issues concerning poverty reduction, human resource development, protection of the environment, debt and adjustment, public-sector management, private-sector development, good governance and anti-corruption strategies. The WBI supports training institutions overseas through teaching, advice, course planning and the supply of material. It is also supporting countries making the transition from centrally planned systems and works closely with policy-makers on issues such as project management, civil service reform and privatization. The WBI, under the guidance of an External Advisory Council in operation since January 1998, is expanding programmes through distance learning, global knowledge networks and use of new technologies.

The Bank has traditionally financed a large number of projects, especially in the field of capital infrastructure, such as roads and railways, airports, ports and power facilities and telecommunications. In response to the deteriorating prospects for the developing countries, a programme of structural-adjustment lending was inaugurated by the Bank in 1980. The lending supports programmes of specific policy changes and institutional reforms in developing countries designed to achieve a more rational use of resources and thereby: (a) to contribute to a more sustainable balance of payments in the medium and long term and to the maintenance of growth in the face of severe constraints; and (b) to provide the basis for regaining momentum for

future growth. In 1987 the Bank renewed its efforts to alleviate poverty and to mitigate the unfavourable social effects of economic adjustment programmes. A 'Special Programme of Assistance' for sub-Saharan Africa has increased concessional lending to heavily indebted and impoverished African countries. In the late 1980s special emphasis was also placed on assisting heavily indebted middle-income countries, most of them in Latin America. In the past few years the Bank has also been making a sustained effort to provide advice and capital to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe making the transition from command-driven economies to those that are market-oriented. The Gulf crisis initiated by the invasion of Kuwait affected a large number of developing countries, both inside and outside the Middle East, and the Bank, along with the IMF, played a significant role in the mobilization of resources in support of the affected countries.

The present developmental strategy of the Bank places a greater emphasis on the financing of projects likely to bring immediate benefits to the poor in developing countries. The new strategy is particularly directed at operations which promote productive employment and give the poor greater access to social services – health care, basic education, family planning and nutrition; the full integration of women in the development process is another major objective. The traditional emphasis on the public sector has gradually given way to a development strategy increasingly focused on the role of the private sector, the creation of viable enterprises, and the development of domestic capital markets.

The protection of the environment is being accorded growing importance and the impact of projects (especially in agriculture and energy) on the environment is assessed and monitored. All relevant sectors and all types of projects with potential for major environmental effects are addressed, although the question of the sustainability of economic growth and of the viability of alternative development strategies remains open to debate. In any case, there seems to be little doubt that major adjustments are urgently needed in technologies, policies and institutions.

Continuing support is provided to the programme of debt and debt-service reduction; both the Bank and the IMF are actively involved in the negotiation of packages between debtors and commercial banks. Within the context of efforts to

encourage private-sector development, a strategy and work programme are being adopted by the Bank in close co-operation with IFC and MIGA. The Bank has undertaken a programme of expanded co-financing with a view to supporting borrowers' access to private capital markets within the context of the Bank's country-assistance strategies. A 'core poverty programme' for the direct alleviation of poverty among specific groups has been introduced. A comprehensive long-term strategy to address the challenge of poverty, which actually increased in many countries during the 1980s, has gradually emerged and is going to characterize all assistance programmes undertaken by the Bank in the current decade.

Most Bank activities involve various forms of technical assistance to meet gaps in project preparation and for institution building. Project loans and credits may include funds specifically earmarked for feasibility studies, resource surveys, management and planning advice, and training. Technical assistance, usually reimbursable, is also extended to countries which do not need financial support, notably for training and transfer of technology and for the preparation of overall and sectoral development strategies.

The record of the development experience over six decades seems to be both encouraging and sobering. A positive role has certainly been performed by the Bank in helping towards a solution of the problems of underdevelopment in the areas of both financial and technical assistance. As at 30 June 2006, loans outstanding totalled \$103 billion. Despite progress in the growth rates of the developing countries, the living standards of the poor in some of the slower-growing countries have not improved or have even deteriorated.

The Bank is currently making an effort to enhance, primarily at the country level, its two basic roles: financial, through the mobilization and investment of sizeable resources for development; and advisory, through the dissemination of its own cross-country experience. Five major challenges have been identified by the Bank as being crucial to future progress: the pursuit of economic reforms promoting broad-based growth and reducing poverty; the investment in people enabling the poor to take advantage of the opportunities created by growth; the protection of the environment to ensure lasting growth benefiting tomorrow's generations as well as today's; the stimulation of the private sector; and the reorientation of government so as to

complement private-sector activity and carry out efficiently essential tasks.

External relations

Longstanding relations are maintained by the Bank with UN agencies and programmes concerned with various aspects of development work. Activities have focused increasingly on strengthening the capacity of developing countries to implement and sustain policy reform. The Bank currently acts as executing agency for a growing number of projects financed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

Increasing interagency co-operation involves environmental issues reflecting the widespread concern with the link between environment and development. The UNDP, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Bank jointly manage the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The Bank administers the Facility, the UNDP is responsible for technical assistance and UNEP provides environmental expertise.

Co-operation has been rapidly expanding between the Bank and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) with a view to supporting developing countries in the improvement of urban management and disaster preparedness.

The Bank also maintains close working relations with major regional development institutions, such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Asian Development Bank (AsDB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and with the European Union (EU) to assure co-ordination of development assistance activities. The Bank is closely collaborating with other international agencies, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), to help Central and Eastern European countries meet fundamental challenges such as transformation of the economic system, social protection, and environmental clean-up.

Together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and UNDP, the Bank sponsors the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), an informal association, founded in 1971, of over 50 public- and private-sector donors supporting a network of international agricultural research centres and programmes. An invitation was extended in 1995 to UNEP to become the fourth sponsoring member of CGIAR. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) became a co-sponsor of CGIAR

in 2001–02. The Bank continues to promote co-operation with non-governmental organizations to ensure that grassroots insights and expertise are duly taken into account at both the policy and project levels.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Robert Zoellick

HEADQUARTERS: 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 473 1000; fax: +1 202 477 6391)

WEBSITE: <http://www.worldbank.org>

EUROPEAN OFFICE: 66 Avenue d'Éna, 75116 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4069 3000; fax: +33 1 4723 7436)

TOKYO OFFICE: 10th Floor, Fukoku Seimei Building, 2-2-2 Uchisaiwai-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0011, Japan (telephone: +81 3 3597 6660; fax: +81 3 3597 9161)

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *World Bank Atlas* (annual); *World Development Indicators* (annual); *World Development Report* (annual)

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International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)

The Centre provides conciliation and arbitration procedures to settle international investment disputes arising between private foreign investors and host governments.

Origin and development

The Centre has been established under the Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of Other States, opened for signature on 18 March 1965 and entered into effect on 14 October 1966. The Centre has therefore been added to the 'World Bank Group' which comprises, besides the 'World Bank' as such – including both the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA) – two other institutions, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The common objective of the 'World Bank Group' is to meet the entire range of the financial and technical requirements of development by channelling financial resources from industrial countries to the developing world. The Centre operates, as a distinct international organization, at the World Bank's headquarters in Washington DC.

Membership

The Convention has been signed by 156 countries. As of May 2007, the process of ratification had been completed by 144 countries.

Objectives

The purpose of the Centre is to provide conciliation and arbitration services for disputes between foreign investors and host governments which arise directly out of an investment. Subject to the consent of both parties, a contracting state and a foreign investor who is a national of another contracting state may therefore settle any legal dispute that might arise out of such an investment by conciliation and/or arbitration before an impartial international forum. Proceedings need not be necessarily held at the Centre's headquarters since the parties are free to agree to conduct their proceeding at any other place.

Structure

The governing body of the Centre is the Administrative Council, consisting of one representative of each contracting state, all of whom have equal voting power. The President of the IBRD is ex officio the non-voting Chairman of the Administrative Council. The Secretariat performs administrative functions under a Secretary-General. Under a set of 'Additional Facility Rules', the Secretariat has been authorized since 1978 to administer certain types of proceedings between states and foreign nationals which fall outside the scope of the Convention. The latest amendments to the Additional Facility Rules entered into force on 10 April 2006.

Activities

The number of cases submitted to the Centre has considerably increased over the past few years. By the end of 2006, the total number of cases registered with the Centre since the beginning of its operations reached 210. Besides its basic tasks, the Centre has pursued its investment promotion objectives also by carrying out a range of research and publications activities in the field of foreign-investment law.

External relations

Co-operation with international organizations and other arbitration institutions represent a significant part of the Centre's institutional activities.

CHAIRMAN OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL:
Robert Zoellick

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Ana Palacio

HEADQUARTERS: 1818 H Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 458 1534; fax: +1 202 522 2615)

WEBSITE: <http://www.worldbank.org/icsid>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *News from ICSID* (twice a year); *ICSID Review – Foreign Investment Law Journal* (every six months); *Investment Laws of the World*; *Investment Treaties*

REFERENCE: J.C. Baker, *Foreign Direct Investment in Less Developed Countries: The Role of ICSID and MIGA* (Westport, CT, 1999)

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

The Organization develops the principles and techniques of international air navigation and assists in the planning and improvement of international air transport throughout the world.

Origin and development

The Organization was established under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, signed at Chicago on 7 December 1944, at the conclusion of the International Civil Aviation Conference, and entered into force on 4 April 1947. For about two years, pending the formal establishment of the permanent organization, an interim organization was in operation – the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization (PICAO). A relationship agreement with the UN was concluded by PICAO and subsequently ratified by the permanent organization in 1947.

As between contracting parties, the Chicago Convention superseded the provisions of the Convention relating to the Regulation of Aerial Navigation, signed in Paris in October 1919, which established the International Commission for Air Navigation (ICAN), and the Convention on Commercial Aviation concluded at Havana in February 1928. The Chicago Convention is supplemented by a number of Annexes containing specifications concerning international standards and recommended practices and procedures with which member countries are to comply in order to ensure the safety and regularity of international air navigation. Specifications are kept under constant review and are periodically revised in keeping with technological developments and changing requirements.

According to the Convention, the expression 'international air service' means any scheduled air service, performed by aircraft for the public transport of passengers, mail or cargo, which passes through the air space over the territory of more than one country.

Members of the UN may accede to the Organization, according to current provisions. Any sovereign country, not a member of the UN, may be admitted to the Organization by means of a four-fifths vote of the Assembly. Withdrawal is permitted upon submission of notice of denunciation; withdrawal takes effect after one year.

Membership

The Organization currently includes 190 countries.

Objectives

The objectives of the Organization are basically the following: to ensure safe and orderly growth of international civil aviation; to encourage skills in aircraft design and operation for peaceful purposes; to improve airways, airports and air navigation facilities; to meet the needs of the peoples of the world for safe, regular, efficient and economical air transport; to prevent the waste of resources caused by unreasonable competition; to safeguard the rights of member countries to operate international airlines; to prevent discriminatory practices; to promote safety of flight in international air navigation; to foster the development of all aspects of international civil aeronautics. The most significant functions of the Organization include: establishing international standards and recommended practices and procedures; promoting simpler formalities at international borders; developing regional plans for ground facilities and services; collecting and publishing air-transport statistics; preparing studies on the economic aspects of aviation; and fostering the development of air law conventions.

Structure

The Organization's structure is made up of an Assembly, a Council with various subordinate bodies and a Secretariat. The Assembly, composed of representatives of all member countries, is the legislative body and meets at least once every three years. It lays down basic policies, examines and takes appropriate action on the reports of the Council and decides on any matter referred to it by the Council, approves the budget, considers proposals for the modification or amendment of the Convention and deals with any matter within the sphere of action of the Organization not specifically assigned to the Council. Decisions of the Assembly are taken by a majority of the votes cast, unless expressly provided otherwise.

The Council is the permanent governing body, composed of the representatives of 36 countries elected by the Assembly for a three-year term; it holds three 12-week sessions a year, thus providing continuing direction to the work of the Organization. Members of the Council are appointed under three headings: countries of chief importance in air transport; countries making the largest contribution to the provision of facilities

for international civil air navigation; countries whose designation will ensure that all major geographical areas are represented. The Council: carries out Assembly directives; administers the Organization's finance; adopts international standards and recommended practices, incorporates them as Annexes to the Convention and notifies all member countries to that effect; takes whatever steps are necessary to maintain safety and regularity of operation of international air transport; provides technical assistance; compiles, examines and publishes information on air navigation; and may act, if requested by the member countries concerned, as a tribunal for the settlement of any dispute relating to international civil aviation. The Council elects its President, appoints the chief executive officer who is called the Secretary-General and makes provision for the appointment of the necessary staff. Decisions by the Council normally require approval by a majority of its members.

The Council is assisted by an important subsidiary body, the Air Navigation Commission, composed of people with suitable qualifications and experience and appointed by the Council from among nominations submitted by member countries. The Commission is responsible for: considering and recommending to the Council the adoption or amendment of the Annexes to the Convention; establishing technical sub-commissions; and advising the Council about the collection and communication to member countries of all information that is considered necessary and useful for the advancement of air navigation. Other subsidiary bodies include Standing Committees on: Air Transport; Joint Support of Air Navigation Services; Finance; Legal Problems; Technical Co-operation; and Unlawful Interference.

The Secretariat operates under the Secretary-General. Besides its headquarters in Canada, the Organization has regional offices for: Western and Central Africa (Dakar); Eastern and Southern Africa (Nairobi); Asia and Pacific (Bangkok); Europe and North Atlantic (Neuilly-sur-Seine, France); Middle East (Cairo); North America, Central America and the Caribbean (Mexico City); and South America (Lima). These offices assist, expedite and follow up the implementation of the Air Navigation Plans and keep them up-to-date.

Annual budgets, annual statements of accounts and estimates of all receipts and expenditures are submitted to the Assembly by the Council. The

expenses of the Organization are apportioned among member countries on a basis determined by the Assembly.

Activities

From its inception, the Organization has provided an efficient machinery for the achievement of international co-operation in the air, improving safety and regularity and promoting the use of new technical methods and equipment. Among the Organization's activities special mention should be made of standardization, that is the establishment and amendment of international standards and recommended practices and procedures in the technical sphere: licensing of personnel; rules of the air; aeronautical meteorology; aeronautical charts; units of measurement; operation of aircraft; nationality and registration marks; airworthiness; aeronautical telecommunications; air traffic services; search and rescue; aircraft accident inquiry; aerodromes; aeronautical information services and aircraft noise. Extensive work has been undertaken by the Organization in the areas of automatic reporting of data on aircraft accidents, all-weather operations, automation of air traffic services and the application of computers in meteorological services. The Organization has become increasingly concerned with questions regarding aviation and the protection of the environment. Efforts have also been made towards simplification of government customs, immigration, public health and other regulations relating to international air transport. The Organization has been responsible for drafting several international air law conventions, involving such varied subjects as the international recognition of property rights in aircraft, damage done by aircraft to parties on the surface, the liability of the air carrier to its passengers, crimes committed on board and unlawful interference with civil aviation. The first international legal instruments to combat terrorism were concluded under the Organization's auspices in 1963. Five aviation security treaties have been adopted so far and have contributed to decreasing the number of acts of unlawful interference against civil aircraft. A Protocol to the Chicago Convention, prohibiting the use of weapons against civil aircraft in flight, entered into force in October 1998. After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 using hijacked airliners, the Organization's Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Misuse of Civil Aircraft as Weapons of Destruction and Other Terrorist Acts involving Civil Aviation.

Through technical assistance, the Organization has helped developing countries to build up air transport services and to train personnel; most of the work has been directed towards the development of ground services and the creation of large civil aviation training centres at regional level.

External relations

The Organization works in close co-operation with other agencies of the UN such as the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Technical assistance is extended to developing countries under the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other specific programmes. Non-governmental institutions which participate in the Organization's work include the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Federation of Air Line Pilots Associations, and the International Council of Aircraft Owner and Pilot Associations.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Taïeb Chérif

HEADQUARTERS: 999 University Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 5H7 (telephone: +1 514 954 8219; fax: +1 514 954 6077)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icao.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Civil Aviation Report; Civil Aviation Statistics of the World* (annual); *ICAO Journal* (10 issues a year)

REFERENCE: T. Buerghenthal, *Law-Making in the International Civil Aviation Organization* (Syracuse, NY, 1969)

International Cocoa Organization (ICCO)

FOUNDED: 1973 under the first International Cocoa Agreement of 1972, renegotiated in 1975, 1980, 1986, 1994 and 2001. The sixth Agreement (2001) came into effect provisionally on 1 October 2003

OBJECTIVES: To supervise the implementation of the agreement working towards a sustainable

world cocoa production and consumption with remunerative prices and higher incomes for cocoa farmers

MEMBERS: 13 exporting countries and 29 importing countries including members of the European Community (EC), Russia and Switzerland which account for almost 85 per cent of world cocoa production and over 60 per cent of world cocoa consumption

STRUCTURE: The International Cocoa Council is the highest governing body. The Consultative Board on the World Cocoa Economy performs advisory functions

LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dr Jan Vingerhoets

HEADQUARTERS: Commonwealth House, 1-19 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1NU, UK (telephone: +44 20 7400 5050; fax: +44 20 7421 5500)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icco.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Quarterly Bulletin of Cocoa Statistics; Cocoa Newsletter*

International Coffee Organization (ICO)

FOUNDED: 1963 under the International Coffee Agreement, 1962, renegotiated in 1968, 1976, 1983, 1994 and 2001. The 2001 Agreement entered into force definitively on 17 May 2005

OBJECTIVES: To achieve a reasonable balance between supply and demand on a basis which assures adequate supplies at fair prices to consumers and expanding markets at remunerative prices to producers; to collect and disseminate the relevant statistics; and to provide a forum for consultation and co-ordination

MEMBERS: 45 exporting countries which account for over 97 per cent of world coffee production, Brazil being by far the largest supplier, and 32 importing countries, including the European Community (EC), which account for 68 per cent of world coffee consumption

STRUCTURE: The International Coffee Council is the highest governing body. The Executive Board oversees current operations. The Private Sector Consultative Board performs advisory functions

LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Néstor Osorio Londoño

HEADQUARTERS: 22 Berners Street, London W1T 3DD, UK (telephone: +44 20 7612 0600; fax: +44 20 7612 0630)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ico.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Coffee Statistics* (quarterly); *Green Coffee Trade Statistics* (annual)

International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

The Commission groups countries interested in the proper exploitation of Atlantic tunas and tuna-like fishes, about 30 species being of direct concern to the Commission.

Origin and development

Established by an international Convention signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1966, entered into force in 1969 and amended in 1984 and 1992, the Commission has as its area of competence all waters of the Atlantic Ocean, including the adjacent seas, in which tunas are likely to be found.

Membership

The Commission currently has over 40 member countries plus the European Community (EC).

Objectives

The aim of the Commission is to maintain the populations of tuna and tuna-like fish in the Atlantic Ocean at levels which will permit the maximum sustainable catch for food and other purposes.

Activities

The Commission has used its regulatory powers to recommend several measures concerning catch quotas, minimum weight of fish and limitation of incidental catches. It also conducts studies and collects statistical data.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Driss Meski

HEADQUARTERS: Calle Corazón de Maria 8, 28002 Madrid, Spain (telephone: +34 91 416 5600; fax: +34 91 415 2612)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iccat.es>

PUBLICATIONS: *ICCAT Newsletter*; *Statistical Bulletin* (annual); *Biennial Reports*; scientific papers; data records

International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)

FOUNDED: 1952

OBJECTIVES: To foster the protection and promotion of human rights through the rule of law by providing legal expertise at both the international and national levels in order to ensure that developments in international law adhere to human rights principles and that international standards are implemented at the national level

MEMBERS: Sixty eminent jurists (including senior judges, attorneys and academics) who are representatives of the different legal systems of the world. Autonomous national sections and affiliated organizations located in all continents

SECRETARY GENERAL: Nicholas Owen

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT: P.O. Box 91, 33 rue des Bains, 1211 Geneva 8, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 9793800; fax: +41 22 9793801)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icj.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Yearbook*; *Review*; reports and other legal documents

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The Committee is a private institution acting as a neutral and independent intermediary in humanitarian matters during international conflicts, civil wars and other internal disturbances.

Origin and development

The Committee was founded in 1863 in Geneva, Switzerland, where it still has its headquarters; it is a private Swiss organization, independent of any government.

The Committee is the founding organ of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement which consists of three components: the Committee itself, the National Red Cross and Red

Crescent Societies officially recognized by their countries' governments, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The Committee's role during conflicts is defined in the four Geneva Conventions adopted on 12 August 1949 and their two Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977. The First Geneva Convention deals with the amelioration of the condition of the wounded and sick in armed forces in the field; the Second with the amelioration of the condition of wounded, sick and shipwrecked members of armed forces at sea (including forced landing at sea by or from aircraft); the Third with the treatment of prisoners of war; the Fourth with the protection of civilian persons in time of war. The First Protocol extends the Conventions, taking into consideration modern means of warfare and transport and aiming to provide additional protection for civilians. The Second Protocol provides a code of minimum protection for the combatants and the civilian population during internal conflicts. New Statutes of the Committee, including a revised institutional structure, were adopted in June 1998 and came into force the following July.

Membership

The International Committee is composed of a maximum of 25 Swiss citizens.

Objectives

Assistance is provided to military as well as civilian victims – to prisoners of war and civilian detainees, to the war wounded and to civilian populations in occupied or enemy territory. The seven Red Cross principles – humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality – serve as the Committee's guidelines.

Structure

The new structure was approved in 1998. The Assembly is the supreme policy-making body which lays down principles and basic guidelines, defines the objectives and supervises all the activities of the Committee. The Council, composed of five members elected by the Assembly and chaired by the President of the Committee, is a subsidiary body. The Assembly delegates some of its responsibilities to the Council which is in charge of the preparation of the activities of the Assembly itself. The Directorate, chaired by the

Director-General, is the executive body consisting of five members appointed by the Assembly and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Committee.

As a private body with no capital endowment and no income of its own, the Committee is financed by voluntary contributions from governments, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and private donors.

Activities

The Committee's operations are undertaken throughout the world providing impartial support for all victims of conflicts. In recent years large-scale operations have been conducted in Rwanda, Angola, former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Israel and the Palestinian territories, Sudan, Peru, Haiti and Mexico. The Committee visits political detainees in order to examine the material and psychological conditions of detention and the treatment accorded to detainees following their arrest. The Committee's tracing agency pursues the objective of restoring family ties severed during situations of armed conflict or internal violence, especially through the family message whereby one-page open notes are exchanged between family members who otherwise have no way of communicating.

PRESIDENT: Jakob Kellenberger

HEADQUARTERS: 19, avenue de la Paix, 1202 Geneva 11, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 734 6001; fax: +41 22 733 2057)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icrc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *ICRC Annual Report*; *International Review of the Red Cross* (quarterly); *Yearbook of International Humanitarian Law*

REFERENCES: C. Moorehead, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross* (London, 1998); S. Delorenzi, *ICRC Policy since the End of the Cold War: Contending with the Impasse in International Humanitarian Action* (Geneva, 1999); K. McLuskey, *The Red Cross* (Mankato, MN, 2003); D.P. Forsythe, *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross* (New York, 2005); J.M. Henckaerts and L. Doswald-Beck, *Customary International Humanitarian Law/International Committee of the Red Cross* (New York, 2005)

International Copper Study Group (ICSG)

FOUNDED: 1992

OBJECTIVES: To increase copper market transparency and promote international consultations and co-operation on problems and issues related to copper

MEMBERS: 22 countries throughout the world and the European Union (EU)

STRUCTURE: The General Session of members is the highest governing body; Subordinate Committees are responsible for approving and reviewing the work programme; the Secretariat performs administrative functions under the Secretary General. The Industry Advisory Panel is made up of industry representatives of member delegations and invited observers

ACTIVITIES: There are four core areas: statistics; environment and health; market studies in co-operation with other copper bodies; technology transfer with a view to promoting greater copper use in energy efficient products.

LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY GENERAL: Don Smale

HEADQUARTERS: Rua Almirante Barroso, 38-6º, 1000-013 Lisbon Portugal (telephone: +351 21 351 3870; fax: +351 21 352 4035)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icsg.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Copper Bulletin* (monthly); *Copper Bulletin Yearbook* (annual); *Statistical Database*; *World Copper Factbook*

International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC)

FOUNDED: September 1939

OBJECTIVES: To review developments affecting the world cotton situation, to collect and disseminate statistics, and to recommend any measures for the furtherance of international collaboration with a view to maintaining and developing a sound world cotton economy

MEMBERS: 44 countries in all continents.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dr Terry Townsend

HEADQUARTERS: 1629 K Street NW, Suite 702, Washington, DC 20006-1636, USA (telephone: +1 202 463 6660; fax: +1 202 463 6950)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icac.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Cotton: Review of the World Situation* (every two months); *Cotton: World Statistics*

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

[*Conseil international pour l'exploration de la mer*] (CIEM)

The Council fosters and co-ordinates research concerning the living resources of the North Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas.

Origin and development

Founded on 22 July 1902 by an international Convention as Permanent International Council for Exploration of the Sea. A new Constitution for the Council was adopted by the Convention signed on 12 September 1964 when the present title was introduced.

Membership

Membership includes 18 European countries plus Canada and the US. The European Commission and several other organizations have observer status. Affiliate countries are Australia, Chile, Greece, New Zealand, Peru and South Africa.

Objectives

The Council's purposes are to promote and encourage research and investigations, particularly those related to the living resources, to draw up the relevant programmes, and to publish or otherwise disseminate the result of research and investigation. The Council's area of competence includes the Atlantic Ocean and its adjacent seas, with particular reference to the North Atlantic.

Structure

Each member appoints two delegates who represent their country on the Council.

The Secretariat of the Council serves as the data centre for several fisheries, oceanographic, and marine pollution data bases. In 1992, the Council

restructured its Advisory Committee on Marine Pollution and renamed it Advisory Committee on the Marine Environment in order to address a wider range of problems. The Advisory Committee on Fishery Management (ACFM) provides scientific information and advice, including recommendations for management measures such as total allowable catches, to several international bodies dealing with fisheries in the North Atlantic Ocean.

Activities

The Council co-ordinates marine research through a network of committees, over 100 working groups, symposia and an Annual Science Conference; it is the prime source of advice on the marine ecosystem to governments and international regulatory bodies.

GENERAL-SECRETARY: Gerd Hubold

HEADQUARTERS: H.C. Andersens Boulevard
44-46, 1553 Copenhagen V, Denmark (telephone:
+45 3338 6700; fax: +45 3393 4215)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ices.dk>

PUBLICATIONS: *ICES/CIEM Newsletter*; *ICES Annual Report*; *ICES Journal of Marine Science* (quarterly); *ICES Marine Science Symposia*; *ICES Fisheries Statistics*

REFERENCE: E.M. Thomasson (ed.), *Study of the Sea: The Development of Marine Research under the Auspices of the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea* (Farnham, UK, 1981)

International Criminal Court (ICC)

The Court is a permanent independent body which exercises its jurisdiction over individuals who have committed, after 1 July 2002, the gravest crimes of concern to the international community as a whole.

Origin and development

The Court was established by the Rome Statute, adopted on 17 July 1998 at the conclusion of the UN Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court that had begun on 15 June. The establishment of the Court has met with the strong opposition of some countries, notably the US, that were worried about the danger of politically-motivated prosecutions against their nationals. After reaching the required

number of 60 ratifications, the Statute entered into force on 1 July 2002.

Membership

At present, 104 countries are parties to the Rome Statute: 29 are from Africa, 12 from Asia, 16 from Eastern Europe, 22 from Latin America and the Caribbean, and 25 from Western Europe and other states, including all members of the European Union (EU).

Objectives

The Court has been set up as the first permanent treaty-based international criminal court called to promote the rule of law and ensure that the most serious international crimes do not go unpunished. According to the Statute, the Court has jurisdiction with respect to: (a) the crime of genocide; (b) crimes against humanity; (c) war crimes; and (d) the crime of aggression.

Structure

There are 18 judges elected by the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute. Judges are elected for terms of nine, six and three years and may be re-elected, with the exception of those initially elected for nine years. The judges are chosen from among persons of high moral character, integrity and impartiality, having the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices. In the selection of judges, due account should be taken of the need for the representation of the world's principal legal systems, for equitable geographical distribution and for a fair representation of female and male judges. The Court is composed of the Presidency, the Judicial Divisions, the Office of the Prosecutor, and the Registry. The Presidency is in charge of the overall administration of the Court and is composed of three judges elected to the Presidency by their fellow judges for a three-year term. The Judicial Divisions consist of 18 judges organized into the Pre-Trial, Trial and Appeals Divisions and respective Chambers of the Court.

The Office of the Prosecutor is an independent organ of the Court headed by the Prosecutor who can be assisted by one or more Deputy Prosecutors. The Office of the Prosecutor has the mandate to conduct investigations and prosecutions of crimes falling within the Court's jurisdiction. The Prosecutor may start an investigation upon referral,

by a state party or by the UN Security Council, of situations in which there exists a reasonable basis to believe that such crimes have been or are being committed. The Prosecutor may also start an investigation on the basis of information provided by other sources, subject to an authorization by the Pre-Trial Division. The Registry is headed by the Registrar who is the principal administrator of the Court, elected by secret ballot by an absolute majority of judges.

The Assembly of States Parties has also set up a Trust Fund for Victims for the benefit of those who suffered from crimes within the Court's jurisdiction and their families. The seat of the Court is at The Hague, the Netherlands.

Activities

The jurisdiction and functioning of the Court are governed by the provisions of the Rome Statute. Even though the Rome Statute had entered into force, a number of statutory measures and practical steps had to be taken before the Court became fully operational. Unlike the two *ad hoc* Tribunals for Yugoslavia and Rwanda that were established within the UN framework, the Court had to be set up as a completely new international organization. Since its actual establishment in 2003 the Court has gradually become a fully-functioning judicial institution devoted to its core activities of investigating and conducting trials of individuals accused of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes.

External relations

The relationship of the Court with the UN system is governed by an agreement that has been approved by the Assembly of the states parties for conclusion by the President of the Court on its behalf.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

REGISTRAR: Bruno Cathala

SEAT: Maanweg 174, 2516 AB The Hague, The Netherlands (telephone: +31 70 515 9000; fax: +31 70 515 9898)

WEBSITE: <http://www.icc-cpi.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *ICC Newsletter*; *Official Journal of the International Criminal Court*; *Court Reports*

REFERENCES: A. Cassese, P. Gaeta and J.R.W.D. Jones (eds), *The Rome Statute of the International*

Criminal Court: A Commentary (New York, 2002); M. Gow, *Finding Justice: The International Criminal Court* (Monrovia, CA, 2002); M. Politi and G. Nesi (eds), *The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court: A Challenge to Impunity* (Burlington, VT, 2002); J. Elsea, *The International Criminal Court: Overview and Selected Legal Issues* (New York, 2003); P. Sands (ed.), *From Nuremberg to The Hague: The Future of International Criminal Justice* (New York, 2003); O. Bekou and R. Cryer (eds), *The International Criminal Court* (Burlington, VT, 2004); W. Schabas, *An Introduction to the International Criminal Court* (New York, 2nd edn, 2004); E.K. Leonard, *The Onset of Global Governance: International Relations Theory and the International Criminal Court* (Aldershot, UK, 2005)

International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol)

FOUNDED: 1923 and reconstituted in 1946

OBJECTIVES: To promote the widest possible mutual assistance between police forces, to develop institutions for the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes, and to centralize records and information concerning international criminals. Priority areas concern public safety and terrorism, drug-related crimes, financial and high-tech crime, trafficking in human beings and fugitive investigation support

MEMBERS: Official bodies of 186 countries in all continents.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French and Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Ronald K. Noble

HEADQUARTERS: 200 quai Charles de Gaulle, 69006 Lyon, France (telephone: +33 4 7244 7000; fax: +33 4 7244 7163)

WEBSITE: <http://www.interpol.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *International Criminal Police Review*; *International Crime Statistics*

REFERENCE: M. Anderson, *Policing the World: Interpol and the Politics of International Police Cooperation* (New York, 1989)

International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)

The Tribunal has been set up for the prosecution of persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law during 1994 in the territory of Rwanda and of Rwandan citizens committing such crimes in neighbouring territories.

Origin and development

The Tribunal was established by UN Security Council resolution 955 adopted on 8 November 1994. The first plenary session of the Tribunal was held at The Hague in June 1995; formal proceedings at the Tribunal's permanent headquarters in Arusha began in November of the same year. The first trial commenced in January 1997 and the sentences were handed down the following July.

Objectives

The Tribunal deals with the prosecution of war crimes committed by Rwandans, in Rwanda as well as in neighbouring countries, and by non-Rwandan citizens in Rwanda between 1 January and 31 December 1994. A similar body, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) had already been set up by the Security Council in 1993.

Structure

The Tribunal is composed of the following organs: three Trial Chambers and one Appeals Chamber; the Office of the Prosecutor; and the Registry. The Chambers consist of 16 independent judges elected by the UN General Assembly for a renewable four-year term from a list submitted by the Security Council. Three judges sit in each of the Trial Chambers and five judges sit in the Appeals Chamber which is shared with the ICTY. By resolution 1431 of 14 August 2002, the UN Security Council established a pool of 18 *ad litem* judges. At any one time a maximum of four *ad litem* judges, chosen from the pool of 18, could be attached to the Trial Chambers. The maximum number of judges was subsequently increased from four to nine following UN Security Council resolution 1512 of 27 October 2003. The Office of the Prosecutor is in charge of investigations and prosecutions. The Registry is responsible for providing overall judicial and administrative support to the Chambers and the Prosecutor.

The seat of the Tribunal is located in Arusha, in

north-eastern Tanzania, close to the border with Kenya.

Activities

The Tribunal issued its first indictment against eight accused persons on 28 November 1995. The first trial started in January 1997. As of April 2007, the Tribunal had handed down 27 judgments involving 33 accused. In most cases, the convictions or acquittals were appealed to the Tribunal's Appeals Chamber.

Following their arrest and until the completion of the proceedings, the accused are held in a specially-built Detention Facility located within the compound of the Tanzanian prison in Arusha. Life imprisonment represents the maximum sentence that can be imposed. Despite difficult relations between the Tribunal and the Rwandan government, the jurisdiction of the Tribunal is gradually forging a substantial body of case law that can serve as an inspiration for international and national courts. A major contribution of the Tribunal would ultimately be the replacement of a culture of impunity by a culture of accountability establishing the fundamental function of the rule of law, promoting national reconciliation and restoring peace in the Great Lakes region.

External relations

Over 20 countries, most of them African countries, have provided the Tribunal with judicial and police assistance. Other countries have co-operated with the Tribunal by facilitating the movement of witnesses, offering their prison facilities for the execution of sentences and making contributions to the Tribunal's Trust Fund.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French and Kinyarwanda

REGISTRAR: Adama Dieng

SEAT: Arusha International Conference Centre, PO Box 6016, Arusha, Tanzania (telephone: +255 27 250 5000; fax: +255 27 250 4373)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ictr.org>

International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

The Tribunal has been set up for the prosecution of persons responsible for serious violations of

international humanitarian law committed in the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991.

Origin and development

An *ad hoc* 'war crimes' Tribunal was established by UN Security Council resolution 827 (1993), adopted on 25 May 1993, in face of the serious violations committed in the former Yugoslavia and as a response to the threats to international peace and security posed by those violations. The Tribunal was inaugurated in November 1993; the first trial proceedings began in May 1996 and the first sentence of the Tribunal was delivered the following November.

Objectives

The Tribunal's mission is fourfold: (a) to bring to justice persons allegedly responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law; (b) to render justice to the victims; (c) to deter further crimes; and (d) to contribute to the restoration of peace by promoting reconciliation in the former Yugoslavia. The Tribunal is called to prosecute and try the following clusters of offences committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991: grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions; violations of the laws or customs of war; genocide; and crimes against humanity. It is important to stress that the Tribunal's jurisdiction is only over natural persons, thereby excluding organizations, political parties, administrative entities or other legal subjects. The Tribunal and national courts have concurrent jurisdiction over the said offences; however, the Tribunal can claim primacy over national courts and may therefore take over national investigations and proceedings at any stage in the interest of international justice.

Structure

The Tribunal is composed of 16 permanent judges and a maximum, at any one time, of 12 *ad litem* judges. Permanent judges are elected by the UN General Assembly for a renewable four-year term. The *ad litem* judges, elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term, are drawn from a pool of 27 judges. The judges represent the main legal systems in the world and bring to the Tribunal a wide range of legal expertise. The Tribunal operates through three Trial Chambers and one Appeals Chamber. Each Trial Chamber consists of three permanent judges and a maximum, at any one time,

of six *ad litem* judges. Seven permanent judges are members of the Appeals Chamber: five are chosen from the permanent judges of the Tribunal itself while two judges are designated by the President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). These seven judges also constitute the Appeals Chamber of the ICTR. In the conduct of the trial elements from both the civil law and common law systems are combined.

The Prosecutor, acting independently as a separate organ of the Tribunal, is appointed for a renewable four-year term by the Security Council, upon nomination by the Secretary-General. Investigations begin on the Prosecutor's own initiative or on the basis of information received from individuals, governments, international organizations or non-governmental bodies. Indictments must be confirmed by a judge before becoming effective. The Registry is in charge of the administration and judicial support services of the Tribunal.

The seat of the Tribunal is located at The Hague, the Netherlands.

Activities

Following their arrest and until the completion of the proceedings, the accused are held in the Tribunal's Detention Unit located in The Hague and managed by the Registry. Life imprisonment represents the maximum sentence that can be imposed. Sentences are served in one of the countries that have concluded an agreement with the UN to accept persons convicted by the Tribunal.

As of September 2007, the Tribunal had indicted 161 persons for serious violations of international humanitarian law committed in the territory of former Yugoslavia. At the same date, 46 accused were in custody at the Detention Unit and 7 accused had been provisionally released. According to the relevant completion strategy, endorsed by resolutions of the UN Security Council 1503 (August 2003) and 1534 (March 2004), a phased and co-ordinated conclusion of the Tribunal's mission should be achieved by the end of 2010.

External relations

The relationship of the Tribunal with a number of countries and international organizations is crucial for the collection of evidence, the detention and transfer of the accused and the enforcement of sentences. Financial resources may be contributed by states through the Tribunal's Trust Fund.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

REGISTRAR: Hans Holthuis

SEAT: Churchillplein 1, 2517 JW The Hague, The Netherlands; (telephone: +31 70 512 5000; fax: +31 70 512 5345)

WEBSITE: <http://www.un.org/icty>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Judicial Supplement* (monthly/bi-monthly)

International Development Association (IDA)

The Association is a lending agency providing grants and interest-free loans to the poorer developing member countries for a wide variety of poverty reduction activities. The Association and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) are commonly referred to as the 'World Bank'.

Origin and development

The Association was established as an affiliate of the IBRD by Articles of Agreement which were concluded on 26 January 1960 and came into force on 24 September of the same year. The agreement was drawn up by the Executive Directors of the IBRD, pursuant to a resolution of the Board of Governors of October 1959. The Association began operations in November 1960.

Although legally and financially distinct from the IBRD, the Association is administered by the same staff. These two institutions, together with the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), form the 'World Bank Group' whose common objective is to help raise the standards of living in the developing countries by conveying financial resources from the developed world.

Membership

Membership is open to all members of the IBRD and 166 of them have joined to date.

Objectives

The Association finances development projects for the same general purposes as the IBRD but on terms which are more flexible and bear less heavily on the balance of payments than those of conventional

loans – thereby furthering the objectives of the IBRD and supplementing its activities.

The Association concentrates its assistance on very poor countries with a per capita income in 2005 of less than \$1025. About 80 developing countries (half of them in Africa) are currently eligible under this criterion. Over the years, more than 20 countries have passed the Association's eligibility threshold. A number of countries, such as India, Indonesia and Pakistan, are 'blend borrowers' entitled to borrow from both the Association and the IBRD.

Structure

The Association comprises the Board of Governors, the Executive Directors, the President and the necessary operating staff. All the powers of the Association are vested in the Board of Governors – consisting of one governor and one alternate from each member country – which delegates to the Executive Directors (at present 24) authority to exercise many of its powers. Governors and Directors of the IBRD serve *ex officio* in the Association; the President of the IBRD is *ex officio* President of the Association and Chairman of the Executive Directors. Officers and staff of the IBRD serve concurrently as officers and staff of the Association.

All matters before the Association are decided by a majority of the votes cast, except as otherwise specifically provided. Voting rights are related, at least in part, to the amount of each country's contribution to the Association's resources.

Activities

The funds used by the Association, called credits to distinguish them from IBRD loans, come mostly from subscriptions, general replenishments from the more industrialized and developed members and special contributions by richer members as well as transfers from the net earnings of the IBRD. Membership is divided into two categories. Part I countries pay all subscriptions and supplementary resources in convertible currencies (Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, the UK, and the US). Part II countries (including over 135 developing nations) pay 10 per cent of their initial subscriptions in freely convertible currencies and the remaining 90 per cent of their initial subscriptions and all additional subscriptions

and any supplementary resources in their own currencies. The currency of any Part II member may not be used for projects located outside the territory of the member except by agreement between the member and the Association. Operations are conducted in the currencies of all member countries. Credits extended by the Association have maturities of 35 or 40 years, including a ten-year grace period on repayment of principal. Credits are free of interest but carry a small annual charge of 0.75 per cent on disbursed balances.

The Association's resources have been supplemented by several replenishments to which Part I members, and a growing number of Part II members, contribute funds. The most recent replenishment (IDA 14), amounting to about \$35 billion, was approved on 13 April 2005 in order to finance projects over a three-year period ending in June 2008. IDA 14 has represented the largest expansion of the Association's resources in two decades. Original subscriptions plus contributions committed to the 14 replenishments decided thus far totalled about \$145 billion. Beginning with IDA 13, it was decided that between 18 and 21 per cent of the total funds subscribed would be given as grants rather than credits.

The Association's lending is limited to member countries, normally only for specific projects, and is based on principles similar to those of the IBRD. Each credit must be guaranteed by the government concerned. The decision to lend must be based only on economic considerations in the light of the needs of the area or areas concerned. Funds are made available to the recipient only to meet expenses in connection with the project as they are actually incurred; the use of credits cannot be restricted to the purchase of goods and services in any particular member country. Each project is closely followed in all stages of its implementation with due attention being paid to considerations of economy, efficiency and competitive international trade.

Since the Association began operations, credits and grants have reached \$182 billion, averaging in recent years \$10 billion a year and directing the largest share to Africa.

While the Association has traditionally financed all kinds of capital infrastructure, its present developmental strategy is focused on projects that directly affect the well-being of the poorest segments of society in the developing countries by mobilizing domestic resources to achieve faster growth. This strategy is increasingly evident in agri-

culture and rural development projects as well as in projects concerning education, population, health and nutrition. Besides poverty alleviation, the Association is increasingly focusing on debt and debt-service reduction, private-sector development, assistance to 'transition' economies, and the role of women in development.

External relations

The Association co-operates with several organizations within and outside the UN system. Although co-operative relationships are in some cases spelled out in formal agreements, more often they evolve as informal consultations on specific problems and from joint missions and parallel undertakings, especially as regards assistance to low-income countries whose development prospects have been severely impaired by external factors.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Robert Zoellick

HEADQUARTERS: 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 477 1234; fax: +1 202 477 6391)

WEBSITE: <http://www.worldbank.org/ida>

EUROPEAN OFFICE: 66 Avenue d'Iéna, 75116 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4069 3000; fax: +33 1 4069 3066)

TOKYO OFFICE: Kokusai Building, 1-1 Marunouchi 3-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan (telephone: +81 3 3214 5001; fax: +81 3 3214 3657)

PUBLICATIONS: *World Bank Annual Report*; *World Development Report* (annual)

REFERENCE: J.H. Weaver, *The International Development Association: A New Approach to Foreign Aid* (New York, 1965)

International Energy Agency (IEA)

The Agency co-ordinates energy policies of member countries within the framework of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Origin and development

The Agency was established by the Council of the OECD after the 1974 oil crisis when the need of Western countries for an emergency sharing system

of oil supplies had become acute due to the dramatic increase in prices by the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The Agreement on an International Energy Programme was signed on 18 November 1974 in Paris and came into force in January 1976. Under the Programme, countries participating in the Agency agree to share oil in emergencies, to strengthen long-term co-operation with a view to reducing dependence on oil imports, to increase the availability of information on the oil markets and to establish closer ties with oil-producing and other oil-consuming countries. The Long-Term Co-operation Programme envisages co-ordinated efforts to conserve energy, to accelerate the development of alternative sources through specific and general measures, to encourage research and development of new technologies, and to remove legislative and administrative obstacles to increased supplies.

Membership

Members of the Agency currently include 26 countries (all OECD members except Iceland, Mexico, Poland and Slovakia; however, the last two countries are preparing to join). The European Commission is also represented.

Objectives

The Agency aims to foster co-operation among major oil importing nations, to promote stability in world energy markets and to ensure the security of energy supplies, to reduce detrimental environmental effects at all stages of energy production, conversion and use, to develop alternative energy sources to reduce dependence on oil, to step up co-operation and dialogue with energy market participants in view of the globalization of markets, and to operate a permanent information system on the international oil market and other sources of energy. The Agency promotes rational energy policies at the global level through co-operation with non-members, the industrial sector and international institutions.

Structure

The decision-making power in the Agency rests with the Governing Board, composed of energy ministers or senior officials of member countries. Decisions are taken by unanimous vote only if member countries are to be charged with additional obligations not already specified in the founding

Agreement. On all other questions the rule of weighted majority is in use. Qualified majority is required on a number of important questions, such as aspects of stockpiling, oil-sharing contingency plans and relations with the oil companies. Simple majority suffices with regard to routine matters. The Governing Board is assisted by advisory bodies, composed of industrial executives, in charge of coal and oil industry matters. Administrative functions are performed by the Secretariat headed by an Executive Director.

Activities

Although its core mission remains unchanged, the Agency has considerably broadened its activities in several directions, fostering the development of safer, more efficient technologies. An emergency oil-sharing plan has been adopted for implementation in the event of a reduction in oil supplies to member countries. An extensive system providing information and consultation on the oil market and its prospects is in force. In early 1991, during the Gulf War, the Agency activated a contingency plan with a view to ensuring 'security of supply' and keeping prices stable. Regular reviews are conducted in order to assess the effectiveness of national programmes of member countries in the fields of energy conservation and use of alternative sources. Through its publications the Agency has become an authoritative source for energy statistics, providing information as well as analysis. The involvement of the Agency with environmental issues has been steadily increasing over the past few years. Besides playing a major role in international efforts to combat climate change, the Agency stimulates the development and deployment of new technologies in specific areas through a vast network of Implementing Agreements open to participation of both members and non-members. Bioenergy, solar heating and cooling, wind turbine systems, advanced fuel cells and electric vehicles are among the areas covered by the Agreements.

External relations

Various types of co-operation are being developed with international organizations such as the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE). Co-operation with non-member countries has been steadily growing and now represents one of the key priorities of the Agency. As a matter of fact, approximately half of the world's energy consumption now takes place outside the area covered by the Agency's member

countries. Strong emphasis is put on cross-regional activities, with special regard to the Asia-Pacific region (which includes large consumers such as China and India) and to Russia and other countries of the former USSR where major restructuring and reform efforts in the energy sector are under way.

The Energy Charter Treaty, signed in Lisbon on 17 December 1994 by 41 countries and the European Communities, provides for the first time a legal framework for investment and trade in energy among OECD members, Central and Eastern European countries and republics of the former USSR.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Nobuo Tanaka

HEADQUARTERS: 9 rue de la Fédération, 75739 Paris Cedex 15, France (telephone: +33 1 4057 6554; fax: +33 1 4057 6559)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iea.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Oil Market Report* (monthly); *World Energy Outlook* (annually); *Oil Information* (annually); *Coal Information* (annually); *Electricity Information* (annually); *Natural Gas Information* (annually); *Renewables Information* (annually)

REFERENCES: R. Scott, *The History of the IEA: The First 20 Years: Volume I – Origins and Structures* (Paris, 1994); *Volume II – Major Policies and Actions* (Paris, 1995); *Volume III – Principal Documents* (Paris, 1996); C.S. Bamberger, *Volume IV – IEA: The First 30 Years: Supplement to Volumes I, II and III* (Paris, 2004)

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

The Federation is a non-governmental organization alleviating human suffering through the activities of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

Origin and development

The Federation was founded in 1919 in Paris as the 'League of Red Cross Societies' with a view to complementing, through an international federation, the entirely Swiss International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); founder member societies were those of the US, France, Italy, Japan and the UK. The 'League', which changed its name to 'International Federation' in 1991, is one of the components of the

International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the others being the ICRC and recognized National Societies. In many Islamic countries, the Red Crescent replaces the Red Cross.

Membership

The Federation is the permanent liaison body of 185 member National Societies and acts as their spokesman and representative internationally.

Objectives

The Federation: encourages the creation and development of National Societies in countries throughout the world; advises and assists National Societies in the development of their community services, focusing on vulnerable people; organizes and coordinates relief operations for victims of natural disasters and epidemics, often launching worldwide appeals for aid; and promotes the adoption of national preparedness plans.

Structure

The highest decision-making body of the Federation is the General Assembly which meets every two years and consists of representatives of all member National Societies. A Governing Board meets twice a year to carry out the decisions of the Assembly and exercise emergency powers if necessary. The Secretary General, appointed by the General Assembly, is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Federation.

The Federation's financial resources consist of annual dues from member National Societies and voluntary contributions for relief and development.

Activities

The involvement of the Federation in long-term operations has shown a tendency to increase, although donors often stipulate the use and destination of their contributions and this creates difficulties for some operations. After 11 September 2001, the 'war on terror' has progressively politicized the environment in which humanitarian organizations operate. The military as well as commercial contractors are playing a growing role in disaster relief and recovery and international humanitarian bodies are meeting unprecedented challenges, both ethical and practical, in the field. The 'Strategy 2010' document is focused on four core areas: promotion of humanitarian values and principles; disaster response; disaster preparedness; health and care in the community.

External relations

The Federation has permanent observer status with the UN and participated in the UN International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–99). Close relations are maintained with several UN specialized agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and many non-governmental organizations.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Markku Niskala

HEADQUARTERS: 17 chemin des Crêts, Petit-Saconnex, P.O. Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 730 4222; fax: +41 22 733 0395)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ifrc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Red Cross Red Crescent Magazine* (quarterly); *Weekly News*; *World Disasters Report* (annual)

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

The Corporation is the world's largest multilateral organization providing financial assistance directly in the form of loans or equity to private enterprises in developing countries. The Corporation co-ordinates its activities with the other institutions of the 'World Bank Group' – the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) – whose common aim is to facilitate economic development in the poorer member countries by providing funds and technical assistance.

Origin and development

The Corporation was established by Articles of Agreement concluded on 25 May 1955 within the framework of the IBRD. The agreement entered into force on 20 July 1956 and has been subsequently amended.

Legally and financially, the Corporation and the IBRD are separate entities. The Corporation has its own operating and legal staff, but draws upon the IBRD for administrative and other services.

Membership

Membership of the IBRD is a prerequisite for membership in the Corporation, which now totals 179 countries.

Objectives

The Corporation aims to assist developing countries by promoting growth in the private sector of their economies and helping to mobilize domestic and foreign capital; it finances private sector ventures and projects in partnership with private investors and, through its advisory work, helps governments create conditions that stimulate the flow of both domestic and foreign private savings and investment.

The Corporation combines the characteristics of a multilateral development bank and a private financial institution. The basic functions of the Corporation are: (a) to provide – in association with private investors and without government guarantee – risk capital for productive private enterprises of economic priority in developing member countries, in cases where sufficient private capital is not available on reasonable terms; (b) to stimulate and to help create conditions conducive to the flow of domestic and foreign private capital into productive investment; (c) to encourage the development of local capital markets; (d) to provide financial and technical assistance to privately controlled development finance companies; (e) to support joint ventures which provide opportunities to combine domestic sponsorship and knowledge of market and other conditions with the technical and managerial experience available in the industrial countries; and (f) to revolve its portfolio and to undertake new commitments by selling parts of its investments to other investors. The Corporation also provides businesses and governments with advisory services and technical assistance on a wide range of topics. The Corporation does not engage in operations intended primarily for refunding, direct financing of exports or imports, or land development.

Structure

The Board of Governors, in which all powers of the Corporation are vested, consists of the governors and alternates of the IBRD who represent countries which are also members of the Corporation. Most powers are delegated to the Board of Directors, composed ex officio of the Executive Directors of the IBRD who represent countries which are also members of the Corporation; project financing operations are approved by the Board of Directors. The voting power of each member country is related to its contribution to the capital stock.

The President of the IBRD serves ex officio as Chairman of the Board of Directors and is President of the Corporation. The President is assisted by an

Executive Vice President, responsible for overall management and day-to-day decision-making, and by several Vice Presidents. Besides its headquarters in Washington DC, the Corporation has Special Representatives in Frankfurt, London, Paris and Tokyo as well as Regional and Resident Missions in several developing countries.

Activities

The Corporation's resources come from subscriptions by its member countries and from accumulated earnings; however, most of the funds for lending activities are raised through bond issues in the international financial markets. The Corporation also borrows from the World Bank with which it has a Master Loan Agreement (MLA) governing terms of annual Corporation's borrowings from IBRD; the MLA was amended in March 1988 to reflect the growing market orientation of the Corporation and the complex range of funding options provided by the Corporation itself to its borrowers.

An increase in the authorized capital of the Corporation from \$110 million to \$650 million was approved in 1977; following the authorization, in 1985, of new shares in the amount of \$650 million, the capital rose to \$1300 million. In May 1992, the authorized capital was increased to \$2300 million; in December 1992 a selective increase of \$150 million brought the authorized capital to \$2450 million in order to provide sufficient shares for the full entitlement of the former Soviet republics and to provide adequate shares for additional requests for existing or prospective members. As at 30 June 2007, the subscribed capital stock amounted to \$2.37 billion; total assets amounted to \$21.7 billion while liabilities totalled \$8.4 billion. At the end of fiscal year 2005, the Corporation had a committed portfolio of \$19.3 billion with 140 countries represented in its investment portfolio.

The Corporation provides financing by subscribing to shares, usually in conjunction with a long-term loan; loan capital without equity or an equity feature is provided only in exceptional cases. The proportion of equity to loan capital and the interest rate on loan funds are determined in relation to a number of factors such as the risk involved and the prospective overall return on the investment. The Corporation invests in shares which are denominated in the currency of the country in which the enterprise is located; loans may be denominated in any major international currency but most of them are usually expressed in terms of US dollars. The

Corporation has been gradually transforming its role from that of a fixed-rate lender of long-term funds and direct equity investor to provider of a range of variable-rate loans and both equity and quasi-equity instruments; risk-management instruments have also been introduced.

As the Corporation seeks to supplement and not to compete with private capital, it looks to other investors to provide a substantial part of the capital required for a project. The Corporation generally mobilizes substantial project financing from other sources either indirectly, in the form of co-financing, or directly, through loan syndications, and underwriting of debt and equity issues in domestic and international markets. It expects its investment partners to provide management and does not seek representation on the board of directors. Annual financial statements, audited by independent public accountants, are required by the Corporation from the company in which it invests.

The Foreign Investment Advisory Service (FIAS), established by the Corporation in 1985 and now jointly operated with the World Bank, helps governments meet long-term development needs by obtaining the greatest possible benefit from foreign investment – not only in terms of capital but also from the transfer of technology and managerial expertise. FIAS has conducted hundreds of assignments in developing countries, advising governments on laws, policies, regulations, programmes and procedures necessary for the creation of an attractive investment climate and the increase of the inflows of productive foreign direct investment (FDI). The operations of FIAS are financed by the Corporation, the World Bank, the FIAS Trust Fund, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other multilateral and bilateral agencies and donors.

The Corporation has established itself as the largest source of direct financing for private sector projects in developing countries. According to the strategy followed by the World Bank Group in order to adjust to the new economic environment, the Corporation's operations are redirected towards becoming more responsive to the evolving needs of its poorer member countries. Private sector development is widely recognized as a major tool for the stimulation of economic growth and the alleviation of poverty in developing countries. Supported by its last capital increase, the Corporation will be expanding the amount and number of investments and adding to the number of countries in which it is active. The catalytic role of the Corporation through

the mobilization of large amounts of capital from private sources retains its paramount importance; new mobilization techniques, such as securitized loan sales, are being developed.

Priority is given to assisting governments with privatization programmes and direct financial and non-financial assistance to small and medium enterprises is being increased. All projects with a potential impact on the environment are reviewed during the appraisal process and monitored after implementation to ensure conformity with World Bank and international guidelines and host-country rules. Financial and technical assistance is especially needed in the Central and Eastern European countries making their transition to a market-based economy and building their private sectors. It is expected that in the near future the Corporation will play a leading part in developing private sector strategies, while the World Bank will retain its primary role in policy dialogue with governments.

External relations

The Corporation co-operates closely with other international agencies involved in development assistance activities and the promotion of investment opportunities.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

PRESIDENT: Robert Zoellick

HEADQUARTERS: 2121 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 473 1000; fax: +1 202 974 4384)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ifc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Review of Small Businesses* (annual); *Impact* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: J.C. Baker, *The International Finance Corporation: Origin, Operations and Evaluation* (New York, 1968); J.C. Baker, *International Business Expansion into Less-Developed Countries: The International Finance Corporation and its Operations* (New York, 1993)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

The Fund mobilizes financial resources for agricultural development on a sustainable basis in the low-income, food-deficit countries of the world.

Origin and development

Following one of the proposals put forward by the November 1974 World Food Conference, the agreement establishing the Fund was adopted in June 1976 by the representatives of 91 countries at a UN Conference of Plenipotentiaries. After the attainment of initial pledges of \$1 billion, the agreement was opened for signature in December 1976; it entered into force on 30 November 1977 and the Fund began its operations in January 1978. The Fund became a specialized agency of the UN by a decision of the General Assembly on 29 December 1977.

Membership

At present membership includes 164 countries divided into three main groups. According to the classification introduced in 1997, members are divided into: List A, consisting of 22 industrialized donor countries, primarily members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); List B, comprising 12 oil-exporting developing donor countries, primarily members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC); List C, including 130 recipient developing countries divided into three regional Sub-Lists. C1 is for countries in the Africa Group, C2 for countries in Europe, Asia and the Pacific, and C3 for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Members have two types of vote: original votes and votes related to the amount of each country's contribution.

Objectives

The purpose of the Fund is to mobilize additional financial resources for agricultural and rural development in developing countries through projects and programmes specifically designed to improve food production systems, the nutritional level of the poorest populations and the conditions of their lives.

The Fund makes loans or grants to developing member countries or to intergovernmental organizations in which such members participate for financing projects that introduce or improve methods of food production and strengthen related national policies and institutions. The Fund's target groups are the poorest of the world's people: small farmers, the rural landless, nomadic pastoralists, subsistence fishermen, indigenous people and across all groups rural poor women. The Fund is committed, within the framework of the Millennium Development

Goals, to strengthening the capacity of the rural poor and their organizations, improving equitable access to productive natural resources and technologies, and increasing access of the poor to financial services and markets.

Structure

All the powers of the Fund are vested in the Governing Council in which each member country is represented by a governor and an alternate governor. The Governing Council holds ordinary sessions at yearly intervals and may delegate certain powers to the Executive Board. The 18 members and 18 alternates of the Executive Board are elected for a three-year term by the Governing Council; eight seats are allocated to List A countries, four to List B countries, and two for each Sub-List C group of countries. The Executive Board, meeting three or four times a year, is responsible for the general operation of the Fund and for the approval of loans and grants. The Governing Council elects the President of the Fund by a two-thirds majority for a four-year term renewable only once. The President also acts as Chairman of the Executive Board.

Activities

The Fund's resources come from members' contributions, loan repayments and investment income. The Fund started operations with initial contributions of \$899 million in 1977 and has since had five replenishments. Approximately two-thirds of contributions were provided by industrialized members and one-third by developing members. The amounts of replenishments have been as follows: \$992 million for IFAD I (for the period 1981–83); \$473 million for IFAD II (1985–87); \$543 million for IFAD III (1989–91); \$460 million for IFAD IV (1997–99); \$451 million for IFAD V (2001–03); \$550 million for IFAD VI (2004–06); and \$720 million for IFAD VII (2007–09). Supplementary resources (not coming from replenishments) fall into two main categories: resources mobilized for project and programme co-financing; and supplementary funds (that is trust funds) for studies, short-term technical assistance or single or multi-donor programmes. The majority of loans are repayable over 40 years, including a grace period of 10 years and a service charge of 0.75 per cent. The administration of loans is usually entrusted by the Fund to competent international financial institutions in order to avoid duplication of work. The Fund has succeeded in attracting other external

donors and beneficiary governments for the co-financing of projects, thereby stretching the impact of its own resources.

Since it began operations in 1978, the Fund has committed more than \$9.6 billion in grants and loans, for financing 738 projects in 115 countries and territories that have reached more than 300 million poor rural people. A further \$16.2 billion in co-financing has been contributed by partners. Governments and other financing sources in recipient countries, including project beneficiaries, have contributed \$9.1 billion; multilateral and bilateral donors have provided \$7.1 billion. This represents a total investment of about \$25.7 billion.

The Fund's activities are currently directed by the 'Strategic Framework for 2007–2010: Enabling the rural poor to overcome poverty' with a view to empowering poor rural women and men in developing countries to achieve higher incomes and improved food security.

External relations

The Fund co-operates closely with other international institutions, notably its sister food agencies in Rome, that is the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Co-operative relations exist with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), regional development banks, and many other UN agencies and bodies such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Spanish

PRESIDENT: Lennart Båge

HEADQUARTERS: Via del Serafico 107, 00142 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 54591; fax: +39 06 5043463)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ifad.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Rural Poverty Report* (annual); *IFAD Update* (twice a year)

REFERENCE: R.B. Talbot, *The Four World Food Agencies in Rome: FAO, WFP, WFC, IFAD* (Ames, IA, 1990)

International Grains Council (IGC)

The Council, formerly known as the International Wheat Council (IWC) and set up under the Grains

Trade Convention (GTC), currently administers the International Grains Agreement which came into force on 1 July 1995 with two linked conventions, one on grains trade and the other on food aid, with the Food Aid Convention (FAC, 1999) tied to the existence of the GTC. Both the current GTC and FAC are the most recent in a series of multilateral instruments in operation since 1949 for grains trade and since 1967 for food aid.

Objectives

To provide an intergovernmental forum for co-operation in grains trade matters and to contribute to world food security through the improvement of the ability of the international community to respond to food needs of developing countries.

Members

8 exporter countries (Argentina, Australia, Canada, India, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Ukraine and the US) and the European Community (EC); 17 importer countries.

Structure

The Council holds two regular sessions a year, usually in June and December, to supervise the implementation of the GTC and monitor changes in national grain policies and their market implications. The Executive Committee, consisting of a maximum of 14 members (6 exporters and 8 importers), meets twice a year between the regular sessions of the Council. The Market Conditions Committee (MCC) keeps under close review the global grain market situation and its outlook. The Secretariat, headed by the Executive Director, provides administrative services. The Food Aid Committee consists of all parties to FAC meeting twice a year, usually at the same time as the Council.

LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY GENERAL: Don Smale

HEADQUARTERS: 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AE, UK (telephone: +44 20 7513 1122; fax: +44 20 7513 0630)

WEBSITE: <http://www.igc.org.uk>

PUBLICATIONS: *Grain Market Report* (monthly); *Grain Market Indicators* (weekly); *World Grain Statistics* (annual); *Food Aid Shipments* (annual)

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (Unidroit)

The Institute provides for the harmonization and co-ordination of the private law of its member countries.

Origin and development

Originally set up in 1926 as an auxiliary organ of the League of Nations, the Institute was re-established in 1940 on the basis of a multilateral agreement.

Membership

Membership, which currently includes 61 countries in all continents, is restricted to states which have acceded to the Unidroit Statute.

Objectives

The aims of the Institute are to study methods for harmonizing and co-ordinating the private law of states and of groups of states, to prepare drafts of laws and conventions with the object of establishing uniform internal law and to prepare drafts of agreements for the improvement of international relations in the field of private law.

Structure

The General Assembly, composed of one representative from each member country and meeting at least once a year, is the supreme decision-making body. It adopts every year the Institute's budget, approves the Work Programme every three years, and elects the members of the Governing Council every five years. The Governing Council, consisting of 25 elected members plus one ex officio member, is responsible for the preparation of the Work Programme and for the determination of the appropriate ways to achieve the aims of the Institute. The President, appointed by the Italian Government, is an ex officio member of the Governing Council. The Secretariat performs administrative tasks under the direction of the Secretary-General who is appointed by the Governing Council on the nomination of the President. The Administrative Tribunal, having jurisdiction over disputes between the Institute and its staff, and the Permanent Committee, overseeing general staff matters, are the other two organs envisaged by the Institute's statute.

Activities

Since its foundation the Institute has prepared many studies and drafts concerning several branches of law such as the law of sale and kindred matters, credit law, the law of carriage, the law relating to civil liability, the law of procedure and tourism law. The work of the Institute has materialized in several international conventions adopted by conferences convened by its member countries or has served as a basis for a number of international instruments signed under the auspices of other international organizations.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, German, Italian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY GENERAL: Prof. Herbert Kronke

HEADQUARTERS: Via Panisperna 28, 00184 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 696 211; fax: +39 06 6994 1394)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unidroit.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *News Bulletin* (every six months); *Uniform Law Review* (quarterly)

International Jute Study Group (IJSG)

FOUNDED: 27 April 2002 as successor to the International Jute Organization

OBJECTIVES: To encourage the expansion and diversification of the jute trade through facilitation of producer-consumer contacts, research and development projects and market promotion, including the introduction of new jute products and the development of new end-uses

MEMBERS: Bangladesh, India, Switzerland and the European Community (EC) and its member countries accounting for over 60 per cent of jute trade (import and export). Associate membership may be granted to associations, companies and other entities concerned with the development of jute that are not entitled to full membership

SECRETARY GENERAL: A.F.M. Sarwar Kamal

HEADQUARTERS: 145 Monipuripara, Near Farmgate, Tejgaon, Dhaka 1215, Bangladesh (telephone: +880 2 912 4887; fax: +880 2 912 5248)

WEBSITE: <http://www.jute.org>

PUBLICATIONS: Studies and reports on manufacturing and marketing of jute products

International Labour Organization (ILO)

The Organization operates for the improvement of working and living conditions through the adoption of international labour conventions and recommendations, setting minimum standards in fields such as wages, hours of work and conditions of employment.

Origin and development

The Organization was established as an autonomous institution within the system of the League of Nations, its Constitution being adopted on 11 April 1919 and representing an integral part of the Peace Treaties. The International Labour Conference held in Philadelphia adopted on 10 May 1944 a Declaration concerning the aims and purpose of the Organization and expanding its tasks (Philadelphia Declaration). The Constitution was subsequently amended in order to sever the link with the League of Nations and to anticipate a new relationship with the UN. The Organization became the first specialized agency associated with the UN through the conclusion of a formal relationship agreement which entered into effect in December 1946. The revised Constitution of the Organization entered into force on 28 June 1948. Other amendments were subsequently introduced on several occasions. According to the Instrument of Amendment 1997 (adopted on 19 June 1997 but not yet in force), it will become possible to abrogate any Convention if it appears that the Convention itself has lost its purpose or that it no longer makes a useful contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Organization.

As distinct from the automatic membership of the Organization originally provided for all members of the League of Nations, membership is now entirely voluntary. Members of the UN may accede to the Organization in conformity with current provisions. Any sovereign country, not a member of the UN, may be admitted to the Organization by a vote concurred in by two-thirds of the delegates attending the session of the International Labour Conference, including two-thirds of the government delegates present and voting. Unilateral withdrawal is allowed upon

submission of written notice to that effect to the Director-General and takes effect two years thereafter. Withdrawal shall not affect the continued validity of obligations arising under any international labour convention ratified by the country which terminates its membership.

Membership

The Organization, which originally comprised 45 countries, now numbers 181 members. Non-members are mainly micro-states in Europe and the Asia-Pacific. In 1977 the US exercised its right to withdraw from the Organization on mainly political grounds but resumed full participation in February 1980.

Objectives

The principal aim of the Organization is to contribute to the establishment of universal and lasting peace based upon social justice by improving, through international action, working and living conditions.

Under the Philadelphia Declaration, the fundamental principles which inspire the Organization's work include the following: (a) labour is not a commodity; (b) freedom of expression and freedom of association are essential to sustained progress; (c) poverty anywhere constitutes a danger to prosperity everywhere; and (d) the war against want is to be carried on by continuous and concerted international effort in which the representatives of workers and employers, enjoying equal status with those of governments, join with them in free discussion and democratic decision with a view to promoting common welfare. The Declaration stressed the right of all human beings, irrespective of race, creed or sex, to pursue both their material well-being and their spiritual development in conditions of freedom and dignity, economic security and equal opportunity. The attainment of such conditions must constitute the central aim of national and international policies and measures, especially those of an economic and financial character, which should therefore be considered by the Organization in the light of this fundamental objective. These objectives were evoked in the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted by the International Labour Conference in June 1998.

Structure

The Organization's structure is made up of the International Labour Conference, the Governing

Body, and the International Labour Office. The Conference is the supreme deliberative organ and meets annually in Geneva, with a session devoted to maritime questions when necessary. National delegations are composed of two government delegates plus one delegate representing employers and one representing workers. As every delegate is entitled to vote individually, non-government delegates can speak and vote independently of the views of their respective governments. The primary function of the Conference is to adopt international labour conventions and recommendations by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the delegates present.

The Governing Body (elected by the Conference for a three-year term) is the Organization's executive council. It meets three or four times a year in Geneva to implement policies and programmes and to supervise the work of the International Labour Office and of the various committees and commissions. The Governing Body has the same tripartite structure as the Conference. It is composed of 56 titular members, 28 representing governments, 14 representing employers and 14 representing workers. Of the 28 persons representing governments, 10 are appointed by the members of 'chief industrial importance' (at present Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Russia, the UK and the US), and 18 are appointed by the members selected every three years by the government delegates to the Conference, excluding the delegates of the 10 members mentioned above. Employers' and workers' members are elected as individuals, not as national candidates. Among the committees set up by the Governing Body is the nine-member tripartite Committee on Freedom of Association, created in 1951 to examine complaints in the field of freedom of association.

The International Labour Office is headed by a Director-General. It serves as Secretariat, operational headquarters, research centre and publishing house. In particular, it collects and distributes information, assists governments upon request in drafting legislation on the basis of decisions of the Conference, administers the technical co-operation programmes, undertakes special investigations and provides machinery to assist in the effective application of conventions. Operations are decentralized to regional, area and branch offices in about 40 countries. Regional offices are based in Abidjan (for Africa), Lima (for the Americas), Beirut (for Arab States), Bangkok (for Asia and the Pacific) and Geneva (for Europe and Central Asia).

Activities

According to the Constitution, the improvement of labour conditions is to be achieved, *inter alia*, by the regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum working day and week, the regulation of labour supply, the prevention of unemployment, the provision of an adequate living wage, the protection of the worker against sickness, disease and injury arising out of his employment, the protection of children, young persons and women, the provision for old age and injury, the protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own, the recognition of the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, the recognition of the principle of freedom of association, and the organization of vocational and technical education. To this end, the Organization brings together government, labour and management to recommend international minimum standards and to draft international labour conventions.

Member countries are required to submit conventions, within a prescribed period of time, to the competent national authorities for the enactment of legislation or other appropriate action. When the competent authorities give their consent, the member is bound to communicate the formal ratification of the convention to the Organization and to take all necessary steps. The member is required to make a periodical report to the Organization on the implementation of the provisions of the convention. The obligation to report periodically the position of national law and practice, in regard to the matters dealt with in a convention, also applies to the non-ratifying member which, moreover, must state the difficulties preventing or delaying ratification. In the case of recommendations, members are again required to bring them before the competent national authorities but are under no further obligation other than that of reporting to the Organization, at appropriate intervals, the position of the law and practice in their countries, showing the extent to which effect has been given to the provisions of such recommendations with any modifications that have been found necessary.

The activities of the Organization have met with many serious difficulties owing to a variety of factors. Some of the difficulties and conflicts of interest originated in the past from the participation of member countries which did not possess independent employers' and workers' organiza-

tions, with the result that all their delegates were government-instructed.

Since it began operations in 1919 the Organization has adopted more than 180 Conventions and about 185 Recommendations, which cover almost every aspect of labour conditions: basic human rights; freedom of association and abolition of forced labour; wages; hours of work; minimum ages for employment; conditions of work for various classes of workers; workmen's compensation; social insurance; vacation with pay; industrial safety; employment services; and labour inspection. Eight conventions have been identified by the Organization's Governing Body as fundamental to the rights of human beings at work, whatever the levels of development of individual member countries. These rights are considered a precondition for all the others since they provide the tools that are needed for improving individual and collective conditions of work. The 'Fundamental Conventions' are the following: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948 (No. 87); Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949 (No. 98); Forced Labour, 1930 (No. 29); Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957 (No. 105); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 (No. 111); Equal Remuneration, 1951 (No. 100); Minimum Age, 1973 (No. 138); Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182). Besides countries that have formally ratified, many other countries are involved in formal ratification procedures of the fundamental conventions. The following four instruments have been designated by the Governing Body as 'Priority Conventions': Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards), 1976 (No. 144); Labour Inspection, 1947 (No. 81); Labour Inspection (Agriculture), 1969 (No. 129); Employment Policy, 1964 (No. 122). It is important to emphasize that since 1994 the regular system of reporting has been changed. Regular reports from governments are required every five years on most ratified conventions, but once every other year as regards Fundamental and Priority conventions.

The Maritime Labour Convention, adopted in February 2006 and not yet into force, aims to provide comprehensive rights and protection at work for more than 1.2 million seafarers, consolidating and updating over 65 international labour standards adopted over the last 80 years.

Besides its legislative functions, the Organization provides extensive technical assistance in co-operation with the governments

concerned and carries out research and publication activities on social and labour matters, with a view to promoting democracy and human rights.

The International Institute for Labour Studies was established by the Organization in March 1960 in Geneva. It is an advanced educational and research institution dealing with social and labour policy and bringing together international experts representing employers, management, workers and government interests and other specialists. Its activities are financed by grants and an Endowment Fund to which governments and other bodies contribute. The International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training was opened by the Organization in October 1965 in Turin, Italy. It provides programmes for directors in charge of technical and vocational institutions, training officers, senior and middle-level managers in private and public enterprises, trade union leaders, and technicians, primarily from the developing nations.

Arrangements for the approval, allocation and collection of the biennial budget of the Organization are determined by the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by the delegates present. Expenses are allocated among member countries in accordance with a scale which is revised from time to time.

The Organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1969.

External relations

The Organization maintains working relations and co-operates closely with UN bodies, including the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), and with the specialized agencies operating within the UN system. Arrangements for co-operation or consultation have been concluded with many international institutions, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, and national bodies.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Juan Somavía

HEADQUARTERS: 4 route des Morillons, 1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland (telephone +41 22 799 6111; fax: +41 22 798 8685)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ilo.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *International Labour Review* (quarterly); *Official Bulletin* (three a year); *Labour*

Law Documents (three a year); *Bulletin of Labour Statistics* (quarterly); *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*; *World Labour Report* (every two years); *World of Work* (five a year)

REFERENCES: N. Hewett, *Towards Better Things: The Story of the ILO* (London, 1936); J.W. Follows, *Antecedents of the International Labour Organization* (Oxford, 1951); G.A. Johnston, *The International Labour Organization: its Work for Social and Economic Progress* (London, 1970); G. Foggon, 'The Origin and Development of the ILO and International Labour Organizations', *International Institutions at Work*, eds P. Taylor and A.J.R. Groom (London, 1988), 96–113; C.R. Lubin and A. Winslow, *Social Justice for Women: The International Labour Organization* (Durham, NC, 1990); H. Bartolomei de la Cruz, G. von Potobsky and L. Sweptston, *The International Labour Organization: The International Standards System and Basic Human Rights* (Boulder, CO, 1996)

International Lead and Zinc Study Group (ILZSG)

FOUNDED: 1959

OBJECTIVES: To provide opportunities for regular consultations on international trade in lead and zinc, to conduct studies and to consider possible solutions to any special problems or difficulties

MEMBERS: 28 countries in all continents and the Commission of the European Communities, representing 90 per cent of world production and over 80 per cent of world consumption of both lead and zinc

LANGUAGES: Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Don Smale

HEADQUARTERS: Rua Almirante Barroso 38, 5º, Lisbon 1000-013, Portugal (telephone: +351 21 359 2420; fax: +351 21 359 2429)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ilzsg.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Monthly Bulletin*; *Lead and Zinc Statistics* (monthly)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

The Organization fosters co-operation among governments on technical matters regarding international merchant shipping.

Origin and development

A provisional Maritime Consultative Council had been set up, to act only until the establishment of a permanent intergovernmental agency in the maritime field, by an agreement concluded in October 1946 in Washington DC, and entered into effect in April 1947.

The Convention establishing the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) was adopted on 6 March 1948, at the conclusion of the UN Maritime Conference held in Geneva, but did not enter into force until 17 March 1958 because of the delay in securing ratifications by at least 21 countries, including seven with at least one million gross tons of shipping each.

The Convention has been amended and supplemented on a number of occasions. On 22 May 1982, upon the entry into force of the relevant amendments, the Organization had the words 'Intergovernmental' and 'Consultative' dropped from its name and adopted the present denomination. On the basis of a relationship agreement, the Organization has been recognized since 1959 as the specialized agency of the UN in the field of shipping.

Members of the UN may accede to the Organization in conformity with current provisions. Any sovereign country not belonging to the UN may be admitted to the Organization provided that, upon the recommendation of the Council, the application has been approved by two-thirds of the full members. Territories that do not enjoy full sovereignty, and to which the Convention has been made applicable either by full members responsible for their international relations or by the UN, may be granted associate membership. Any member may withdraw from the Organization by written notification given to the UN Secretary-General; the withdrawal takes effect twelve months thereafter.

Membership

At present, membership of the Organization includes 167 countries. The Faroe Islands, Hong Kong and Macao are associate members.

Objectives

The Organization facilitates international co-operation on technical matters related to merchant shipping, with a view to achieving safe and efficient navigation and to protecting the marine environment from pollution caused by ships and craft.

The purposes of the Organization are basically to foster co-operation and exchange of information among member countries regarding government regulations and practices relating to technical matters of all kinds affecting shipping engaged in international trade; to encourage the general adoption of the highest practicable standards with regard to maritime safety, efficiency of navigation and the prevention and control of pollution from ships, and to deal with the relevant legal questions; to promote the abolition of discriminatory action and unnecessary restrictions by governments; to consider unfair restrictive practices by shipping concerns; and to deal with any matters concerning shipping that may be referred to it by any organ or specialized agency of the UN.

Structure

The Organization's structure consists of an Assembly, a Council, a Maritime Safety Committee, a Legal Committee, a Marine Environment Protection Committee, a Technical Co-operation Committee, and a Secretariat. The Assembly is the policy-making body and is composed of representatives from all member countries meeting for regular sessions every two years. It elects the members to be represented on the Council, considers the reports of the Council and decides upon any question referred to it by the Council, approves the budget, and refers to the Council for consideration or decision any matters within the scope of the Organization. The Assembly also recommends to member countries measures concerning maritime safety as well as the prevention and control of pollution caused by ships and craft operating in the marine environment.

Between sessions of the Assembly, the Council, elected for a two-year term and normally meeting twice a year, performs all the functions of the Organization but is not empowered to make recommendations on maritime safety and pollution control to member countries, a function expressly reserved for the Assembly. The Council, subject to the approval of the Assembly, appoints the Secretary-General. It presents a report to the Assembly at each regular session.

The Council consists of 40 members, of which 10

represent countries with the largest interest in providing international shipping services, 10 represent other countries with the largest interest in international seaborne trade, and 20 represent other countries which have a special interest in maritime transport or navigation and whose participation ensures representation of all major geographical areas.

The Maritime Safety Committee is open to all members of the Organization and meets at least once a year. It has set up a number of specialized sub-committees to deal with specific problems such as: bulk liquids and gases; carriage of dangerous goods, solid cargoes and containers; fire protection; flag state implementation; radio communications and search and rescue; safety of navigation; standards of training and watchkeeping; ship design and equipment; stability and load lines and fishing vessels safety. The Committee, through the Council, submits proposals to the Assembly on technical matters affecting shipping, including prevention of marine pollution.

The Legal Committee, originally created to deal with problems resulting from the Torrey Canyon pollution disaster of 1967, was made a permanent body in 1982. It deals mainly with liability and compensation regimes for damage caused at sea by oil pollution and other hazardous substances. The Marine Environment Protection Committee was set up by the Assembly in 1973 to co-ordinate work on the prevention and control of marine pollution from ships. The Technical Co-operation Committee is in charge of the evaluation and review of technical assistance programmes and projects. The Facilitation Committee is a subsidiary body of the Council dealing with measures to simplify the documentation and formalities required in international shipping. All of these Committees are open to full participation by all members of the Organization on an equal basis.

Decisions are generally taken by the Assembly and the Council by a majority of members present and voting; where a two-thirds majority is required, decisions are taken by a two-thirds majority vote of the members who are present.

The Secretariat comprises the Secretary-General and the necessary staff. Financial statements for each year and budget estimates on a biennial basis, with estimates for each year shown separately, are prepared by the Secretary-General for consideration by the Council, which submits them to the Assembly with its comments and recommenda-

tions. The expenses of the Organization are apportioned among member countries according to a scale which is fixed by the Assembly after consideration of the proposals of the Council.

Activities

In order to achieve its purposes, the Organization is endowed with consultative and advisory powers. It considers and makes recommendations upon matters submitted by member countries, by any organ or specialized agency of the UN or by any other intergovernmental institution. It is also responsible for: convening international conferences on matters within its competence; drafting international maritime conventions, agreements or other suitable instruments and recommending these to governments and intergovernmental organizations. Moreover, the Organization provides appropriate machinery for consultation and exchange of information. At the request of one of the countries concerned, the Organization may consider any matter related to unfair restrictive practices by shipping concerns, provided that such matter has proved incapable of settlement through the normal processes of international shipping business and has been the subject of direct negotiations between members.

Besides the activities carried out over the years by its various organs in the fields of maritime safety and environmental protection, the Organization has been working in connection with many international instruments, of which it is the depository. These instruments include International Conventions concerning: Prevention of Pollution of the Sea by Oil, 1954 (OILPOL); Safety of Life at Sea, 1960 (SOLAS); Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic, 1965 (FAL); Load Lines, 1966 (LL); Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (TM); Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties, 1969 (CSI); Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969 (CLC); Civil Liability in the Field of Maritime Carriage of Nuclear Material, 1971 (LNM); Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage, 1971 (IFC); Special Trade Passenger Ships Agreement, 1971 (STP); Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972 (LDC); International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972 (COLREG); Safe Containers, 1972 (CSC); Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified by the Protocol of 1978 (MARPOL 73/78); Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS); Carriage of

Passengers and their Luggage by Sea, Athens, 1974 (PAL); International Maritime Satellite Organization and Operating Agreement, 1976, later renamed International Mobile Satellite Organization (INMARSAT); Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims, 1976 (LLMC); Safety of Fishing Vessels, Torremolinos, 1977 (SFV); Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978 (STCW); Maritime Search and Rescue, 1979 (SAR); Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA) of 1988 and its related Protocol, amended in 2005; Salvage, 1989; Oil Pollution, Preparedness, Response and Co-operation, 1990; Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 1996. New Conventions relating to the marine environment were adopted in the early 2000s, including one on anti-fouling systems (AFS 2001) and ballast water management (BWM 2004). A new comprehensive security regime for international shipping entered into force in July 2004. Some conventions have not yet entered into force, pending formal ratification by the prescribed number of countries; changes and amendments are being adopted following developments in technology and lessons learned from accidents. In addition to conventions, the Organization has developed numerous codes of practice, such as the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code. Finally, the Organization has issued hundreds of resolutions and recommendations.

The Organization also works with: the Oslo Commission (OSCOM), established by the Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft; and the Paris Commission (PARCOM), established by the Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources.

The Organization provides consultancy and advisory services, arranges for training through its fellowship scheme and is involved in individual maritime projects in many countries. Most involve training, including the establishment of maritime training academies. The World Maritime University (WMU) opened in July 1983 in Malmö, Sweden, to provide advanced training for administrators, educators and others involved in shipping at a senior level.

External relations

The Organization works in close co-operation with UN bodies and specialized agencies as well as with other international institutions, both intergovern-

mental and non-governmental. Technical assistance in the field of shipping is extended to developing countries under the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other specific programmes.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Efthimios E. Mitropoulos

HEADQUARTERS: 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR, UK (telephone: +44 20 7735 7611; fax: +44 20 7587 3210)

WEBSITE: <http://www.imo.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *IMO News* (quarterly); specialized publications, including international conventions of which IMO is depository

REFERENCES: S. Mankabady (ed.), *The International Maritime Organization* (London, 1987); K.R. Simmonds, *The International Maritime Organization* (London, 1994)

International Mobile Satellite Organization (INMARSAT)

The Organization is the world's leading provider of global mobile satellite communications.

Origin and development

The convention and operating agreement relating to the International Maritime Satellite Organization were the result of three sessions of a conference, held between April 1975 and September 1976 under the auspices of the then Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) – later renamed the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Both acts entered into force on 26 July 1979 and the Organization began operations on 1 February 1982 under the name of International Maritime Satellite Organization. The convention was amended in 1985 and 1989 to include aeronautical and global land-mobile communications respectively. The Organization adopted its present name on 9 December 1994.

Objectives

To provide a complete portfolio of mobile voice and data services almost everywhere in the world, whether on land, at sea or in the air.

Structure

The Organization was transferred in 1999 to the private sector, becoming a limited company. The intergovernmental Secretariat continues its operations to monitor the Organization's public service obligations.

Activities

The Organization owns and operates a fleet of ten satellites in geo-stationary orbit whose capacity is steadily increased and provides emergency transportable communications in cases of natural or man-made disasters.

DIRECTOR OF SECRETARIAT: Jerzy W. Vonau

GLOBAL HEADQUARTERS: 99 City Road, London EC1Y 1AX, UK (telephone: +44 20 7728 1777; fax: +44 20 7728 1142)

WEBSITE: <http://www.inmarsat.com>

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The Fund is a specialized agency of the UN established to foster international monetary consultation and co-operation with a view to maintaining global financial stability.

Origin and development

Together with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the Fund originated from the Final Act adopted by the UN Monetary and Financial Conference held at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire (US), in July 1944 with the participation of representatives of 44 countries. According to the 'division of labour' between the two institutions envisaged at Bretton Woods, the Fund's activities were primarily intended to provide temporary balance of payments assistance while the IBRD was to be essentially concerned with long-term project and economic development finance.

The Articles of Agreement of the Fund were signed on 22 July 1944 and came into force on 27 December 1945 when 35 countries, whose quotas amounted to 80 per cent of the Fund's resources, deposited their ratification of the Bretton Woods Agreement. The Fund began operations in Washington on 1 March 1947. 'Original members' of the Fund include the countries participating in the Bretton Woods Conference which accepted the Articles of Agreement within a prescribed time

limit; 39 out of 44 countries became original members, the then USSR being the only important exception. 'Other members' are the countries which have subsequently joined the Fund under the terms and conditions set out in the Fund's resolutions admitting them to membership. A few countries – Czechoslovakia, Indonesia and Poland – withdrew from the Fund and later rejoined.

Membership

Membership of the Fund, which is a prerequisite for membership of the IBRD, totals 185 countries of the industrial and developing world in widely different stages of economic development and representing a variety of economic systems from centrally planned to market economies. Among non-members mention must be made of Cuba, North Korea and Taiwan, the latter having been replaced as a member by the People's Republic of China in 1980. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, all 15 republics applied for membership in the Fund and subsequently joined the Fund and the World Bank.

Objectives

The Fund promotes international co-operation and stabilization of currencies, to facilitate the expansion and balanced growth of world trade, and to help member countries meet temporary difficulties in foreign payments. It is unique among intergovernmental organizations in its combination of consultative, financial, and regulatory functions with a view to ensuring a stable world financial system and sustainable economic growth.

The original purposes of the Fund are: to provide the machinery for consultation and collaboration on international monetary problems; to promote exchange stability, to maintain orderly exchange arrangements among members and to avoid competitive exchange depreciation; to assist in the establishment of a multilateral system of payments in respect of current transactions between members and in the elimination of foreign exchange restrictions which hamper the growth of international trade; to make resources available to members, under adequate safeguards, so as to enable them to correct maladjustments in the balance of payments without resorting to measures destructive of national or international prosperity; and to shorten the duration and lessen the degree of disequilibrium in the international balances of payments of members.

Structure

The organization of the Fund, which is similar to that of the IBRD, comprises the Board of Governors, the Executive Directors, and the Managing Director; advisory Committees also play a significant role.

The Board of Governors is vested with all powers and consists of one governor and one alternate governor appointed by each member country. It holds an ordinary annual meeting – usually in September and in conjunction with that of the World Bank Group – to consider the Fund's operations and set down the basic guidelines to be implemented by the Executive Directors, to whom the Board has delegated many of its powers; between annual meetings the governors may take votes by mail or other means. Certain fundamental powers cannot be delegated and remain the sole responsibility of the Board of Governors. They concern, *inter alia*, the admission or suspension of members, the adjustment of quotas, the distribution of the net income, the liquidation of the Fund, and the election of Executive Directors. In principle, the Board's decisions are to be adopted by a majority of the votes cast, except as otherwise specifically provided. Each member has 250 basic votes, plus one additional vote for each part of its quota equivalent to 100,000 special drawing rights (SDR). SDRs were introduced in 1969 as an international reserve asset for allocation by the Fund in order to supplement the existing official reserves of member countries and thus improve the liquidity of the international monetary system. The SDR also serves as the unit of account of the Fund and some other international organizations. Voting rights in the Fund are proportionate to the amount of each member's quota. As of October 2007, the US remained by far the largest shareholder in the Fund, holding 16.79 per cent of total votes, followed by Japan with 6.02 per cent and Germany with 5.88. France and the UK held 4.86 per cent each.

There are at present 24 Executive Directors, who permanently reside in Washington, DC, meet as often as required (usually several days a week) under the chairmanship of the Managing Director, and are responsible for the day-to-day operations under the powers delegated by the Board of Governors. Directors are appointed or elected by member countries or by groups of countries. Each one of the eight members with the largest quotas – the US, Japan, Germany, France, the UK, Russia, China and Saudi Arabia – appoints an Executive Director. The other 16 Directors are elected every

two years by the Governors of the remaining member countries, grouped according to geographical and other criteria; each Director casts all the votes of the countries which contributed to his election. Since a member's voting power depends on the size of its quota, quotas also have a bearing on the formation of the constituencies. However, in practice most decisions are taken on the basis of consensus rather than of formally cast votes.

The Managing Director, elected by the Executive Directors for a five-year term which may be extended, is *ex officio* Chairman of the Executive Directors and is assisted by a Deputy. He conducts the ordinary business of the Fund and is responsible for the organization, appointment and dismissal of the officers and staff. According to an established practice, the post of Managing Director of the Fund is reserved to a European citizen while a US citizen is appointed President of the IBRD.

An Interim Committee of the Board of Governors on the International Monetary System and a Joint Committee of the Boards of Governors of the Fund and the World Bank on the Transfer of Real Resources to Developing Countries (Development Committee) were established with advisory functions and held their initial meetings in January 1975. The Second Amendment to the Articles of Agreement empowers the Board of Governors to decide, by a large majority of the total voting power, the establishment of a new organ, the Council, which would be similar to the Interim Committee as regards composition and terms of reference but would have decision-making powers. In 1999 the Interim Committee was transformed into the permanent International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC). The IMFC, consisting of 24 members representing the same countries or groups of countries as those on the Board of Executive Directors, performs advisory functions but has no decision-making powers.

Activities

Members commit themselves to mutual collaboration to promote orderly exchange arrangements and a system of stable exchange rates and undertake certain specific obligations relating to domestic and external policies that affect the balance of payments and the exchange rate. Members are bound to furnish such information as the Fund deems necessary for its operations and the effective discharge of its duties, including national data on: official holdings as well as holdings by banking and financial

agencies, at home and abroad, of gold and foreign exchange; production, exports and imports of gold; total exports and imports of merchandise, according to countries of destination and origin; international balance of payments; international investment position; national income; price indices; buying and selling rates for foreign currencies; and exchange controls.

Each member country is assigned a quota related to its national income, monetary reserves, trade balance and other economic indicators. A member's subscription is equal to its quota and is payable in SDRs, in other members' currencies or in its own currency. The quota approximately determines a member's voting power, the amount of foreign exchange it may purchase from the Fund, and its allocation of SDRs. The Board of Governors conducts general quota reviews at regular intervals, usually every five years. Of the twelve general reviews that have been conducted so far, five concluded that no increase in quotas was required. The last quota increase took effect in January 1999 under the eleventh general review. The twelfth review decided in January 2003 that no increase was needed. The total of members' quotas as of October 2007 was SDR217.3 billion.

Each member deals with the Fund only through its Treasury, central bank, stabilization fund, or other similar fiscal agency and the Fund deals only through the same agencies. The Fund's resources are made available, on an essentially short-term and revolving basis, to members which need temporary assistance for the solution of their payments problems. More precisely, exchange transactions take the form of members' purchases (drawings) from the Fund of the currencies of other members for the equivalent amounts of their own currency. A member is entitled to buy the currency of another member from the Fund subject to certain conditions, including its likely ability, with the help of resources provided by the Fund, to overcome payments difficulties within a short time. Drawings are limited by provisions governing both the rate of increase and the total amount of the Fund's holdings of a member's currency expressed as a percentage of its quota. Reserve-tranche purchases, that is purchases that do not bring the Fund's holdings of the member's currency to a level above its quota, are allowed more or less automatically and unconditionally. Further purchases on the part of a member are subject to the principle of 'conditionality' which, although not expressly mentioned in the Fund's

Articles of Agreement, is the guiding concept of the various policies and facilities based on the requirement that resources be made available to members 'under adequate safeguards'. In line with this principle, a member must commit itself to sound economic management and agree to adjust its fiscal, monetary, exchange and trade policies as stipulated by the Fund. The revised Guidelines on Conditionality, adopted in 1979, obliged the Fund to take a much broader view of a country's economic requirements making express reference to the social and political objectives of member countries and to the causes of their balance of payments difficulties. Conditionality, therefore, is not based on a rigid set of operational rules but may vary according to individual programmes and the types of policies or facilities that are used.

A member's purchases of currency from the Fund must be repaid by repurchases or by the purchase of that member's currency by another member. As a general rule members undertake to repay within a period not exceeding three to five years; exceptions are made in the case of extended arrangements. Repurchases are made in SDRs or in usable currencies. Purchases outside the reserve tranche are made in four credit tranches, each equivalent to 25 per cent of the member's quota; repurchases must be made within a specified period of time.

The Fund is expected to depend primarily on its own resources – that is on its quota-based or subscribed resources – but when members face extraordinary financing requirements it is authorized to supplement its resources by borrowing. Although it can borrow a member's currency, with the concurrence of the member itself, from any source, the Fund has borrowed thus far only from official sources, primarily member countries and their central banks. Since a member's access to Fund financing is no longer strictly limited to the size of its quota, borrowing has enabled the Fund to expand its lending capability although the exercise has often proved to be costly and time-consuming.

Under the General Arrangements to Borrow (GAB) of 1962, ten industrialized members – the Group of Ten (G-10) including Belgium, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK, and the US – undertook to lend the Fund up to \$6 billion, in their own currencies, should this be necessary to forestall or cope with an impairment of the international monetary system. Switzerland became

associated with the GAB in 1964. Since their inception, the Arrangements have been activated on several occasions and have been periodically reviewed and renewed with some modifications. In January 1983, the Group of Ten reached an agreement on major revisions and a substantial enlargement of the GAB from SDR6.4 billion to SDR17.0 billion, with Saudi Arabia contributing SDR1.5 billion. The Swiss National Bank became a full participant in the GAB in April 1984. The decision was adopted in 1995 to double the GAB by means of a parallel arrangement, using also the resources of countries other than the ones belonging to the G-10. The so-called New Arrangements to Borrow (NAB), approved by the Executive Board in January 1997, became effective in November 1998.

Stand-by Arrangements, introduced in 1954, enable members to negotiate credit in advance of actual needs with a view to forestalling speculative attacks which might aggravate impending difficulties. Under these arrangements, drawings up to specified limits may be made within an agreed period, subject to certain conditions. The usual duration of a stand-by arrangement does not exceed 12 months, with repayment within a period of 3 to 5 years.

To further support members facing temporary balance of payments problems, the Fund adopted a number of devices, including the establishment of: a compensatory financing facility (February 1963, replaced in 1988); a buffer stock financing facility (1969); an oil facility (June 1974); an extended facility for medium-term assistance to members in special circumstances of balance of payments difficulty (September 1974); another oil facility (April 1975); a Trust Fund (May 1976) which was terminated in April 1981; a supplementary financing facility for members facing serious payments imbalances (1978). In 1981 the Fund inaugurated the policy of 'enlarged access', allowing for a maximum cumulative use of its resources of up to 450 per cent of quota over a period of three years. This policy enabled the Fund to provide assistance to members whose balance of payments deficits are large in relation to their quotas and which need resources in larger amounts and for longer periods than are available under the regular credit tranches.

The Fund established in August 1988 the Compensatory and Contingency Financing Facility (CCFF) which replaced and expanded the former compensatory financing facility of 1963. The CCFF was modified in December 1990, to include a petro-

leum import financing component in the context of the Middle East crisis, and was reformed in 2000 through the elimination of the contingency component. A Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) was set up in March 1986 in order to provide balance of payments assistance to low-income developing countries on concessional terms; loans are granted to support medium-term macroeconomic and structural adjustment programmes. To provide additional assistance to the adjustment efforts of heavily indebted countries the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) was established in December 1987, setting the access limit to 250 per cent of the member's quota (compared with 70 per cent under the SAF). Resources committed under ESAF were provided by the Structural Adjustment Facility of the Special Disbursement Account and by the ESAF Trust Loan Account. In September 1999, ESAF became the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) that expressly includes lasting poverty reduction and the promotion of sustainable growth. Commitments have also been undertaken to strengthen the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative.

To provide financial assistance to members such as the countries of the former USSR and those of Central and Eastern Europe finding themselves at an early stage of the transition process and unable to use other facilities, the Fund established in April 1993 the Systemic Transformation Facility (STF).

The Articles of Agreement of the Fund have been amended substantially on three occasions, in 1969, 1978 and 1992. The First Amendment entered into force on 28 July 1969 with the introduction of SDRs as usable and acceptable reserve assets and a substitute for gold in international payments. However, the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the shift of major currencies to a floating exchange rate regime as well as the growth in international capital markets have considerably reduced the need for SDRs. From January 1981, the calculation of SDRs was reduced from an original basis of 16 leading currencies to a basket including only the currencies of five member countries (France, Germany, Japan, the UK and the US). On 1 January 1999, the French and German currencies were replaced by the euro, the single currency of the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) currently used by 15 members of the European Union (EU).

The suspension of the convertibility of the dollar into gold, announced by the US in August 1971, the modifications of the par values of currencies and

other related events in the financial and monetary fields, gave rise to a major crisis in the international monetary order as envisaged by the Bretton Woods Agreement. More than four years of intensive efforts on international monetary reform culminated during 1976, when negotiations were completed with the approval of the Second Amendment which entered into effect on 1 April 1978.

The Second Amendment is designed to adapt the Fund and its operations to current needs in six main areas: (a) the promotion of orderly exchange arrangements and a stable system of exchange rates in compliance with certain obligations undertaken by members with regard to domestic and external economic and financial policies; (b) the reduction of the role of gold (including the elimination of its function as the unit of value of the SDR, the abolition of the official price of gold, and the disposition of part of the Fund's own holdings of gold) with a view to making the SDR the principal reserve asset in the international monetary system; (c) the provision for wider uses of the SDR by endowing the Fund with increased powers over the categories of holders of SDRs, the relevant transactions and the rules for the reconstitution of members' holdings of SDRs; (d) the simplification and expansion of the types of financial operations and transactions carried out by the Fund; (e) the possible establishment of the Council as a new organ of the Fund; and (f) the improvement of the organizational and administrative mechanism of the Fund.

The par value of the dollar is no longer defined in terms of the SDR and gold and the US is not obliged to establish and maintain a par value for the dollar.

The Third Amendment, entered into force on 11 November 1992, empowers the Fund to suspend the voting and certain related rights of members that fail to fulfil any of their obligations under the Fund's Articles of Agreement, other than obligations with respect to SDRs.

The Fund is actively engaged in the training of officials of member countries and their financial organizations. Courses offered by the Fund's Institute, established in 1964, deal with financial analysis and policy, balance of payments methodology and public finance; assistance is also extended to national and regional training centres. Several departments of the Fund provide training and technical assistance in their areas of special competence.

Over six decades, the Fund has performed a significant role despite the fundamental political and economic changes that have occurred in many parts of the world and has maintained an effective presence at the centre of the international monetary and payments system. The amendments to the Articles of Agreement adopted so far represent important stages in the evolution towards a new monetary order whose establishment, however, will ultimately depend on a number of factors largely beyond the powers and scope of the Fund. Disruptions and manipulations of exchange rates have often prevented effective adjustments of the balance of payments of member countries. The recent expansion of facilities and other types of operations should benefit in particular developing member countries.

A proposed Fourth Amendment was approved by the Board of Governors in September 1997 concerning a special one-time allocation of SDRs in order to equalize member countries' ratio of cumulative allocations to the ninth review quotas.

The role of the SDR and the possibility of new SDR allocation have been discussed extensively; in fact, no allocations of SDRs have been made since January 1981. The value of the SDR is calculated daily on the basis of the market exchange rates of the relevant currencies.

A number of central banks, intergovernmental monetary institutions and development institutions have been designated by the Fund 'prescribed holders' of SDRs. These institutions are therefore entitled to acquire and use SDRs in transactions and operations with participants in the SDR Department (all Fund members) and other prescribed holders under the same terms and conditions as Fund members. In addition to its uses as a medium of exchange and for settlements among participants and prescribed holders, the SDR is the unit of account for Fund transactions and operations and for its administered accounts.

With a view to reducing the role of gold, in the mid-1970s the Fund undertook a gold sales programme: one-sixth of the Fund's gold (25 million troy ounces or 775 metric tons) was sold directly to member countries and a further sixth was sold at public auction for the benefit of developing member countries. On completion of the programme, in the first half of 1980, 24.5 million ounces had been sold directly to 126 members in four annual restitution sales and a further 25 million ounces had been sold at public auction. The profits of the gold auction

totalled over \$4.6 billion, of which \$1.3 billion was transferred directly to 104 developing member countries and the remainder made available for loans by the Trust Fund.

The Fund's role will remain essentially 'catalytic', that is mobilizing additional market financing rather than replacing it. One major problem remains that of the heavy indebtedness of some developing countries whose situation has not substantially improved because of inadequate policies and/or insufficient financial support. In the area of debt reduction operations, co-operation with the IBRD and the International Development Association (IDA) will be crucial since these operations represent a major element in a country's financial and development strategy. The large and persistent external payments imbalances among major industrial countries represent another concern of paramount importance.

External relations

The Fund may co-operate, within the terms of its Articles of Agreement, with 'any general international organization and with public international organizations having specialized responsibilities in related fields'; a relationship agreement was concluded between the Fund and the UN in November 1947.

Close relations, mainly of a non-financial character, are maintained by the Fund with its sister Bretton Woods institution, the World Bank. Co-operation has become closer in the past few years as both organizations are increasingly concerned with structural adjustment issues; guidelines establishing the policy areas on which each institution must concentrate were first formalized in 1986 and have been periodically reviewed since then. Administrative procedures have been adopted to promote collaboration and more efficient use of staff resources. These procedures are supplemented at the operational level by joint or parallel missions, systematic contacts in the field and co-operation in technical assistance activities.

A co-operative relationship is being developed between the Fund and the World Trade Organization (WTO) on trade policy issues and their repercussions in the payments field with a view, *inter alia*, to strengthening the trade reform content of Fund-supported programmes. As regards the provision of technical assistance for the improvement of economic and financial management, the Fund has

become, in 1989, an executing agency for the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

MANAGING DIRECTOR: Dominique Strauss-Kahn

HEADQUARTERS: 700 19th Street NW,
Washington, DC 20431, USA (telephone: +1 202
623 7000; fax: +1 202 623 4661)

WEBSITE: <http://www.imf.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *International Financial Statistics* (monthly, with yearbook); *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook*; *Direction of Trade Statistics* (quarterly, with yearbook); *World Economic Outlook* (twice a year); *IMF Survey* (monthly); *Finance and Development* (quarterly); *IMF Economic Reviews* (three times a year); *Civil Society Newsletter*

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International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)

[*Organe international de contrôle des stupéfiants*] (OICS)

The Board ensures the continuous evaluation and overall supervision of governmental implementation of drug control treaties as well as the availability of drugs for medical and scientific purposes.

Origin and development

The formal establishment of the Board was envisaged by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) which consolidated earlier Conventions (February 1925, July 1931) placing natural or synthetic narcotics, cannabis and cocaine under international control. The 1961 Convention entered into force on 13 December 1964; the Board, which took over the functions of the Permanent Central Narcotics Board and the Drug Supervisory Body, began operating in March 1968. The growing abuse of several drugs, such as hallucinogens, amphetamines, barbiturates, non-barbiturate sedatives and tranquillizers, not covered by international treaties prompted the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) to draw up a legal instrument dealing with these substances. As a result, a Convention on Psychotropic Substances was adopted in 1971 in Vienna by a UN Conference and entered into effect in 1976. The 1961 Convention was amended by a Protocol, signed in 1972 in Geneva and entered into force in 1975, which considerably enlarged the functions and membership of the Board and stressed the need for treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. The UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted in 1988 and entered into force in 1990, deals with areas not previously regulated by international treaties.

Membership

Thirteen persons who serve in their personal capacity and do not represent their governments.

Objectives

The basic objective of the above-mentioned international instruments is to limit the supply of and demand for narcotics and psychotropic substances to medical and scientific needs through coordinated national and international action.

The functions of the Board are to ensure that the aims of the drug control treaties are not endangered because of the failure of any country or territory to implement the relevant provisions; to review and confirm annual estimates of licit narcotic drug requirements submitted by governments and to monitor the licit movement of psychotropic substances; to prevent the illicit cultivation, production and manufacture of, and illicit trafficking in and use of, drugs; to require governments to adopt remedial measures in case of breaches of the treaties and to bring violations to the attention of the parties, the Economic and Social Council and the CND.

Structure

The Board consists of 13 members elected for a five-year period by the Economic and Social Council in their individual capacities. Members are elected as follows: three members with medical, pharmacological or pharmaceutical experience from a list of at least five nominated by the World Health Organization (WHO); and ten members from a list of persons nominated by the members of the UN and by parties to the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs which are not UN members.

Meetings are held three times a year, in closed session, in order to review the drug situation throughout the world and to supervise the implementation of the drug control treaties. The Board is assisted by a permanent Secretariat which receives and evaluates information from governments and submits it for the Board's attention.

According to the General Assembly resolution of December 1990, the Board's Secretariat has been integrated into the UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP), now part of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The Secretariat reports solely to the Board on matters of substance.

Activities

A significant role has been played by the Board in the supervision of national control over production

and distribution of narcotic drugs in accordance with the relevant treaties; the Board is also concerned with the effectiveness of the treaties, highlighting areas in need of strengthening. However, both 'classical' and new drugs are increasingly abused by large numbers of persons in most parts of the world, thus making it increasingly difficult for the Board to exercise an effective international control.

SECRETARY: Koli Kouame

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, PO Box 500, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 260600; fax: +43 1 26060-5867)

WEBSITE: <http://www.incb.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board* (annual); *Estimated World Requirements of Narcotic Drugs* (annual); *Statistics on Narcotic Drugs and Maximum Levels of Opium Stocks* (annual)

International Nickel Study Group (INSG)

FOUNDED: 1990

OBJECTIVES: To provide a forum for the discussion of matters affecting the production, consumption and trade of nickel, including environmental issues; to collect and publish improved statistics on nickel markets and other relevant information; and to undertake economic analysis of nickel markets and related topics

MEMBERS: 14 countries (Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, UK) and the European Community (EC). Germany is an associate member

STRUCTURE: The Group meets twice a year, in April and October, with the participation of government and industry representatives of member countries. Non-member countries with significant interests in nickel and permanent industry associations may be invited as observers

ACTIVITIES: Besides the collection of statistics on world nickel, the Group produces a semi-annual forecast of nickel production and consumption and an annual compilation of existing or proposed

regulations concerning environmental, health and safety issues connected with nickel production and consumption

LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY GENERAL: Don Smale

HEADQUARTERS: Rua Almirante Barroso, 38-5º, 1000-013 Lisbon, Portugal (telephone: +351 21 356 7030; fax: +351 21 356 7039)

WEBSITE: <http://www.insg.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *World Nickel Statistics* (monthly bulletin); *World Directory of Nickel Production Facilities*

International Olive Council (IOC)

FOUNDED: 1959 for administering the International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives of 1956 (succeeded by several agreements concluded over the following years) and known under the name of International Olive Oil Council until 2006. The 2005 International Agreement on Olive Oil and Table Olives entered into force definitively on 25 May 2007

OBJECTIVES: To co-ordinate policies of member countries in order to ensure fair competition in the olive oil trade, to put into operation, or to facilitate the application of, measures designed to expand the production and consumption of olive oil, to reduce the disadvantages arising from the fluctuations of supplies on the market and generally to foster international co-operation concerning world olive oil problems

MEMBERS: Twelve countries mostly bordering the Mediterranean and the European Community (EC) as contacting parties to the 2005 International Agreement.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Italian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Habib Essid

HEADQUARTERS: Príncipe de Vergara 154, Madrid 28001, Spain (telephone: +34 91 590 3638; fax: +34 91 563 1263)

WEBSITE: <http://www.internationaloliveoil.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Information Sheet* (fortnightly); *National Policies for Olive Products* (annual)

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

The Organization is a humanitarian agency with a predominantly operational mandate, in order to ensure orderly and planned migration and protect the dignity and wellbeing of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and other individuals in need of international migration services.

Origin and development

At the initiative of Belgium and the US an International Migration Conference was convened in Brussels at which the Provisional Intergovernmental Committee for the Movement of Migrants from Europe (PICMME) was founded on 5 December 1951. The Organization established its headquarters in Geneva and started operations in February 1952 as the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM). The Constitution of ICEM was adopted in 1953 and entered into force on 30 November 1954. While the early activities of the Organization were confined to population movements from Europe to North America, Latin America and Oceania, international events gradually led to an extension of operations on a worldwide scale. The global role of the Organization was formally recognized in 1980 by member countries which decided to drop the word 'European' from the agency's name.

The role and mandate of the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) were again modified in May 1987 when a special Council session adopted amendments to the Constitution and changed the name to International Organization for Migration. Amendments, which entered into force in November 1989, recognized, *inter alia*, that international migration services may be needed throughout the world and in a variety of circumstances, such as temporary migration, voluntary return migration, intra-regional migration, migration of refugees, displaced persons and other individuals. The link between migration and development was emphasized and the need for close co-operation and co-ordination among international organizations was explicitly stated.

Membership

The Organization's membership currently includes 120 countries plus 20 countries as observers. Some 50 international governmental and non-governmental organizations also hold observer status.

Objectives

The objectives of the Organization include the provision of orderly and planned migration to meet the specific needs of both emigration and immigration countries and the processing and movement of refugees, displaced persons and other individuals in need of international migration services to countries offering them permanent resettlement opportunities.

To fulfil its basic goals the Organization carries out the following functions: (a) the handling of orderly and planned migration; (b) the transfer of qualified human resources to foster the economic, social and cultural advancement of the receiving countries; (c) the organized transfer of refugees, displaced persons and other individuals compelled to leave their homeland; and (d) the provision of a forum to states and other partners to discuss experiences, exchange views, devise measures and promote co-operation and co-ordination of efforts on migration issues.

Structure

The decision-making power with regard to policy, programmes and financing of the Organization rests with the Council, composed of representatives of all member countries (including observers) and normally meeting at yearly intervals. The Executive Committee, consisting of nine members annually elected by the Council, meets twice a year to prepare the work of the Council and make recommendations on the basis of reports from the Sub-Committee on Budget and Finance and the Sub-Committee on the Co-ordination of Transport. The Director General, assisted by a Deputy Director General and the necessary staff, is in charge of administrative functions.

The budget of the Organization has two components: the administrative part funded by assessed contributions from all member countries, according to an agreed percentage scale; the operational part funded through voluntary contributions from governmental sources and from migrants themselves or their sponsors. The Organization's worldwide activities are carried out by field missions and sub-offices.

Activities

For refugees the Organization provides documentation, processing and medical services to respond to entry requirements in resettlement countries as well as language and cultural orientation courses; for national migrants the Organization arranges for

counselling, recruitment, selection and processing in the country of origin, reception, placement and integration in the receiving country and language courses for migrant workers. Reliable transportation for the movement of migrants is financed by the Organization through its Loan Fund. In order to help developing countries meet their urgent needs for highly skilled persons, the Organization has developed specific 'Migration for Development' initiatives which comprise: the Return of Talent programme for Latin America and Africa; the Selective Migration programme in Latin America; the Integrated Experts programme in Latin America and Asia; and the Horizontal Co-operation in the Field of Qualified Human Resources programme in Latin America. In August 1993 the Organization initiated the special Emergency Humanitarian Return Programme (EHRP) for former scholarship-holders from Africa, Latin America and Asia residing in Central and Eastern Europe and the erstwhile USSR and desiring to go home. The Organization provides advisory services and carries out studies to co-operate with member countries in the formulation and implementation of their migration policy, legislation and administration. The Centre for Information on Migration in Latin America (CIMAL) was set up in 1983 by the Organization in Santiago, Chile. The Organization also acts as a multilateral forum where key migration issues may be discussed in the course of international seminars. Over the past few years, the Organization has assisted Kosovars returning home and organized the return of East Timorese refugees. A programme was started in 2000 for the identification and indemnification of former forced and slave labourers in Germany; first payments to almost half of the eligible slave and forced labour claimants were made in 2002. The '1035 Facility' provides special support to developing member countries as well as countries with economy in transition for the implementation, jointly with the Organization, of projects directed at particular areas of migration management. Since its inception in 2001, the Facility has supported over 140 projects in over 80 countries.

External relations

The Organization co-operates closely with other international organizations working in the field of refugee assistance or dealing with social, economic and demographic aspects of international migration. Refugee activities are co-ordinated with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), under a memorandum of understanding signed in May

1997, and with governmental and non-governmental organizations.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Brunson McKinley

HEADQUARTERS: 17 route des Morillons, PO Box 71, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 717 9111; fax: +41 22 798 6150)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iom.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *World Migration Report* (annual); *International Migration* (five times a year); *Migration* (quarterly); *IOM News* (quarterly); *Migration and Health* (quarterly)

International Organization of Vine and Wine

[*Organisation internationale de la vigne et du vin*] (OIV)

FOUNDED: 29 November 1924 as International Office of Wine; renamed International Office of Vine and Wine on 4 September 1958; present Organization established by international agreement signed on 3 April 2001 and entered into force on 1 January 2004

OBJECTIVES: To study the scientific, technical, economic and human problems concerning the vine and its products (wine, wine-based beverages, table grapes, raisins and other vine-based products) and to spread the relevant knowledge by means of publications, to formulate a rational world policy with respect to viticulture and to address recommendations

MEMBERS: 43 countries, mostly in Europe. Argentina, Bolivia, Tunisia and Ukraine are observer states

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish (German and Italian may be used upon request of the countries concerned)

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Federico Castellucci

HEADQUARTERS: 18 rue d'Aguesseau, 75008 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4494 8080; fax: +33 1 4266 9063)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oiv.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *The OIV Newsletter*; *Le Bulletin de l'OIV*; *The World Vitivinicole Situation* (annual)

International Pepper Community (IPC)

FOUNDED: 1972, under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

OBJECTIVES: To promote increased consumption and enlargement of markets and to co-ordinate research on the technical and economic aspects of pepper production

MEMBERS: Six producing countries: Brazil, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, accounting for about 70 per cent of the world pepper production and export. Papua New Guinea and Hainan Province (China) are associate members

ACTIVITIES: Among recent results of co-operation efforts is the institutionalization of the International Pepper Future Exchange at Kochi, India

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dede Kusuma Edi

HEADQUARTERS: 4th Floor, Lina Bldg, Jalan H.R. Rasuna Said, Kav. B7, Kuningan, Jakarta 12920, Indonesia (telephone: +62 21 522 4902; fax: +62 21 522 4905)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ipcnet.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *International Pepper News* (quarterly); *Pepper Statistical Yearbook*

International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA)

FOUNDED: 1971 as successor to the International Red Locust Control Service (IRLCS) established in 1949

OBJECTIVES: To promote and undertake the most effective control of the significant populations and swarms of red locust in recognized outbreak areas; assistance is provided in the control of African army-worm and quelea-quelea

MEMBERS: Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

DIRECTOR: E. Byaruhanga

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 240252, Ndola, Zambia (telephone: +260 2 612057; fax: +260 2 614285)

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Monthly Report*

International Rubber Study Group (IRSG)

FOUNDED: 1944

OBJECTIVES: To provide a forum for the discussion of matters affecting the production, consumption and trade of natural and synthetic rubber and for the study of the economic and statistical aspects of the world rubber industry

MEMBERS: 17 countries (Belgium, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, UK, US) and the European Community (EC)

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Dr Hidde P. Smit

HEADQUARTERS: 1st Floor, Heron House, 109/115 Wembley Hill Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8DA, UK (telephone: +44 20 8900 5400; fax: +44 20 8903 2848). Headquarters moving to Singapore before end of June 2008.

WEBSITE: <http://www.rubberstudy.com>

PUBLICATIONS: *Rubber Statistical Bulletin* (monthly); *Rubber Industry Report* (monthly); *Rubber Statistics Yearbook* (annual)

International Seabed Authority (ISA)

FOUNDED: 1994, under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea – UNCLOS, signed in December 1982 and entered into force in November 1994

OBJECTIVES: To oversee all exploring and exploiting activities in the international seabed area

MEMBERS: About 155 countries having ratified, acceded or succeeded to UNCLOS

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Satya N. Nandan

HEADQUARTERS: 14–20 Port Royal Street, Kingston, Jamaica (telephone: +1 876 922 9105; fax: +1 876 922 0195)

WEBSITE: <http://www.isa.org.jm>

International Sugar Organization (ISO)

FOUNDED: 1987

OBJECTIVES: To administer the International Sugar Agreement, 1992, in force since January 1993, with a view to ensuring enhanced international co-operation, providing a forum for consultation and exchange of information, and encouraging increased demand for sugar

MEMBERS: Over 70 countries throughout the world including the European Community and representing 82 per cent of world sugar production, 64 per cent of world sugar consumption, 89 per cent of world exports and 34 per cent of world imports

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dr Peter Baron

HEADQUARTERS: One Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5AA, UK (telephone: +44 20 7513 1144; fax: +44 20 7513 1146)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sugaronline.com>

PUBLICATIONS: *Sugar Year Book; Monthly Statistical Bulletin; Quarterly Market Outlook*

International Tea Committee (ITC)

FOUNDED: 1933

OBJECTIVES: Originally established to administer the International Tea Agreement, and subsequently transformed into a statistical and information centre, became a limited company in 1986

MEMBERS: Full producer and exporter countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malawi, Sri Lanka) and full consumer countries (Canada, Ireland, Netherlands, UK and US). Associate and corporate members

HEADQUARTERS: 1 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5DB, UK (telephone: +44 207 839 5090)

WEBSITE: <http://www.inttea.com>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Bulletin of Statistics; Monthly Statistical Summary*

International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (INTELSAT)

FOUNDED: 1964 with the establishment of the interim International Telecommunications Satellite Consortium open to all member countries of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); subsequently the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization was created by an international agreement signed in Washington on 20 August 1971 and entered into force on 12 February 1973. After 37 years as an intergovernmental organization, Intelsat became a private company – Intelsat, Ltd. – on 18 July 2001; merged with PanAmSat in 2006

OBJECTIVES: To develop, establish, operate and maintain the space segment of the global commercial telecommunications satellite system

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: David McGlade

HEADQUARTERS: 3400 International Drive, NW, Washington, DC, 20008-3098, USA (telephone: +1 202 944 6800; fax: +1 202 944 7898)

WEBSITE: <http://www.intelsat.com>

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The Union, which is the oldest intergovernmental organization in existence, promotes the development and rational use of telecommunications. The Union's role extends over three core sectors: radio-communication, standardization and development.

Origin and development

The Union was founded in Paris, in May 1865, as the International Telegraph Union, by the representatives of 20 countries, with the adoption of the first Telegraph Convention and the relevant Regulations. A Bureau of the Union was set up in Berne, Switzerland, in 1868. The first international Radio Conference was held in Berlin in 1906, with the participation of 27 countries, and a Convention and Radio Regulations were drawn up. The Union's full title was changed to the present one at the Madrid Conferences (1932), when the existing Telegraph and Radiotelegraph Conventions were replaced by the first single International Telecommunication Convention, which entered into effect on 1 January 1934. At the Atlantic City

Plenipotentiary and Radio Conferences (1947), the Union was reorganized and entered into a relationship agreement with the UN under which it was recognized as the specialized agency for telecommunication; the agreement came into force in January 1949. The seat of the Union was transferred to Geneva in 1948.

The concept of 'telecommunications' applies to any transmission, emission or reception of signs, signals, writing, images and sounds or intelligence of any nature by wire, radio, optical or other electromagnetic systems – that is telegraph, telephone and radio, and all their applications such as television and telex.

The International Telecommunication Convention, which is the constitutional document of the Union, has been radically revised several times. At present the Union is governed by the Geneva Constitution and Convention adopted by the Additional Plenipotentiary Conference held in Geneva in December 1992 and entered into force in 1994. The last revision of the Constitution was adopted at the Plenipotentiary Conference held in Minneapolis, US, in 1998.

Members of the UN may accede to the Union, according to current provisions. Any sovereign country, not a member of the UN, may be admitted to the Union if the request has secured approval by at least two-thirds of member countries.

Membership

Membership of the Union includes 191 countries and over 530 sector members. Sector members are public and private companies and organizations interested in telecommunications that are entitled to participate in the work of one or more sectors of the Union with specific rights as well as obligations. There are also over 120 sector associates.

Objectives

The aims of the Union are to maintain and extend co-operation among all member countries for the improvement and rational use of telecommunications of all kinds, to assist the development of technical facilities and their most efficient operation, to promote the extension of the benefits of the new telecommunications technologies to all the world's inhabitants and to foster, at the international level, a new approach to the issues of telecommunications in the global information economy and society.

The Union works to fulfil its basic purposes in three main ways: international conferences and

meetings; publication of information and organization of world exhibitions; technical co-operation. Basic functions of the Union include: allocating radio frequencies and recording the assignments; co-ordinating efforts to eliminate harmful interference between stations; establishing the lowest possible rates, consistent with efficient service and taking into account the necessity to keep on a sound basis the independent financial administration of telecommunication; promoting the adoption of measures for ensuring the safety of life through telecommunications; making studies and recommendations which also cover space telecommunication techniques and regulations; and collecting and publishing information for the benefit of its members. As regards technical co-operation with the developing countries, the Union: promotes the development of regional telecommunication networks; helps strengthen technical and administrative services; and develops the human resources required for telecommunications, especially through the training of personnel. Assistance is provided in the specialized fields of telephony, telegraphy, radiocommunications, frequency management, satellite communications, planning, organization, administration and management.

Structure

According to the 1992 Geneva Constitution, the structure of the Union consists of the Plenipotentiary Conference, the Council, World conferences on international telecommunications, the Radiocommunication sector, the Telecommunication Standardization Sector, the Telecommunication Development Sector, and the General Secretariat.

The Plenipotentiary Conference is composed of representatives of all member countries and normally meets every four years. It is the supreme authority of the Union, laying down general policies, reviewing the Union's work, revising the Convention if necessary, and establishing the basis for the budget. The 46-member Council, acting on behalf of the Plenipotentiary Conference, holds one annual meeting. World conferences on international telecommunications are held at the request of plenipotentiary conferences; radiocommunication conferences are held every two or three years along with a Radiocommunication Assembly; telecommunication standardization conferences are held every four years (an additional conference may be held upon request of one-quarter of the members); telecommunication development conferences, to be

held every four years. In principle, within the four-year period between plenipotentiary conferences, one world conference and one conference in each of the five world regions (Africa, Americas, Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Northern Asia, and Asia and Australasia) are convened. The Radiocommunication Sector is in charge of world and regional radiocommunication conferences, radiocommunication assemblies and the Radio Regulations Board. The Telecommunication Standardization Sector, including world telecommunication standardization conferences, is in charge of technical, operating and tariff questions and issues recommendations with a view to standardizing telecommunications on a world-wide basis. The Telecommunication Development Sector includes world and regional telecommunication development conferences and the Telecommunication Development Bureau (TDB); the TDB is responsible for presenting to developing countries the range of policy and structural options leading to greater resources for telecommunication development. The First World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC 94) was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in March 1994 and adopted a Declaration and an Action Plan setting the main orientations and programmes for achieving a balanced telecommunication development. The General Secretariat is directed by a Secretary-General elected by the Plenipotentiary Conference for a renewable term. The Secretary-General is responsible for all the administrative and financial aspects of the Union's activities.

Each meeting of the Plenipotentiary Conference fixes the maximum amount of expenditure which the Union may reach until the next meeting. Expenses are borne in common by member countries which are divided for this purpose into various contribution classes.

Activities

Since its establishment, the Union has made fundamental contributions to the development and improvement of telecommunication, laying down basic principles and provisions and adapting itself to new pressing needs. In the field of technical co-operation mention should be made, *inter alia*, of the Plan Committees (World Committee and Regional Committees) responsible for preparing plans establishing circuit and routing requirements for international telecommunications. In 1981 the UN General Assembly had proclaimed 1983 as World Communications Year, and designated the Union as

the leading agency for co-ordinating activities, with special regard to the development of communications infrastructures.

The Union's 14th Plenipotentiary Conference met in Kyoto, Japan, in 1994 to establish general policies, to adopt an overall strategic plan for the next four years and to improve the Union's effectiveness in the light of the changes which have characterized the world of telecommunications, including enhanced participation of the industry and other organizations in the Union's work and decision-making process. A second strategic plan for 1999–2003 was adopted by the Plenipotentiary Conference held in 1998. The Union has undertaken a lead role in the organization of the World Summit on the Information Society held in two phases, in Geneva on 10–12 December 2003 and Tunis on 16–18 November 2005. Moreover, the Union is called to support all UN initiatives in the field of information and communication technologies and to contribute to bridge the international digital divide.

External relations

The Union, mainly within the framework of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), administers a programme through which telecommunications experts are sent to various countries throughout the world to advise on the operation of telegraph, telephone and radio systems or to help to train technicians. Surveys for modern international telecommunication networks have been conducted in several developing areas. The Union co-operates actively with the Universal Postal Union (UPU) with a view to preparing and executing joint technical assistance projects, particularly in the vocational training field. Close co-operative contacts are also maintained with other UN specialized agencies, as well as with several intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions.

OFFICIAL AND WORKING LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Dr Hamadoun Touré

HEADQUARTERS: Place des Nations, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 730 5111; fax: +41 22 733 7256)

WEBSITE: <http://www.itu.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *World Telecommunication Development Report*; *ITU News*

(ten times a year); conventions, statistics, technical documents and manuals

REFERENCES: G.A. Codding Jr, *The International Telecommunication Union: An Experiment in International Co-operation* (Leiden, 1952, reprinted 1972); G.A. Codding Jr and A.M. Rutkowski, *The International Telecommunication Union in a Changing World* (Dedham, MA, 1982); J.G. Savage, *The Politics of International Telecommunication Regulation* (Boulder, CO, 1989)

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC)

The Centre, jointly operated by the UN (acting through the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO)), promotes the international trade of the developing and transition economies.

Origin and development

The Centre was set up in 1964 under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT); in 1968 UNCTAD joined the GATT as a co-sponsor of the Centre. Since the establishment of the WTO in 1995, the Centre is operated jointly by the WTO and UNCTAD. In 1984 the Centre became an executing agency of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), directly responsible for carrying out UNDP-financed projects related to trade promotion.

Membership

Since the Centre does not have a membership of its own, *de facto* members are countries belonging to UNCTAD and WTO.

Objectives

The Centre facilitates the integration of developing and transition economies into the multilateral trading system assisting in the formulation and implementation of export promotion programmes as well as import operations and techniques. It provides advice on marketing techniques and export markets and helps in establishing export promotion and marketing services and in training the necessary personnel.

Structure

The Joint Advisory Group (JAG) on the International Trade Centre meets annually to review technical co-operation programmes, estab-

lish guidelines and make the relevant recommendations. The Executive Director of the Centre, jointly selected by the WTO Director-General and the UNCTAD Secretary-General, reports to the executive heads of the parent organizations and is accountable to them.

Activities

While UNCTAD and WTO work essentially with governments, the Centre works with the business community. Technical co-operation projects, undertaken at the request of governments, are carried out in developing and transition economies at the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels. Technical programmes include business advisory services, strategic and operational market research, sector-specific product and market development, trade in services and international purchasing and supply chain management. Assistance is provided free of charge to the least-developed countries.

As an executing agency of UNDP, the Centre bears direct responsibility for implementing UNDP-financed projects in developing countries related to trade promotion.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Patricia Francis

HEADQUARTERS: Rue de Montbrillant 54-56, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 730 0111; fax: +41 22 733 4439)

WEBSITE: <http://www.intracen.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; International Trade Forum* (quarterly); handbooks, market surveys, monographs, directories and training material

International Transport Forum

The Forum is the result of the transformation into a global body, with new mandates and a broader scope, of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT).

Origin and development

The Conference had been established on 17 October 1953 following an initiative of the then Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), succeeded in 1960 by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Over the past few years the need has emerged to transform the Conference into a more efficient and streamlined structure with a wider partnership and a higher public profile. As a result, the Council of Ministers of Transport, meeting in Dublin on 17–18 May 2006, adopted a Declaration establishing the International Transport Forum. The permanent venue for the yearly meetings of the Forum will be in Leipzig, Germany, where members will be convened for the first time in May 2008 to discuss the challenge represented by climate change for transport and energy.

Membership

Founding members of the Forum include 51 countries (the 44 European members of the former Conference plus the 7 associate members: Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the US).

Objectives

The Forum aims to bring high-profile international consideration of the crucial role played by all modes of transport in the economy and society in general, while facilitating the integration of transport and logistics into key policy-making processes.

Structure

A high level Transport Management Board, comprising all member countries, provides direction to the work of the Forum. Administrative tasks will be performed by the existing Secretariat based in Paris alongside the OECD.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY GENERAL OF ECMT: Jack Short

HEADQUARTERS: OECD/ITF, 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4524 9710; fax: +33 1 4524 1322)

WEBSITE:

<http://www.internationaltransportforum.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual report; Trends in the Transport Sector* (annual); Transport statistics

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

FOUNDED: 1985 under the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1983; Second Agreement

concluded in 1994 and in force since 1 January 1997; Successor Agreement concluded on 27 January 2006 and expected to come into force in 2008

OBJECTIVES: To assist timber-producing countries in sustainable forest management, processing and trade, to collect information and to promote research

MEMBERS: 60, including the European Union (EU), which account for 90 per cent of world trade in tropical timber and 80 per cent of the world's tropical forests.

LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Manoel Sobral Filho

HEADQUARTERS: International Organizations Centre, 5th floor, 1-1-1 Minato Mirai, Nishi-ku, Yokohama 220-0012, Japan (telephone: +81 45 223 1110; fax: +81 45 223 1111)

WEBSITE: <http://www.itto.or.jp>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Annual Review and Assessment of the World Timber Situation; Tropical Forest Update* (quarterly)

REFERENCE: D. Poore, *Changing Landscapes: The Development of the International Tropical Timber Organization and its Influence on Tropical Forest Management* (London, 2003)

International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)

The Union protects the industrial property rights of breeders of new plant varieties.

Origin and development

The Union was established by the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants signed in Paris on 2 December 1961 and entered into force in 1968. Revisions took place through Acts adopted on 10 November 1972, 23 October 1978 and 19 March 1991.

Membership

Membership currently includes 63 countries, mostly in Europe and North and South America, and the European Community (EC).

Objectives

The purposes of the Union are to provide and promote an effective system of plant variety protection, with the aim of encouraging the development of new varieties of plants for the benefit of society.

Structure

The Council is the highest decision-making body meeting at yearly intervals and consisting of the representatives of all member countries. The Council is assisted by three Committees – the Consultative Committee, the Administrative and Legal Committee, and the Technical Committee. Administrative and technical tasks are performed by the Secretariat-General, known as the ‘Office of the Union’.

Activities

The Union has contributed to the protection of rights of plant breeders and to the harmonization of the relevant legislative measures.

External relations

Although it is an independent intergovernmental organization, the Union works in close co-operation with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) whose Director-General is the Union’s Secretary-General.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Dr Kamil Idris

HEADQUARTERS: 34 chemin des Colombettes,
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22
338 9111; fax: +41 22 733 0336)

WEBSITE: <http://www.u pov.int>

International Whaling Commission (IWC)

The Commission promotes the conservation of whale stocks as well as research concerning whales.

Origin and development

The Commission was established under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling which was signed in Washington, DC, on 2 December 1946. The Commission keeps under review and revises as necessary the measures laid down in the Schedule to the Convention governing the conduct of whaling throughout the world. These measures, *inter alia*, set limits on the numbers and

size of whales which may be taken and the Commission has concentrated its efforts on the limitation of commercial whaling. Member countries are allowed to grant permits for the taking of whales for scientific research purposes; permits were given in recent years by a number of countries.

Membership

The current membership includes 77 countries in all continents. Iceland was readmitted in October 2002.

Objectives

The purposes of the Commission are to provide for the proper preservation of whale stocks, to encourage research relating to whales and whaling, to collect and analyse statistical information concerning conditions and trend of whale stocks and to appraise and disseminate information about methods of maintaining and increasing whale stocks.

Structure

The Annual Meeting, usually in May–June, of the representatives of all member countries is the policy-making body of the Commission. Each country is represented by a Commissioner, assisted by experts and advisers. The Chair and Vice-Chair are elected from among the Commissioners and usually serve for a three-year period. There are three main Committees in charge, respectively, of Scientific, Technical, and Finance and Administration matters. A new Committee, responsible for Conservation issues, first met in 2004.

Activities

The first moratorium on commercial whaling was declared by the Commission in 1982, with effect from the 1986 and 1985/86 seasons, and was reconfirmed in June 1995, notwithstanding Japan’s requests for a limited resumption. Catch limits for all commercial whaling were therefore set to zero. Only ‘subsistence whaling’ was allowed for limited quotas to meet the needs of indigenous communities in Alaska, Greenland, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Norway did not accept the moratorium and despite widespread protest resumed whaling operations in 1993. Japan, for its part, has been catching a small amount of whales for ‘scientific purposes’. In addition to the safe area in the Indian Ocean, created in 1979 with a ban on commercial whaling, a whale sanctuary is to be established in the Antarctic thereby ensuring protection to around 80 per cent of the world’s whales. The Commission

is currently examining ways to finalize a Revised Management Scheme (RMS) aimed at integrating the scientific aspects of management with those designed to ensure that regulations are obeyed.

SECRETARY: Dr Nicola Grandy

HEADQUARTERS: The Red House, 135 Station Road, Impington, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB24 9NP, UK (telephone: +44 1223 233971; fax: +44 1223 232876)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iwcoffice.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*

REFERENCE: R.L. Friedheim (ed.), *Toward a Sustainable Whaling Regime* (Seattle, WA, 2001)

Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)

The Bank is one of the leading Arab development institutions financing economic and social development.

Origin and development

The origins of the Bank date back to the Declaration of Intent issued by a Conference of Finance Ministers of Islamic countries, held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, in December 1973. The Agreement establishing the Bank was signed under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in August 1974 in Jeddah; the Bank began functioning in that town on 20 October 1975 and financial operations actually started in 1976. At present, the Bank's Group consists of five distinct entities: the Bank itself; the Islamic Research and Training Institute (IRTI) established in 1981; the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector (ICD) whose creation was decided in 1999 in order to facilitate access to Islamic capital markets for private companies in member countries; the Islamic Corporation for the Insurance of Investment and Export Credit (ICIEC) established in 1994; and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) whose Articles of Agreement were approved in 2006.

Membership

The basic condition for joining the Bank is membership of the OIC. Present members total 56. Member countries are mostly in Africa and Asia but there

also two European countries (Albania and Turkey) and a South American country (Suriname).

Objectives

The Bank aims to finance the economic development and social progress of its member countries and of Muslim communities in non-member countries, in accordance with the principles of the Shari'ah, that is Islamic Law. Its functions are to participate in equity capital and grant loans for productive projects and enterprises besides providing financial assistance to member countries in other forms for economic and social development.

Structure

The Bank comprises the Board of Governors, the Board of Executive Directors, and the President. The Board of Governors is the supreme body composed of one governor, usually the Minister of Finance, or his alternate, appointed by each member country and meeting at least once a year. Many powers have been delegated by the Board of Governors to the executive organ, that is the Board of Executive Directors, consisting of 14 members and responsible for the Bank's general operations. Seven directors are appointed by the seven largest subscribers; the governors of the remaining subscribers are entitled to elect the other seven directors for a three-year term. The President of the Bank serves for a five-year period and acts as Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors by whom he is elected.

Activities

In its activities, the Bank follows the Koranic principle forbidding usury; it does not extend loans or credits for interest and supports economic and social development by taking up equity participation in public and private enterprises in member countries, financing infrastructural projects, granting funds to Islamic communities in non-member countries and providing technical assistance. It may establish and operate special funds for specific purposes in order to preserve the value of its assets. In particular, the Bank seeks to develop new financial instruments, in accordance with Islamic principles, for additional resource mobilization.

The Bank uses as unit of account the Islamic Dinar (ID) equivalent to one special drawing right (SDR). The size of the authorized capital stock was initially set at ID2000 million, divided into 200,000 shares, each of them having a value of ID10,000. As of January 2007 the authorized capital amounted to

ID30,000 million, and the subscribed capital to ID13,218 million of which ID2810 paid-in. The largest subscribers are Saudi Arabia (with over one-quarter of the capital), Libya, Iran, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait and Egypt.

Under the Bank's Special Assistance Account, emergency aid and other forms of assistance are provided mostly with a view to promoting education in Islamic communities in non-member countries. A sizeable share of the Bank's concessional financing goes to about 20 members which are among the world's least-developed countries according to the UN classification. The Bank also undertakes the distribution of meat sacrificed by Muslim pilgrims.

In 1987 the Bank launched the Islamic Banks' Portfolio for Investment and Development to finance trade and leasing activities in the private sector. A Longer-Term Trade Financing Scheme (LTTFS) was introduced in 1987/88, with a view to promoting trade among member countries especially in non-traditional commodities, and later renamed the Export Financing Scheme (EFS). In order to mobilize additional resources from the market the Bank introduced a Unit Investment Fund, specifically targeted to institutional investors, in December 1989. The Bank's Unit Investment Fund (UIF) started operations in 1990 to finance private-sector industrial projects in middle-income countries.

Between 1 January 1976 and 19 January 2007 the Bank had approved a total of 5272 projects for the equivalent of \$45.9 billion. More precisely, ID13,162 million were committed for project financing and technical assistance, ID20,524 million for foreign trade financing, and ID484 million for special assistance operations.

External relations

Co-operative links are maintained by the Bank with various international institutions, both Islamic and non-Islamic. It is a member of the Co-ordination Secretariat of Arab National and Regional Development Institutions.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

WORKING LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

PRESIDENT: Ahmad Mohamed Ali Al-Madani

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 5925, Jeddah 21432, Saudi Arabia (telephone: +9662 636 1400; fax: +9662 636 6871)

WEBSITE: <http://www.isdb.org>

PUBLICATION: *Annual Report*

REFERENCE: S.A. Meenai, *The Islamic Development Bank: A Case Study of Islamic Co-operation* (New York, 1989)

Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO)

The Organization, established to advance the implementation of the key provisions of the 'Agreed Framework' between the US and North Korea supplying the latter with proliferation-resistant nuclear reactors and with alternative sources of energy, was expected to play a crucial role with regard to nuclear safety in the Korean peninsula. However, in view of the continued and extended failure of North Korea to meet its obligations, the Light-Water Reactor (LWR) project was terminated in 2006. The Organization continues to exist in order to settle financial and legal obligations originating from the termination of the project.

Origin and development

Under the 'Agreed Framework' signed in Geneva on 21 October 1994 between the US and North Korea, the latter had agreed to freeze and ultimately dismantle its nuclear programme, a cause of growing international concern. In exchange North Korea was to be supplied with two LWR units and with other sources of energy for heating and electricity production until construction of the first of the two reactors was completed. The Organization was established on 9 March 1995 when South Korea, Japan and the US stated their intention of implementing the basic provisions of the 'Agreed Framework' and signed KEDO's charter. The charter allowed other countries and international agencies sharing the aims of the Organization and willing to provide funds, goods or services to become members. In 1995, New Zealand, Australia and Canada joined the Organization, followed in 1996 by Indonesia, Chile and Argentina. The European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) signed an accession agreement to KEDO on 30 July 1997 and became a full member on 19 September. Poland joined later in 1997, followed by the Czech Republic

in 1999 and Uzbekistan on 28 December 2000. On 7 December 2001, Euratom extended its membership for another five-year period and increased its annual contribution. In addition to members, the Organization had received material and financial support from 19 other non-member countries, including France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the UK.

Objectives

Besides advancing the implementation of the 'Agreed Framework', the original objective of the Organization was to contribute to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime and to the improvement of the prospects for lasting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Structure

The Organization's Executive Board was composed of major member countries, that is Japan, South Korea and the US, and of a representative of Euratom, deciding by consensus.

Activities

Work at the nuclear power plant construction site at Kumho, North Korea, started in February 2000 with more than 1000 workers from North Korea, South Korea and Uzbekistan taking part in the project. On the other hand, the Organization's supply of heavy fuel oil (HFO) to North Korea continued. At the end of 2003, in view of the fact that North Korea had not met the conditions necessary for the continuation of the LWR project, a one-year suspension of activities was decided. Following a further one-year suspension, the termination of the project was considered at the end of 2005. All workers at the LWR project site were withdrawn by January 2006. On 31 May 2006 the Executive Board of KEDO decided to terminate the project.

WEBSITE: <http://www.kedo.org>

Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)

[*Commission du bassin du lac Tchad*]

FOUNDED: 24 May 1964

OBJECTIVES: To co-ordinate the development of the Chad basin, to recommend plans for common projects and joint research programmes and to ensure the most efficient use of the subterranean and surface water resources in relation to agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries

MEMBERS: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Niger and Nigeria

LANGUAGES: English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Abubakar B. Jauro

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 727, N'Djamena, Chad (telephone: +235 524145; fax: +235 524137)

Latin American and Caribbean Economic System

[*Sistema Económico Latinoamericano y del Caribe*] (SELA)

The System is intended to provide Latin American and Caribbean countries with permanent institutional machinery for joint consultation, co-ordination and co-operation in economic and social matters at both the intra-regional and the extra-regional levels.

Origin and development

After a relatively brief period of negotiation, with Mexico and Venezuela playing a very active role, the agreement establishing SELA was signed on 17 October 1975 in Panama by the representatives of 25 Latin American and Caribbean countries (including Cuba); Suriname joined in 1979, followed by Paraguay in 1986, Belize in 1992 and the Bahamas in 1998. SELA has taken over the functions formerly performed by the Special Latin American Co-ordinating Commission (CECLA), which was created in the first half of the 1960s as a forum for the formulation of common policies on trade and development issues towards international organizations and countries outside Latin America.

Membership

There are 26 Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Objectives

The basic aims of the System are to advance Latin American trade and co-operation, while respecting and supporting the existing regional arrangements, and to co-ordinate the positions and strategies of individual members regarding external countries and agencies with a view to strengthening the bargaining power of the area.

To achieve its main objectives, the System: (a) promotes the better utilization of regional resources through the creation of Latin American multinational enterprises; (b) defends the prices of raw materials exported from Latin America and encourages the transformation of these materials within the region; (c) formulates measures and policies which ensure that the operations of transnational companies are in accordance with the development goals of the region and the interests of individual members; (d) improves the collective negotiating capacity for acquiring and utilizing capital goods and technology; and (e) furthers the drafting and implementation of economic and social projects of interest to member countries.

Structure

The System's institutional structure includes the Latin American Council, the Permanent Secretariat and a number of other bodies dealing with specific sectors. The Latin American Council is the supreme body and consists of one representative from each member country, with one vote. It meets annually at ministerial level; extraordinary meetings may be held whenever necessary. The Council establishes the System's general policies, defines common positions of members concerning third countries, groups of countries and international organizations, approves the budget and elects the Permanent Secretary. Decisions concerning basic policies and joint positions must be approved by consensus. Specific agreements and projects are adopted on a fully voluntary basis and therefore need the approval only of those countries choosing to participate in them.

The Permanent Secretariat is charged with the technical and administrative functions of the System. It organizes and carries out preliminary studies on projects of common interest to member countries, implements the decisions of the Latin

American Council and co-ordinates the activities of the Action Committees. The Permanent Secretary is appointed by the Latin American Council for a four-year term and may be re-elected once, but not for consecutive periods.

The Action Committees are flexible co-operation frameworks established when more than two member countries express their interest in promoting joint programmes and projects in specific areas. In principle, the Committees are dissolved upon the achievement of their objective.

Activities

In conformity with its basic purposes and principles and in spite of the relative weakness of its organizational machinery, the System has been making a notable effort to expedite regional co-operation and to build up Latin American solidarity on international economic issues in regard to external countries and organizations. The System has contributed to the formulation of a joint regional position in preparation of sessions of important economic agencies and forums such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Group of 77 (G-77).

On the whole, SELA may play a role in the promotion of economic integration but the formation and implementation of a region-wide economic policy appears a difficult goal.

External relations

The System has been gradually developing active co-operative relations with international organizations, especially Latin American regional economic and financial bodies, and with third countries. It has been designated as the regional focal point for the System for Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC).

At the extra-regional level, initiatives to establish and maintain a common policy within an appropriate consultative framework have been a regular feature of meetings of the Latin American Council. A remarkable effort has been carried out to develop dialogue and co-operation with the European Union (EU).

LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

PERMANENT SECRETARY: Floria Caricote Lovera

HEADQUARTERS: Av. Francisco de Miranda, Torre Europa, Fourth floor, Urbanización Campo

Alegre, Caracas 1060, Venezuela (telephone: +58 212 9557111; fax: +58 212 9515292)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sela.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Capítulos del SELA* (twice a year); *Integration Bulletin* (monthly)

Latin American Energy Organization

[*Organización Latinoamericana de Energía*]
(OLADE)

The Organization promotes co-operation among member countries in the use and conservation of the energy resources of the region.

Origin and development

The Organization was founded with the Agreement of Lima, signed on 2 November 1973 and entered into force on 19 November 1974, establishing a permanent mechanism for the development of energy resources and their joint management.

Membership

Members currently include 26 Latin American and Caribbean countries. Algeria admitted as 'participating country' in 2001.

Objectives

The Organization basically aims to facilitate and promote co-operation and co-ordination among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean with regard to policies concerning the protection, conservation, proper utilization and marketing of the energy resources of the region.

Structure

The Meeting of Ministers is the highest policy-making organ, consisting of Energy Ministers of member countries and holding ordinary sessions once a year. Ministers are supported by a Board of Experts. The Secretariat, based in Quito, Ecuador, performs technical and administrative functions under an Executive Secretary appointed by the Meeting of Ministers.

Activities

Programmes carried out by the Organization are intended to integrate the energy sector into overall economic and development planning in the region. While the basic assumptions of the Agreement of

Lima remain valid, the Meeting of Ministers decided at the end of the 1990s to strengthen the role of the Organization as a regional political forum. Ministers stressed the need to promote the integration of energy resources at both the bilateral and the multilateral levels, taking into account the growing role of the private sector, to streamline the relevant regulations in order to eliminate barriers to integration and to preserve the environment and the sustainable development of the continent.

External relations

Co-operation is being developed with non-member countries, within and outside the region, and other international organizations such as the International Energy Agency (IEA).

LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Álvaro Ríos Roca

HEADQUARTERS: Av Mariscal Antonio José de Sucre N58-63 y Fernández Salvador, Edif. OLADE, Sector San Carlos, PO Box 1711-06413, Quito, Ecuador (telephone: +593 2 2598 122; fax: +593 2 2531 691)

WEBSITE: <http://www.olade.org.ec>

PUBLICATIONS: *Energy Scenarios for the Region* (every two years); *Energy Statistics Report* (annual)

Latin American Integration Association (LAIA)

[*Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración*]
(ALADI)

The Association aims to establish a common market among Latin American countries through the promotion of mutual trade, economic complementarity and the development of economic co-operation activities.

Origin and development

The Treaty creating the Association was signed in Montevideo, Uruguay, on 12 August 1980 by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the same 11 countries that had founded the Latin American Free Trade Association (LAFTA) under the Treaty of Montevideo of February 1960 or had subsequently joined it (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru,

Uruguay and Venezuela). At the same time, several resolutions were approved concerning the renegotiation of LAFTA's 'historical heritage', meaning the various commitments arising from LAFTA's Trade Liberalization Programme. The Treaty entered into force on 18 March 1981.

The adoption of a new and more flexible integration scheme for Latin America represented the outcome of complex efforts originally intended to reorganize and update LAFTA's structure and mechanisms. The Montevideo Treaty of 1960 envisaged the establishment within a 12-year period of a free trade area through the gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers. Tariff reductions covering 55 per cent of intra-zonal trade were achieved during the first rounds of negotiations. However, further progress proved extremely difficult and the transition period was extended to 1980 under the Caracas Protocol of 1969. 'Complementation agreements' in particular sectors were mostly unable to strengthen policies of economic and industrial integration. Financial co-operation largely failed to materialize and no agreement was reached on the creation of a regional financial institution. In 1967, LAFTA had expressly authorized the drawing up, within its legal framework, of subregional agreements between its members, to encourage the formation of common markets on a more limited scale, with the ultimate goal of a future merger in a single Latin American market. In accordance with this policy, in May 1969, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador and Peru concluded the Cartagena Agreement establishing the Andean Group (succeeded in 1996 by the Andean Community).

In recognition of the slow progress on basic issues and the widespread disappointment over the lack of concrete perspectives, in December 1979 a detailed agenda was set up for the negotiation of a new Montevideo Treaty. After two preparatory meetings, the Conference of Contracting Parties held an extraordinary session in June 1980 in Acapulco, Mexico, to consider the final draft of the Treaty that was actually signed in Montevideo the following August.

Membership of the Association is open to other Latin American countries but may not be subject to reservations. Cuba was admitted on 6 November 1998 and became a full member on 26 August 1999. Members may withdraw from the Association provided one year's notice is given. However, special rules apply to the withdrawal of concessions

granted under the regional tariff preference scheme and regional and partial scope agreements.

Membership

At present 12 countries from Latin America and the Caribbean participate in the Association. There are permanent observers representing several countries from Latin America, Europe and Asia and a number of international agencies such as the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the European Union (EU), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Latin American Economic System (SELA).

Objectives

The Association pursues the long-term goal of establishing a common market through the creation of an area of economic preferences, based on a regional tariff preference and regional and partial scope agreements. In addition, a support system for less-developed member countries is envisaged.

The Montevideo Treaty of 1980 envisages the gradual and progressive establishment of an economic preferences area and not of a free trade area like its predecessor. In addition, no rigid mechanisms, schedules or time limits are set out for the achievement of basic objectives. The exact content and scope of the area of economic preferences depend on the nature of the agreements to be reached, whether regional or partial, and on the depth of the regional preference margin to be applied with reference to tariff levels in force for third countries. All members participate in regional agreements; partial scope agreements are applicable only to interested countries but must aim at progressive multilateralization and provide for extension to other members. Partial agreements may be concluded for periods of at least one year in the spheres of trade, economic and industrial complementation, agriculture and livestock and export promotion.

The Association's objectives are to be pursued, paying due regard to a set of basic principles which involve differential treatments based on the classification of member countries, according to their economic structure, into three categories: most developed (Argentina, Brazil and Mexico); intermediate (Chile, Colombia, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela); and least developed (Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador and Paraguay). More favourable terms are

granted to intermediate countries while additional, special benefits are provided for the least developed and landlocked members. The functions of the Association, in conformity with the rules and mechanisms of the Treaty, include the promotion of reciprocal trade and economic complementation and the development of economic co-operation activities directed to the enlargement of markets.

Structure

The Association accomplishes its purposes by means of three 'political' organs – the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Evaluation and Convergence Conference, and the Committee of Representatives – plus a technical organ, the General Secretariat. Subsidiary organs performing advisory and technical functions may be set up in order to facilitate the study of specific problems.

The Council of Ministers, which is the supreme body, has a broad mandate to consider any action that may be necessary for the attainment of the objectives of economic integration. It is empowered to: lay down the essential rules for the harmonious development of the integration process; appraise the results of the tasks performed by the Association; adopt corrective measures upon the recommendation of the Conference in order to propitiate convergence; direct the work of the other organs; set basic guidelines concerning relations with other regional organizations and international bodies; revise and adapt the fundamental rules on convergence and co-operation agreements concluded with other developing countries and integration groupings; modify and supplement the Treaty; decide on the admission of new members; and appoint the Secretary-General. The Council is convened by the Committee of Representatives and may not meet and take decisions unless all its members are present.

The Evaluation and Convergence Conference, consisting of plenipotentiaries from member countries, is convened by the Committee of Representatives; the presence of all members is required. The Conference is entrusted with responsibility for appraising the integration process in all its aspects and the convergence of partial scope agreements through their progressive multilateralization, as well as for recommending to the Council the adoption of corrective measures of multilateral scope. The Conference is also responsible for: carrying out periodic revisions of differential treatments; assessing the results of the implementation of the

system for supporting the relatively least developed members; effecting multilateral negotiations with regard to the regional tariff preference; and facilitating the negotiation of regional agreements involving all members.

The Committee of Representatives is the Association's permanent organ, composed of a permanent and a deputy representative from each country plus representatives from the permanent observers. It may not hold meetings and adopt resolutions unless two-thirds of its members are present. Its principal powers are: to convene governmental meetings for the negotiation of regional agreements, especially with regard to tariff reductions; to take the necessary steps for the implementation of the Treaty; to undertake the work assigned to it by the Council and the Conference; to approve the Association's annual budget and to fix the contributions of each member; to convene the Council and the Conference; to represent the Association in dealings with third countries; to submit proposals and recommendations to the Council and the Conference; to evaluate multilaterally the partial scope agreements reached by the interested members.

The three political organs of the Association may take decisions when affirmative votes are cast by at least two-thirds of the member countries; non-participation is equivalent to abstention. A two-thirds majority, provided that no negative vote is cast, is required for decisions on highly sensitive issues considered to be vital to the integration process (including admission of new members).

Several subsidiary bodies have been created, including the Advisory Commission on Financial and Monetary Affairs; the Advisory Commission on Customs Valuation; the Tourism Council; the Entrepreneurial Advisory Council; the Labour Advisory Council; the Nomenclature Advisory Commission; the Advisory Council for Export Financing; the Council on Transport for Trade Facilitation; and the Meeting of Directors of National Customs Administrations.

The General Secretariat is headed by a Secretary-General – elected by the Council for a three-year term and re-eligible for another period – who is assisted by two Deputy Secretaries-General. The Secretariat's duties are: to prepare proposals for consideration by the political organs; to carry out studies and other activities included in the annual work programme; to represent the Association in dealings with international economic agencies and

bodies; to recommend to the Committee of Representatives the creation of subsidiary organs; to establish an Economic Promotion Unit responsible for the least-developed members; to submit to the Committee an annual report on the results of the implementation of the Treaty.

Activities

A series of initiatives have been taken, within the Association's framework, for saving and widening the concessions granted under the auspices of LAFTA and for promoting bilateral and multilateral agreements in the economic and financial fields. The multiplicity of ways provided to facilitate agreement on integration actions, together with the effort to propitiate convergence and progressive multilateralization, should lead to the choice of the most feasible means to comply with the ultimate goal of the Montevideo Treaty of 1980. Partial economic complementation agreements with emphasis on the industrial, energy, technological and financial sectors may offer ample possibilities for strengthening co-operation not only among members but with non-members in Central America and the Caribbean.

Over 100 agreements have entered into force thus far. Seven are 'regional scope' agreements, involving all member countries and dealing, *inter alia*, with regional tariff preferences, market access in favour of the three least developed members, scientific and technological co-operation and cultural co-operation. The remaining agreements have a 'partial' scope, concerning two or more countries and facilitating trade and co-operation in particular sectors. The Treaty establishing Mercosur is one of the most significant 'partial agreements'. The proliferation of subregional arrangements presents a serious challenge for the Association which should act as an 'umbrella' organization. A further challenge has been represented by the participation of Mexico in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); to make such participation possible, an Interpretative Protocol to the Montevideo Treaty was adopted in June 1994 expressly allowing the conclusion of preferential trade agreements between members and developed countries.

External relations

The Association gives special emphasis to co-ordination and co-operation with other countries and integration groupings in Latin America, with a view

to establishing a Latin American tariff preference and concluding partial scope agreements. Under special circumstances, partial agreements may also be reached with other developing countries (or the relevant integration areas) outside Latin America. Co-operative links have been established with economic integration bodies in other continents.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Portuguese, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Didier Operti Badán

HEADQUARTERS: Cebollatí 1461, Barrio Palermo, PO Box 20.005, 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay (telephone: +598 2 410 1121; fax: +598 2 419 0649)

WEBSITE: <http://www.aladi.org>

PUBLICATIONS (IN SPANISH): *Noticias ALADI* (monthly); *Informes de Comercio Exterior*; *Boletín ALADI*; *Informes sobre el Proceso de Integración*

Latin American Organization for Fisheries Development

[*Organización Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Pesquero*](OLDEPESCA)

The Organization deals with the development of fishery resources of member countries.

Origin and development

Founded by an agreement signed in 1982 and entered into force in 1984, the Organization covers the oceans bordering Latin America.

Membership

The Organization groups the following countries: Belize, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Venezuela.

Objectives

The Organization's purpose is to provide adequately for the food needs of Latin America and the Caribbean through the rational exploitation of the potential of fisheries with a view to increasing production and trade of marine and freshwater products and promoting the generation of sources of income and employment.

Structure

The Conference of Ministers is the supreme authority setting the guidelines and policies of the

Organization through declarations and resolutions which are generally prepared, in the form of recommendations to the Conference, by the Governing Council.

Activities

The Organization is currently involved in research concerning fisheries resources and their exploitation, aquaculture, training and environmental protection.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Dr Ángel Alberto Rivera Benavides

HEADQUARTERS: Avenida Petit Thouars 115, Tercer Piso, Lima 1, Peru (telephone: +511 330 8741; fax: +511 332 2480)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oldepesca.org>

Latin Union

[*Unión Latina*]

FOUNDED: 1954, in actual operation since 1983

OBJECTIVES: To promote Latin culture, especially in arts and literature, to encourage teaching of Latin languages in member countries and to develop scientific and technical terminology in Latin languages

MEMBERS: 35 countries in Southern Europe, Africa, and Latin America plus the Philippines and Timor-Leste in Asia. Argentina, the Holy See and the Order of Malta have been granted observer status

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: French, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Romanian; the first four are working languages

SECRETARY GENERAL: Bernardino Osio

GENERAL SECRETARIAT: 131 rue du Bac, 75007 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4549 6060; fax: +33 1 4544 4597)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unilat.org>

League of Arab States

[*Arab League*]

The League represents the most important attempt that has been made so far to strengthen solidarity and co-ordinate policies and activities among Arab countries.

Origin and development

The foundation of the League as a regional political arrangement for the pursuit of comprehensive goals emerged from an effort to restore the Arab community. However, the existence of many separate states and administrations under mandatory control (as a result of the 1919 peace settlement) and the long-standing tensions and rivalries between conservative and revolutionary groups and movements, as well as between oil-rich and poor countries, led Arab leaders to shelve union or federation plans in favour of a voluntary association of sovereign states. A Pan-Arab conference was held in Alexandria from 25 September to 7 October 1944. It drew up the Alexandria Protocol outlining the basic features of the new organization, which was formally established by the signing of the Pact of the League of Arab States on 22 March 1945 in Cairo. The Pact was concluded by the representatives of seven Arab countries which had achieved independence (Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Transjordan and Yemen). The original members were joined by Libya (1953); Sudan (1956); Tunisia and Morocco (1958); Kuwait (1961); Algeria (1962); Southern Yemen (1967); Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (1971); Mauritania (1973); Somalia (1974); Djibouti (1977); and the Comoros (1993). Palestine – considered independent *de jure* even though, according to the Pact Annex Regarding Palestine, ‘the outward manifestations of this independence have remained obscured’ – is a full member of the League since the beginning. Two documents are regarded as complementary to the Pact establishing the League: the Treaty for Joint Defence and Economic Co-operation, concluded on 13 March 1950; and the Charter for National Economic Action, adopted on 26 November 1980.

In response to the signing in March 1979 of a peace treaty between Israel and Egypt, the latter’s membership of the League was suspended and the League headquarters were transferred from Cairo to Tunis; Egypt’s readmission took place in May 1989 and the League moved its headquarters back to Cairo at the end of October 1990.

Each member is bound to respect the form of government existing in other member countries and to refrain from any action tending to change such form. Members are not allowed to use force for the settlement of disputes between them. The League is entitled to mediate in a dispute which may lead to war between two members or between a member and another country in order to conciliate them. In

case of aggression or threat of aggression by any country against a member, the League may decide, by unanimous vote, upon the necessary measures to repel the aggression.

Every independent Arab state has the right to adhere to the League, whose Council will decide upon the application presented to this effect. The right of withdrawal is expressly envisaged, provided one year’s notice is given; however, a member which does not approve an amendment to the Pact may withdraw before such amendment becomes effective, no minimum period of notice being required. Any member which is not fulfilling its obligations under the Pact may be excluded from the League by a decision taken unanimously.

Membership

Twenty-two Arab countries. Observers include Eritrea, since 2003, and India and Venezuela since 2007.

Objectives

The purposes of the League are to strengthen the ties between Arab countries, to co-ordinate their policies and activities, to safeguard their sovereignty, and to consider in a general way the affairs and interests of the Arab countries; co-operation is to take place paying due regard to the structure of each country and the conditions prevailing therein.

As well as the basic aim of promoting co-ordination on the political plane, a close co-operation between member countries is envisaged by the Pact in: economic and financial affairs, including trade, customs, currency, agriculture and industry; communications, including railways, roads, aviation, navigation, and postal and telegraphic services; cultural affairs; matters related to nationality, passports, visas, execution of judgments and extradition; social welfare; and health.

Structure

The basic organizational structure of the League is fairly simple, comprising the Council, assisted by a number of Committees, and the General Secretariat. The Council is the highest policy-making body, composed of the representatives of member countries and of Palestine, each member having one vote. Ordinary sessions are held either at the seat of the League or at any other designated place, and are presided over by representatives of member countries in turn. Extraordinary sessions may be convened at the request of at least two member

countries whenever the need arises. The Council is entrusted with the functions of realizing the purposes of the League, supervising the implementation of agreements concluded between members on specific matters, and setting the guidelines for co-operation with other international organizations in the political, economic and social spheres. In principle, decisions are taken by the Council by unanimity; these decisions are obligatory on all member countries that are bound to act in conformity with their own constitutional rules. Some important questions may, however, be dealt with by majority vote such as decisions relating to arbitration and mediation, personnel, budget, internal organization and termination of sessions. Amendments to the Pact require a two-thirds majority.

Technical and specialized committees establish the basis and scope of co-operation in the form of draft agreements to be submitted to the Council for consideration. As a rule, decisions are taken by the Committees by simple majority. Specialized ministerial councils are responsible for the formulation of common policies in a number of areas including home affairs, legal affairs, environmental issues, health, sports, transport and telecommunications.

The General Secretariat is composed of the Secretary-General, a number of Assistant Secretaries-General, and the necessary staff. It is the central and permanent organ, carrying out the policies and programmes decided upon by the Council and providing administrative services. The Secretary-General is elected by the Council by a two-thirds majority for a renewable five-year term. The Assistant Secretaries-General and the principal officials are appointed by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council.

A significant role within the institutional framework of the League has been played by the periodic meetings of Arab Kings and Presidents, that is the 'Summit Conference', whose first session was held in Cairo in January 1964.

The member countries of the League participate in the Specialized Agencies which are designed to develop specific aspects of co-operation, or to deal with special technical matters of common interest to Arab states. The Specialized Agencies include: the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA); the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD); the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF); the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC); the Arab Administrative Development Organization (ARADO) based in Cairo; the Arab

League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) in Tunis; the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) in Khartoum; the Arab Labour Organization (ALO) in Cairo; the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO) in Rabat; the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) in Tunis; the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) in Damascus; the Arab Academy for Science and Technology and Maritime Transport (AAST) with headquarters in Abu-Qir, Alexandria (Egypt) and branches in Cairo, Upper Egypt and Latakia (Syria); the Arab Satellite Communications Organization (ARABSAT) in Riyadh; and the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC) in Kuwait.

Offices and information centres have been established in several countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and in the US.

All members are expected to contribute to the budget of the League according to a scale of quotas determined by the Council.

Activities

The activities of the League have developed considerably over the past decades, affecting more or less closely a wide range of aspects of inter-Arab co-operation. Although it lacks the indispensable cohesion to make substantial progress towards a permanent integration of the basic policies of its member countries, the League has achieved a remarkable degree of unity on issues vital to Arab foreign policy. The League maintained a general unity on the Palestinian issue and the non-recognition of Israel until President Sadat's visit to that country in 1977. The Camp David agreements and the consequent peace treaty between Egypt and Israel imposed upon inter-Arab relations a major strain. The League has been dealing with inter-Arab disputes over boundaries and with the recurring crises in Lebanon, obtaining so far only modest results. On the economic plane, a boycott has been carried out against Israel, and public and private establishments throughout the world dealing with Israel. On the cultural and technical plane, rather elaborate structures have been established and various records of achievements are to be found. In any case, the Palestinian issue and the consequent inter-Arab tensions have long exerted a major influence on all aspects and forms of co-operation and on the prospects for the achievement of effective Arab unity within the framework of the League.

Efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement of the Iran–Iraq conflict were undertaken by the League in 1984; unanimous support for Iraq in the defence of its legitimate rights against Iran was expressed in 1987. In May 1990 a Summit Conference held in Baghdad (and boycotted by Syria and Lebanon) criticized the emigration of Soviet Jews to Israel and the efforts of Western governments to prevent Iraq from acquiring advanced weapons technology. In August 1990 an emergency Summit Conference was convened to discuss the invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq; 12 members approved a resolution condemning Iraq and requesting its withdrawal from Kuwait while the remaining members condemned the presence of foreign troops in Saudi Arabia. Growing inter-Arab conflicts over the conduct to be followed in the Gulf crisis (especially Western military presence in Saudi Arabia) and the proposed return of the League's headquarters to Cairo led to the resignation of the Secretary-General in September 1990. The divisions in the Arab world made it impossible to convene another meeting of the League until March 1991 when a session took place at ambassadorial, rather than ministerial, level and any discussion of the war in the Gulf was avoided. In May 1991 the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs was unanimously elected Secretary-General confirming the return of Egypt to its former position in the Arab world. The Middle East peace process, started in the early 1990s, led to a gradual modification of the economic boycott of the League *vis-à-vis* Israel and its trading partners. However, Arab countries remain divided over a number of issues concerning the relationship with the Jewish state, especially in consideration of the lack of progress in the peace negotiations. A Saudi-inspired peace plan was adopted by the Arab Summit held in Beirut on 27–28 March 2002 with a view to 'enabling the Arab countries and Israel to live in peace and good neighbourliness and provide future generations with security, stability and prosperity'. However further progress in the implementation of the peace plan proved impossible. The US-led military intervention in Iraq in 2003 was condemned by the Council but the formulation of an articulate Arab stance over the situation in Iraq proved difficult. As regards Palestine, the Secretary-General stressed

again in 2004 the land-for-peace principle and the problems of Jerusalem, refugees and the Palestinian state as key elements to be dealt with in any serious effort to settle the Palestinian-Israeli crisis. Efforts have been made to establish gradually an Arab free-trade area. Unpaid arrears by several members put the League under a severe financial strain.

External relations

The League is considered a 'regional organization' under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. Besides its links with the UN, the League co-operates closely with several UN specialized bodies, such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and other international and national agencies.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Amr Muhammad Moussa

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 11642, Arab League Bldg, Tahrir Square, Cairo, Egypt (telephone: +20 2 5750511; fax: +20 2 5740331)

WEBSITE: <http://www.arableagueonline.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Arab Perspectives* (monthly); *Journal of Arab Affairs* (monthly); separate reports covering specific problems; bulletins of treaties and agreements concluded between member countries; monthly and fortnightly bulletins in several languages issued by Offices and Information Centres abroad especially to present the Palestinian case

REFERENCES: B. Boutros-Ghali, *The Arab League, 1945–1955* (New York, 1955); M. Khalil, *The Arab States and the Arab League* (Beirut, 1962); R.W. Macdonald, *The League of Arab States: A Study in the Dynamics of Regional Organization* (Princeton, NJ, 1965); H.A. Hassouna, *The League of Arab States and Regional Disputes: A Study of Middle East Conflicts* (Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1975); A.M. Goma, *The Foundation of the League of Arab States* (London, 1977); F.A. Clements, *Arab Regional Organizations – Bibliography* (Oxford and New Brunswick, 1992)

Mano River Union (MRU)

The Union groups Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to develop joint co-operation with special regard to the potential resources of the Mano river.

Origin and development

Efforts to organize co-operation date back to the Mano River Declaration issued by the Heads of State of Liberia and Sierra Leone on 30 October 1973 and followed by the signature of a number of protocols in 1974. The founder members were joined by Guinea on 25 October 1980. After a promising start with the establishment of a customs union in 1981, tensions between Liberia and the other two members brought about a virtual standstill in the Union's activities until 1986. The conclusion of a non-aggression and security treaty in 1986 improved for a short period of time relations among member countries without, however, any major progress in the implementation of the Union's programmes also because of continuing budgetary difficulties.

Membership

Three countries in the subregion. The admission of Côte d'Ivoire is being considered also in view of the fact that the country was a founder member of the original West African Free Trade Area (WAFTA), a precursor of the present Union.

Objectives

The purpose of the Union is to develop a common policy and co-operation regarding harmonization of tariffs and regulations concerning customs, telecommunications and postal services, forestry and maritime activities, and to promote joint development projects, with special emphasis on the hydroelectric potential of the Mano river.

Activities

Progress on infrastructural projects in energy, transport and communications was stopped by the outbreak of civil war in Liberia at the beginning of 1990. The situation in the region further deteriorated after the April 1992 military coup in Sierra Leone and the insurrection in the southeastern section of the country adjoining Liberia. For a long period, political instability, civil unrest and factional fighting along the borders of member countries prevented the Union from carrying out any effective form of co-operation. The decision to reactivate the

Union was adopted on 20 May 2004 by the Heads of State of the three member countries and reconfirmed by summit meetings in 2007 which also discussed the reorganization of the Secretariat and the provision of adequate budgetary support.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

CHAIRPERSON: Aliou M. Diallo

HEADQUARTERS: Private Mail Bag 133, Delco House, Lightfoot Boston Street, Freetown, Sierra Leone (telephone: +232 22 222811)

REFERENCE: B. Higgins, A. Axline, O. Mehmet, *The Mano River Union: An Assessment of Past Performance and Some Guidelines for the Future* (London, 1978)

Médecins sans frontières (MSF)

FOUNDED: 1971

OBJECTIVES: To provide medical aid to victims of war and natural disasters regardless of race, religion, politics or sex; to assist in the rehabilitation of hospitals and dispensaries; and to carry out programmes of immunization, sanitation, public health and nutrition

MEMBERS: Over 2500 volunteers working worldwide; offices in 20 countries and ongoing activities in over 70 countries throughout the world

HEADQUARTERS: Rue de Lausanne 78, CP 116, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 849 8400; fax: +41 22 849 8404)

WEBSITE: <http://www.msf.org>

Mekong River Commission (MRC)

The Commission groups the riparian countries with a view to developing joint co-operation with special regard to the water and related resources of the Mekong river.

Origin and development

The Agreement on the Co-operation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin was signed on 5 April 1995 in Chiang Rai, Thailand, by Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The Commission is a successor to the

Committee for Co-ordination of Investigations of the Lower Mekong Basin which had been created in 1957 under UN auspices.

Membership

Four countries in the subregion. China and Myanmar have been dialogue partners since 1996.

Objectives

In order to pursue its basic goal of creating 'an economically prosperous, socially just and environmentally sound' Mekong River Basin, the Commission fosters co-operation for the sustainable development, utilization, management and conservation of the water resources for navigational and non-navigational purposes. Freedom of navigation along the river is accorded regardless of national boundaries; any member country may use waters, except during the dry season, without having to obtain approval from other members.

Structure

The institutional structure consists of the Council, meeting once a year at ministerial level, the Joint Committee, consisting of senior officials from member countries meeting twice a year, and the Secretariat headed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Activities

The Commission deals primarily with problems concerning drainage and flood control, hydroelectric power, irrigation, improvement of navigation, and development of agriculture, fisheries and forestry, recreation and tourism. Several forms of co-operation are being strengthened between the four members of the Commission and other riparian countries, that is the Yunnan Province of China and Myanmar. The six countries together make up the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS). Although many GMS issues are of an economic and commercial character, the political and security implications of co-operation are also being dealt with, well beyond the borders of Southeast Asia.

External relations

The Commission co-operates actively with major regional and global organizations concerned with economic development and financial assistance, notably the Asian Development Bank (AsDB), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the World Bank and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER: Dr Olivier Cogels

SECRETARIAT: Vientiane, Laos (telephone: +856 21 263 263; fax: +856 21 263 264)

WEBSITE: <http://www.mrcmekong.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Mekong News* (quarterly)

Mercosur

[Mercado Común del Sur – Mercado Comum do Sul]

The grouping represents one of the most significant efforts undertaken thus far to promote economic integration among Argentina, Brazil and the smaller countries of the Southern Cone.

Origin and development

The initiative for the establishment of a regional common market originated in the late 1980s when Argentina and Brazil signed several bilateral agreements which could later involve other countries of the subregion. After a relatively brief period of negotiation, the 24-article agreement establishing Mercosur (Treaty of Asunción) was signed on 26 March 1991 by the heads of state of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay; it entered into effect on 29 November 1991. The signatory countries committed themselves to the progressive reduction of barriers to trade, the establishment of a common external tariff and the harmonization of economic policies. As required by the Treaty of Asunción, before the completion of the Common Market by the end of 1994, an extraordinary meeting had to be held to decide on the permanent institutional structure of Mercosur and the voting procedures. Accordingly, on 17 December 1994, the member countries signed the Protocol of Ouro Preto which amended and supplemented the founding treaty delineating the institutional framework and conferring on the organization the international legal personality.

Participation in Mercosur was opened to other countries of the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA) after the expiration of an initial five-year moratorium on new memberships. The Treaty of Asunción, however, forbids in principle dual affiliations to economic integration schemes.

Membership

The four signatories to the Treaty of Asunción plus Venezuela that joined in July 2006. Close links are being forged with both Chile and Bolivia. Chile, although it belongs to the Southern Cone countries, has decided not to join Mercosur as a full member but has negotiated a free trade pact and has entered an association agreement. Bolivia, although it is part of the Andean Community, has also signed a free trade agreement and enjoys associate membership. The five full members plus Bolivia and Chile participate in the so-called Political Mercosur.

Objectives

The grouping intends to establish a common market providing for the free movement of goods, services, capital and labour among member countries. According to the Treaty of Asunción, the Common Market, which was to be established by January 1995 and was substantially implemented on schedule, implies: (a) the free circulation of goods, services and production factors through the elimination of customs duties and non-tariff barriers; (b) the establishment of a common external tariff and the adoption of a common commercial policy; (c) the co-ordination of macroeconomic and sectoral policies concerning foreign trade, agriculture, industry, fiscal, monetary and exchange issues, services, transport and communications; and (d) the harmonization of individual state legislation in the relevant areas in order to strengthen the integration process. The Common Market is based on the reciprocity of rights and obligations among the contracting parties, although some exceptions are envisaged in favour of Paraguay and Uruguay during the transitional period.

The main instruments for the establishment of the Common Market are: the Trade Liberalization Programme involving the gradual elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers; the co-ordination by stages of macroeconomic policies; the common external tariff; and the adoption of sectoral agreements with a view to achieving efficient economies of scale. The schedule for the implementation of the targets envisaged by the Treaty of Asunción was the object of a decision in June 1992 and was revised in July 1993 and in January 1994. Agreement was also reached on the common external tariff between January and December 1994. From January 1995 tariffs among member countries were abolished for about 90 per cent of traded goods while common external tariffs averaging 14 per cent were imposed

on 80 per cent of goods entering the Mercosur area; the remaining products are covered by transitional arrangements. The consolidation of free trade remains the permanent and most pressing goal of the organization.

Structure

The institutional structure of Mercosur – as redefined by the Protocol of Ouro Preto – includes three principal organs with decision-making powers: the Council of the Common Market; the Common Market Group; and the Trade Commission.

The Council of the Common Market, which is the supreme body responsible for the formulation and the implementation of the integration process, meets at ministerial level whenever necessary. It consists of the Foreign Affairs and Economic Ministers of the member countries but other ministers may be invited depending on the issues under consideration. At least every six months the Council is to hold a meeting with the participation of the Heads of State of the member countries. The presidency of the Council rotates at six-month intervals among the member countries in alphabetical order. The Council adopts, by consensus, decisions binding for all member countries.

The Common Market Group is the executive organ whose activities are co-ordinated by the ministries of foreign affairs. It is composed of four delegates and four alternates from each member country representing the ministries of foreign affairs and economy (including industry and foreign trade) and the central banks. The Group oversees, within the limits of its competence, the implementation of the Treaty of Asunción and its Protocols, adopts the necessary measures to carry out the decisions of the Council, proposes concrete actions for the co-ordination of macroeconomic policies and the negotiation of agreements with non-member countries, and approves the budget submitted by the Administrative Secretariat. Resolutions adopted by the Group, by consensus, are binding for all member countries.

The Trade Commission assists the Group and oversees the implementation of the instruments of the common commercial policy agreed upon by member countries, dealing with all issues related to trade between members and with third countries. It is composed of four delegates and four alternates from each member country meeting at least once a month under the co-ordination of the ministries of foreign affairs. The Commission adopts directives

and proposals, the former having a binding character for all member countries. It is worth noting that the Trade Commission was not envisaged by the Treaty of Asunción; it was established by a decision of the Council in August 1994 and subsequently incorporated by the Protocol of Ouro Preto into the institutional structure.

The Protocol of Ouro Preto also created the Joint Parliamentary Commission, which represents the Parliaments of the member countries and may submit recommendations to the Council, and the Economic and Social Consultative Forum, which represents the economic and social sectors and may submit recommendations to the Group.

The Administrative Secretariat, based in Montevideo, has been changed by the Protocol of Ouro Preto from a body servicing the Group to a body servicing the whole Mercosur. The Secretariat is headed by a Director elected by the Group, on a rotating basis, for a non-renewable two-year term.

The procedure to follow for the settlement of disputes had been outlined by the Protocol of Brasília adopted in December 1991, the first decision actually to be taken by the Council of the Common Market. In 2003, with a view to strengthening the institutional structure, a Committee of Permanent Representatives of Mercosur was established. A permanent dispute settlement body has been created through the Protocol signed in Olivos (Argentina) on 18 February 2002 comprising a legal representative from each member country plus one member appointed by consensus.

Activities

Despite the often inadequate results of several Latin American attempts at economic integration and the huge differences in the economic potential of its member countries, Mercosur seems to offer prospects of real progress owing to its flexible institutional machinery and its pragmatic approach. A solid foundation for the success of the initiative may also lie in the fact that it draws to some extent on the basically positive experience of the Argentina-Brazil integration treaty of November 1989. In the late 1990s, currency devaluation in Brazil, political instability in Paraguay and recurring economic problems slowed down efforts at liberalization and integration and delayed the conclusion of free-trade accords with other regional organizations and countries. In the year 2000 member countries decided to adopt measures with a view to relaunching the organization and strengthening the customs union

both internally and *vis-à-vis* third countries. The serious economic and financial difficulties of Argentina led the country to adopt in early 2001 temporary trade restrictions that compounded tensions already existing within Mercosur. Extraordinary meetings of the Council of the Common Market were convened in order to resolve the growing differences especially between Argentina and Brazil.

On a broader plane, a 'political security network' is being built along with the common market. The members of Mercosur plus Bolivia and Chile have set up a Mechanism for Political Consultation and Concertation ('Political Mercosur'). A Presidential Declaration on Democratic Commitment in Mercosur was adopted on 25 June 1996 with a view to preventing participation in Mercosur by countries lacking democratic and accountable institutions; Bolivia and Chile subscribed a Protocol of adhesion to the Declaration. On 24 July 1998 the full members and the two associate countries signed the Protocol of Ushuaia on Democratic Commitment, stressing that any alteration of the democratic order represents an unacceptable impediment to the regional integration process. Programmes are also being implemented by the six countries to counter illegal activities in border areas.

External relations

Mercosur has developed co-operative relations with other countries and integration groupings both within and outside Latin America. Trade and investment agreements have been concluded with the US and Canada respectively. Free trade accords have also been negotiated by members of Mercosur with the Andean Community. Mercosur has granted associate membership to Andean Community countries; the Andean Community for its part granted associate membership to countries of Mercosur.

An Interregional Framework Co-operation Agreement was signed on 15 December 1995 in Madrid by the countries of Mercosur with the European Union (EU), laying the foundation for the creation of a Mercosur-EU free trade zone. The Agreement entered into force on 1 July 1999 and is based on three main elements: political dialogue, co-operation and trade issues.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Portuguese, Spanish

DIRECTOR: José Büttner

HEADQUARTERS: Edificio Mercosur, Dr Luis Piera 1992, 1°, 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay (telephone: +598 2 412 9024; fax: +598 2 418 0557)

WEBSITE: <http://www.mercosur.int>

PUBLICATION: *Boletín Oficial del Mercosur* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: H. Gros Espiell *et al.*, *El derecho de la integración del Mercosur* (Montevideo, 1999); P. van Dijk and M. Wiesebron (eds), *Ten Years of Mercosur* (Amsterdam, 2002); F. Domínguez and M. Guedes de Oliveira (eds), *Mercosur: Between Integration and Democracy* (Oxford, 2004)

Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)

The Agency, established as an affiliate of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), encourages the flow of investment for productive purposes among its member countries, through the mitigation of non-commercial barriers to investment, notably political risk. The Agency thus complements the developmental efforts of the other members of the 'World Bank Group': the IBRD, the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

Origin and development

The Convention setting up the Agency entered into effect on 12 April 1988 and has been signed by 177 countries and ratified by over 160. The US is by far the largest subscriber, followed by Japan, Germany, France, the UK and China.

Membership

Membership of the Agency, currently including 171 countries, is open to all countries belonging to the IBRD. Members are divided into industrialized countries (23) and developing countries (148). The Agency is owned by its member countries.

Objectives

The basic objective of the Agency is to guarantee eligible investments against losses resulting from non-commercial risks, under four main categories: (a) transfer risk resulting from host government restrictions on currency conversion and transfer; (b)

risk of loss resulting from legislative or administrative actions of the host government; (c) repudiation by the host government of contracts with investors in cases in which the investor has no access to a competent forum; and (d) risk of armed conflict and civil unrest.

Structure

The Agency, legally and financially separate from the IBRD, is supervised by a 24-member Board of Directors. Six Directors are appointed by the six largest shareholders (the US, Japan, Germany, France, the UK and China), and 18 are elected by the other shareholders. The President of the World Bank is President of the Agency and Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Activities

Eligible investments include contributions in cash or in kind in the form of equity, loans made or guaranteed by equity holders, and certain forms of non-equity direct investment. The guarantee coverage requires investors to adhere to social and environmental standards considered to be the world's best.

The Agency's standard policy covers investments for 15 years; in exceptional cases, coverage may be extended to 20 years. In addition to new projects, the Agency can insure the expansion of existing ones, including privatizations and financial restructurings. No minimum investment is required to be eligible for insurance. The Agency co-operates with national investment insurance agencies and private insurers to co-insure or re-insure eligible investments. In December 2003, the Agency officially launched its new contract of guarantee with a view to meeting client requests for a simpler and more efficient document.

Since its inception in 1988, the Agency has issued nearly 900 guarantees worth more than \$17.4 billion for projects in 96 developing countries. The Agency mobilizes additional investment coverage through its Co-operative Underwriting Programme designed to encourage private-sector insurers into transactions they would not have otherwise undertaken. Investment-promotion conferences have been held under the Agency's sponsorship and as a result several joint ventures have been finalized. In the field of technical assistance, the Agency promotes the introduction of new management and marketing techniques and technologies to help developing member countries

maximize the effectiveness of their programmes in attracting foreign direct investment. New policies on social and environmental sustainability as well as on disclosure, reinforcing the Agency's role and its business model built around openness and transparency, entered into effect on 1 October 2007. This will result, *inter alia*, in harmonization with the new policies adopted by IFC.

PRESIDENT: Robert Zoellick

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT: Yukiko Omura

HEADQUARTERS: 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA (telephone: +1 202 473 1000; fax: +1 202 522 2630)

WEBSITE: <http://www.miga.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Investment Promotion Quarterly; MIGA News* (bimonthly e-newsletter).

REFERENCES: I.F. Shihata, *MIGA and Foreign Investment: Origins, Operations, Policies and Basic Documents of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency* (Dordrecht, 1988); J.C. Baker, *Foreign Direct Investment in Less Developed Countries: The Role of ICSID and MIGA* (Westport, CT, 1999); G.T. West, E.I. Tarazona, *Investment Insurance and Developmental Impact: Evaluating MIGA's Experience* (Washington, DC, 2001)

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

NEPAD is intended as a long-term strategy to promote an integrated socio-economic development framework for the renewal of Africa.

Origin and development

The summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001, formally adopted the New African Initiative (NAI) for the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable growth. At the summit of African leaders that took place on 23 October 2001 at Abuja, Nigeria, the decision was adopted to transform NAI into NEPAD, defined as a 'pledge by African leaders', based on a common vision of the future of the continent, with a view to ending 'the scourge of underdevelopment that afflicts Africa'. The commitment of African leaders to mobilize collective action is based on the acknowledgment that the situation in Africa is the result not only of the 'legacy of colonialism' but also of 'shortcomings in the policies pursued by many countries in the post-independence era'. NEPAD has now become a programme of the African Union (AU) that succeeded the OAU in 2002.

Membership

All AU member countries.

Objectives

NEPAD's major goals are: (a) to eradicate poverty; (b) to place the countries of the continent, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development; (c) to halt the continued marginalization of Africa in the globalization process and to promote its active participation in the world economy and body politic; and (d) to accelerate the empowerment of women. The principles of NEPAD are good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and political and socio-economic development, African ownership and leadership, partnership between and amongst African peoples, and the establishment of a new international partnership changing the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world.

Structure

The highest authority in charge of the implementation of NEPAD is the summit of the Heads of State

and Government of the AU. The Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSIC) consists of the representatives of three countries for each of the five regions of the AU (northern, western, eastern, central and southern) and reports annually to the summit. The Steering Committee, comprising the personal representatives of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government, oversees the development of projects and programmes whose implementation is co-ordinated by the NEPAD Secretariat.

Activities

The main characteristics of NEPAD were presented by African leaders at the summit of the Group of Eight (G-8) held in Kananaskis, Canada, in June 2002 where a joint 'Africa Action Plan' and the possibilities of additional financial support to African nations were discussed. The key priority action areas are the following: implementation of regional infrastructure programmes covering transport, energy, information and communication technology, water and sanitation; support the realization of the food security and agricultural development programme; facilitate the preparation of a co-ordinated African position on market access, debt relief and official development assistance reforms; operate to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals in the areas of health and education are met.

EXECUTIVE HEAD OF SECRETARIAT: Prof. Firmino Mucavele

SECRETARIAT: PO Box 1234, Halfway House, Midrand, 1685 South Africa (telephone: +27 11 313 3716; fax: +27 313 3684)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nepad.org>

REFERENCES: M.K. El Sayyid, *Neo-Liberalism and African Development Strategies: Prospects of the New Partnership for Africa's Development* (Cairo, 2003); O. Kabbaj, *The Challenge of African Development* (Oxford, 2003); I. Taylor, *NEPAD: Towards Africa's Development or Another False Start?* (Boulder, CO, 2005)

Niger Basin Authority

[*Autorité du bassin du Niger*]

FOUNDED: 1964 as River Niger Commission [Commission du fleuve Niger] (CFN); present title adopted in 1980

OBJECTIVES: Promotion of the most effective use and development of the resources of the Niger basin in all fields, with special regard to navigation regulation, environmental control, hydrological forecasting, infrastructure and agro-pastoral development

MEMBERS: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Nigeria

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Othman Mustapha

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 729, Niamey, Niger (telephone: +227 20 723102; fax: +227 20 724208)

WEBSITE: <http://www.abn-ne>

PUBLICATION: *Bulletin*

Nile Basin Initiative (NBI)

FOUNDED: 1999. The establishment of a permanent Nile River Basin Commission involving all basin countries is envisaged by the Nile River Basin Co-operative Framework Agreement concluded on 26 June 2007 in Entebbe

OBJECTIVES: To achieve sustainable socio-economic development through the equitable use and management of the Nile Basin water and other resources

MEMBERS: Burundi, Congo Democratic Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda. Eritrea currently participates as an observer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Audace Ndayizeye

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 192, Entebbe, Uganda (telephone: +256 41 321329; fax: +256 41 320971)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nilebasin.org>

PUBLICATION: *NBI Newsletter*

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Movement has played a role for over four decades, emphasizing the political and economic concerns of most developing countries *vis-à-vis* the industrialized nations.

Origin and development

The creation of the Movement dates back to the first Conference of Non-Aligned Heads of State or Government representing 25 countries, held on 1–6

September 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia. The purpose of the Conference was to enable Third World nations to articulate and promote their collective political and economic interests and to enhance their bargaining power in international forums. Among the criteria of non-alignment adopted in view of the Belgrade Conference were the pursuit of an independent policy based 'on the co-existence of states with different political and social systems and on non-alignment', the consistent support for national liberation movements, and non-membership of a multilateral military alliance 'concluded in the context of Great Power conflicts'; bilateral military agreements were allowed if concluded outside the context of Great Power conflicts. Non-alignment appeared at that time as a genuine alternative to the division of the world into two opposing blocs, despite the risk of setting up a new bloc between East and West. The countries participating in the Belgrade meeting were for the most part Asian and African; this represented to a certain extent the continuation of the co-operation and co-ordination efforts undertaken at the 'Asian African Conference', held in the Indonesian city of Bandung on 18–24 April 1955, by nearly all the independent countries of Asia and Africa.

The establishment of the Group of Seventy-seven (G-77) in 1964 – as a forum where developing nations could elaborate and harmonize their negotiating positions on trade and development issues – brought about to some extent a 'division of labour' between NAM and the G-77, the former mostly dealing with broad political matters and the latter with economic and financial aspects.

Under the pressure of a number of 'socialist' developing members, the Movement often sided openly with the USSR and its allies, instead of adopting a balanced and truly 'non-aligned' stance between East and West on major international issues. The effective 'alignment' of the Movement – especially during periods of heightened tension between the two blocs – discouraged moderate pro-Western developing countries from joining. The end of the East–West polarization and of the Cold War 'alignments' which had been a paramount peculiarity of international relations for decades represented a major challenge for the Movement, unexpectedly deprived of its original *raison d'être*. Despite the withdrawal of a few members because of specific reasons, the Movement has continued to meet at regular intervals.

After the first summit conference held in

Belgrade on 1–6 September 1961, summit meetings, characterized by a growing participation of developing countries, took place in Cairo (1964), Lusaka (1970), Algiers (1973), Colombo (1976), Havana (1979), New Delhi (1983), Harare (1986), Belgrade (1989), Jakarta (1992), Cartagena de Indias, Colombia (1995), Durban, South Africa (1998), Malaysia (2003) and Cuba (2006).

Membership

Actual membership of the Movement – currently including 118 countries – has always been somewhat lower than potential membership. There are 53 countries from Africa, 38 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean and one European country (Belarus). A number of countries (at present 15) and international agencies (currently seven) have been granted ‘observer’ status. Other countries and international organizations enjoy ‘guest’ status which however has no permanent character.

Objectives

Among major goals of the Movement may be mentioned the pursuit of a world order based on freedom, equality and social justice, the elimination of disparities in the level of global development, the attainment of independence for all peoples living under alien domination and foreign occupation, the achievement of sustainable and environmentally sound development, the strengthening of the effectiveness and role of the UN.

Structure

The organizational structure of the Movement comprises the Conference of Heads of State or Government meeting, in principle, at three-year intervals to set the general guidelines which will be implemented by the Conference of Foreign Ministers. Meetings of Foreign Ministers are generally held every year. A Co-ordinating Bureau, established in 1973 and subsequently expanded, currently consists of 36 members representing the various regions of the world; the Bureau meets at ministerial and senior-official levels to prepare the above-mentioned conferences and fulfil the relevant administrative tasks. The Presidency of the Movement rotates among the member countries which host the meetings of the Conference of Heads of State.

The Movement’s day-to-day functioning is based on practices agreed upon by the Ministerial Committee on Methodology convened in Cartagena, Colombia, on 15–16 May 1996.

The Joint Co-ordinating Committee (JCC), established in New York in partnership with the G-77, operates under the chairmanship of the presidents of the two groupings with a view to harmonizing and advancing their respective positions on North–South and South–South issues.

Activities

The completion of the decolonization process throughout most of the developing world had led the Movement in the 1970s to pay increasing attention to economic issues, despite the heavy political pressures of pro-socialist countries at the 1979 Havana Conference. Debt relief and increased aid for development were among the topics debated at the 1983 New Delhi Conference while the 1986 Harare Conference dealt to a large extent with the measures to be adopted by the international community to fight apartheid in South Africa. Longstanding disputes and deep-rooted divisions among members of the Movement characterized the second half of the 1980s. The 1989 Belgrade Conference saw the emergence of a more balanced and realistic posture on the part of the Movement, particularly because of the absence from the meeting of radical members such as Cuba, Iran and Iraq. The collapse of the socialist bloc and the disintegration of Yugoslavia in 1991 seemed to jeopardize the very existence of the Movement but a new lease of life was provided in 1992 by the Indonesian chairmanship. Leaving aside the traditional confrontational stance in favour of a pragmatic approach, the 10th summit, held on 1–6 September 1992 in Jakarta, called for a constructive relationship between the developing and the developed world with a view to establishing a more equitable global economy and resolving the debt problem. The 11th summit took place on 18–20 October 1995 in Cartagena de Indias and reaffirmed the principles and purposes of the Movement, calling for the democratization of international relations. The summit dealt with several issues, demanding, *inter alia*, easier credit and more open trade from the ‘neo-protectionist’ developed countries, and denouncing human rights abuses in Bosnia and the Palestinian territories, nuclear testing, the responsibilities in drug-trafficking of developed consuming countries, and terrorism. Proposals for reform of the UN and other international institutions to make them genuinely democratic and more responsive to the needs of the developing world were also discussed. The 12th summit was held in Durban, on 2–3 September

1998. Besides denouncing the unpredictability of the process of globalization in the world economy as well as the inequitable relations between industrial and developing countries, the summit stressed the importance for the Movement to set achievable priority areas for South–South co-operation as part of a strategy to give new impetus to international co-operation for development. The ‘Durban Declaration for the New Millennium’, also adopted at the summit, stressed the need for unity of purpose and strategy among members to respond effectively to old and new threats such as drugs, AIDS, transnational crime, famine, terrorism and environmental degradation. Following the conclusion of the 12th summit, a number of additional issues were addressed within the framework of the Movement such as the crisis in Kosovo and the application of the principle of humanitarian intervention. The 13th triennial summit, originally scheduled to take place in September 2001 in Dhaka and repeatedly postponed, was eventually held in Kuala Lumpur on 24–25 February 2003 and adopted the ‘Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Continuing the Revitalization of the Movement’. The 13th summit reaffirmed the need to relaunch the Movement through the identification of concrete actions to be carried out in order to pursue basic objectives in the various fields and the setting up of appropriate mechanisms to that end. In order to celebrate and revive the ‘Spirit of Bandung’ after half a century, an Asia-Africa summit was held in that same city at the end of April 2005 with the participation of nearly 90 countries. The meeting ended with the signing of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership calling for the strengthening of political, economic and socio-cultural relations. The 14th Summit that took place in Havana on 15–16 September 2006 called once more for the revitalization of the Movement and the strengthening of its structures and adopted a Plan of Action for 2006–2009.

WEBSITE: <http://www.cubanoal.cu>

REFERENCES: C.V.D. Crabb, *The Elephants and the Grass: A Study of Non-Alignment* (New York, 1965); J.W. Burton, *Non-Alignment* (London, 1966); G.H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment* (London, 1966); L. Mates, *Non-Alignment: Theory and Current Policy* (Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1972); P. Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement: The Origins of a Third World Alliance* (London, 1978); A.W. Singham and S.

Hune, *Non-Alignment in an Age of Alignments* (London, 1986); R.R. Ramchandani, *NAM and Third World Development Dilemma in the Post-Cold War Era: A Comparative Study of India and Sub-Saharan Africa* (Delhi, 2000); P. Srivastava (ed.), *Non-Aligned Movement: Extending Frontiers* (New Delhi, 2001)

Nordic Council/Nordic Council of Ministers

The two organizations provide a forum for consultation and co-operation among Scandinavian countries.

Origin and development

The Nordic Council is the forum for interparliamentary co-operation established on the basis of an agreement reached on 16 March 1952 by the Foreign Ministers of Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, meeting in Copenhagen. The agreement, which entered into effect on 12 February 1953, created an advisory body on economic and social co-operation, consisting of delegates elected from the parliaments of member countries; Finland joined in 1955. On 23 March 1962 the five Scandinavian countries concluded a Treaty of Co-operation (Treaty of Helsinki) – concerning economic, social, cultural, legal and communications matters – which has since been amended several times (in 1971, 1974, 1983, 1985, 1991, 1993 and 1995). The most recent amendments entered into force on 2 January 1996.

The need to strengthen and institutionalize joint efforts in many areas of mutual concern led the five northern countries to sign a Treaty on Cultural Co-operation in 1971 (subsequently amended in 1983 and 1985).

The Nordic Council of Ministers, established in 1971 as a forum for intergovernmental co-operation, is a separate decision-making body whose composition varies according to the nature of the issues to be treated, such as culture, education and the environment. There are therefore several Councils of Ministers.

Membership

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Greenland, the Faroe Islands and the Åland Islands participate as autonomous regions.

Objectives

The two organizations channel official consultation and co-operation among the legislatures and governments of the Nordic countries on issues of common interest.

Structure

The Nordic Council, which is led by a 13-member Presidium, has held ordinary sessions annually, usually in November, since 1996. The Presidium is the Council's highest decision-making body between sessions. The Nordic Council is made up of 87 delegates elected by and from the respective parliaments of member countries. The various parties are proportionately represented on the basis of their strength in the national parliaments. The Faroe Islands and Åland Islands were granted representation in 1970 within the Danish and Finnish delegations respectively. Greenland has been entitled to separate representation within the Danish delegation since 1984. Observers from the Sami (Lapp) local parliaments of Finland, Norway and Sweden have been admitted in 1994. Continuous work on major policy issues is conducted through five committees and four political party groups.

Overall responsibility for the work of the Nordic Council of Ministers, which is the highest decision-making organ, rests with the respective Prime Ministers. In practice, responsibility is delegated to the Ministers for Nordic Co-operation and to the Nordic Committee for Co-operation in charge of co-ordinating the day-to-day work. Most ministers generally meet their respective counterparts twice a year. The chairmanship of the Council of Ministers, held for one year, rotates between member countries. Formal decisions taken unanimously by Ministers are immediately binding on member countries in all cases where ratification by national parliaments is not required. Ministers for Defence and Foreign Affairs meet outside the formal framework of the Council of Ministers.

The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers have their own Secretariats, both located in Copenhagen. Moreover, the Nordic Council has national Secretariats in the parliaments of member countries, attached to the respective national delegations. The Secretariat of the Nordic Council of Ministers supervises Nordic institutions and is responsible for the overall management of the Nordic Information Offices located in St Petersburg, Riga, Vilnius and Tallinn.

The amount of each country's contribution to the

ordinary budget of the Nordic Council of Ministers is determined in proportion to the respective national product; many forms of co-operation are financed directly from national budgets.

Activities

Nordic co-operation has been developing over the years through the setting-up of a large number of specialized institutions and other permanent bodies and the implementation of common programmes and projects. The Nordic Investment Bank was established under an agreement signed by the Council of Ministers on 4 December 1975. Inaugurated on 9 June 1976 in Helsinki, the Bank provides finance and guarantees for investments and exports, with special regard to energy, metal and wood-processing industries and manufacturing; total assets amounted to €15.9 billion by December 2002. Efforts towards closer co-ordination of national policies in economic, financial, trade, social, cultural and scientific spheres are being made, despite the full membership of Denmark, Finland and Sweden in the European Union (EU), of Iceland and Norway in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), and of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS). The active promotion of educational, cultural and scientific ties has contributed to improving national standards in the member countries. Other successful areas of implementation of joint programmes and projects have been transport and communications, social welfare, drug misuse, health and environment.

External relations

The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers co-operate on various issues with other regional organizations. The Nordic Council has developed close links with the Baltic Assembly on the basis of an agreement concluded in 1992. Annual meetings are held at ministerial level between the Nordic and Baltic ministers for co-operation; several other meetings are held between ministers in charge of specific areas. Cross-border co-operation along the boundaries with Russia and Belarus is being developed.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Danish, Norwegian, Swedish

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL: Jan-Erik Enestam

SECRETARIAT OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL: Store Strandstræde 18, 1255 Copenhagen K, Denmark (telephone: +45 3396 0400; fax: +45 3311 1870)

SECRETARIAT OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: Store Strandstræde 18, 1255 Copenhagen K, Denmark (telephone: +45 3396 0200; fax: +45 3396 0202)

JOINT PUBLICATIONS OF THE NORDIC COUNCIL AND NORDIC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: *Annual Report*; *Norden the Top of Europe* (monthly); *Yearbook of Nordic Statistics*

WEBSITE: <http://www.norden.org>

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North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

The Agreement is designed to remove trade and investment barriers between Canada, Mexico and the US.

Origin and development

Growing out of the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) – signed in January 1988 with effect from 1 January 1989 and extending tariff-free treatment to trade between the two countries – NAFTA was agreed upon by the two North American countries and Mexico in October 1992 and formally signed on 17 December 1992.

The 2000-page document containing the trade pact was completed in August 1993 by the signature of labour and environmental 'side agreements'. The two 'side agreements' cover workers' rights and the environment; in the case of alleged violation of these rights or environmental damage, a panel will have the power to adjudicate and directly impose fines and trade sanctions on the US or Mexico, while Canada will enforce compliance through its own legal system. The Commission for Labour Co-operation, based in Washington DC, has been set up under the North American Agreement on Labour Co-operation (NAALC) to monitor the implementation of labour accords. The Commission for

Environmental Co-operation (CEC), based in Montreal, Canada, and established under the North American Agreement on Environmental Co-operation (NAAEC), fosters the protection and the improvement of the environment, helps prevent potential trade and environmental conflicts, promotes economically efficient and effective environmental measures and pollution prevention policies and practices.

Despite substantial domestic opposition, NAFTA was approved on 17 November 1993 by the US House of Representatives; Canada and Mexico also approved NAFTA which came into force on 1 January 1994.

Membership

Canada, Mexico and the US.

Objectives

The objectives of NAFTA, elaborated more specifically through its principles and rules, including national treatment, most-favoured-nation treatment and transparency, are to: (a) eliminate barriers to trade in, and facilitate the cross-border movement of, goods and services between the territories of the parties; (b) promote fair competition in the free trade area; (c) increase substantially investment opportunities; (d) effectively protect and enforce intellectual property rights; (e) create procedures for the joint administration of the Agreement and the settlement of disputes; and (f) establish a framework for further trilateral, regional and multilateral co-operation. These objectives should be fully implemented by 2008.

Structure

A Free Trade Commission meets at least once a year in regular session, at ministerial level, under the chairmanship of each party in rotation. The Commission supervises the implementation of NAFTA and the work of the relevant committees and working groups and resolves disputes that may arise concerning the interpretation and the application of the Agreement. All decisions are taken by consensus, unless otherwise agreed.

As regards the settlement of disputes, intergovernmental consultation will be resorted to in the first instance; if a dispute is not solved within 30 to 40 days, a government may have recourse to the Commission. Should the Commission fail to settle the issue, a panel of experts will be appointed to adjudicate.

The Commission oversees a Secretariat comprising Canadian, Mexican and US Sections. Each party has established a permanent office of its national Section, run by a national Secretary, and bears the corresponding costs. The national Sections, which are 'mirror-images' of each other, are located in Ottawa, Mexico City and Washington, DC and make up the NAFTA Secretariat. The Secretariat is responsible for the administration of the dispute resolution processes and provisions of the Agreement. Each national Section maintains a court-like registry relating to panel, committee and tribunal proceedings. The mandate of the Secretariat also includes assistance to the Commission and support for various non-dispute-related committees and working groups.

Activities

Under NAFTA nearly all restrictions on trade and investment between the signatory countries are to be gradually eliminated over a period of 15 years. Besides taking over the basic CUFTA commitments, the US and Mexico were to remove all tariffs on agricultural trade (the majority upon entry into effect of the agreement and the remainder over a transitional period). Tariffs on textiles and automobiles were to be abolished over a ten-year period in all three countries. Additional areas of obligation include financial services (with Mexico opening its financial sector to US and Canadian investment and eliminating all restrictions by 2007), intellectual property protection (including copyrights, patents and trademarks), and government procurement (with Mexico removing preferential treatment for domestic companies over a transition period of ten years). Mexico, on the other hand, is not bound to lower its barriers to foreign investment in the petroleum industry which will remain a state-run monopoly.

External relations

An expansion of NAFTA to incorporate gradually other countries of Latin America, first of all Chile to which a formal invitation had been extended in December 1994, was originally envisaged by the US. However, plans towards the establishment of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), embracing the whole western hemisphere from Anchorage to Tierra del Fuego, failed to materialize because of the strong opposition of several Latin American countries.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

NAFTA SECRETARIAT

CANADIAN SECTION: 90 Sparks Street, Suite 705, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5B4, Canada (telephone: +1 613 992 9388; fax: +1 613 992 9392)

MEXICAN SECTION: Blvd. Adolfo López Mateos 3025, 2° piso, Col. Héroes de Padierna, 10700 Mexico, D.F., Mexico (telephone: +52 55 56 299630; fax: +52 55 56 299637)

U.S. SECTION: 14th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 2061, Washington, DC 20230, USA (telephone: +1 202 482 5438; fax: +1 202 482 0148)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nafta-sec-alena.org>

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North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

The Organization groups countries of Europe and North America and aims to ensure their joint security through co-operation and consultation in political and military as well economic and scientific fields.

Origin and development

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington DC, on 4 April 1949 and entered into force on 24 August of the same year. It represented the outcome of initiatives taken on both sides of the Atlantic. Widespread concern over the security of Western Europe in the face of the steadily deteriorating political climate led to the signing, on 17 March 1948 in Brussels, of the 50-year Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and

Collective Self-Defence by the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK. The following April, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs suggested that the Brussels Treaty Organization be replaced by an Atlantic defence system including the countries of North America. The beginning of the Berlin blockade by the USSR and other momentous political events on the European continent prompted the American Senate, on 11 June 1948, to adopt the Vandenberg Resolution calling, *inter alia*, for the 'progressive development of regional and other collective arrangements for individual and collective self-defence' in accordance with the UN Charter and recommending 'the association of the US with such regional and other collective arrangements'. On 25–26 October 1948, the Consultative Council of the Brussels Treaty powers announced 'complete agreement on the principle of a defence pact for the North Atlantic and on the next steps to be taken'. On 10 December, negotiations on the drafting of the North Atlantic Treaty opened in Washington, DC, between the countries party to the Brussels Treaty, the US and Canada. Among European countries, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Norway and Portugal accepted the invitation to participate in the Atlantic Alliance, while Ireland and Sweden declined. On 4 April 1949, the Foreign Ministers of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the UK, and the US signed the Treaty establishing an Alliance for the defence of Western Europe and North America. Greece and Turkey acceded to the Treaty on 18 February 1952, followed by the Federal Republic of Germany on 6 May 1955. The accession of Spain was approved by the Organization in December 1981 and formally took place on 30 May 1982. A key sign of the new times, inaugurated by the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet system, was represented by the entry into the Alliance of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland on 12 March 1999, followed by Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia on 29 March 2004, bringing the current membership to 26.

According to the Treaty, any other European country in a position to further the principles of the Alliance and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area may be invited to join by unanimous consent of the member countries. The right to withdraw was expressly envisaged after the Treaty

had been in force for 20 years. Withdrawal takes effect one year after notice of denunciation has been given.

On 10 March 1966, General de Gaulle announced France's withdrawal from the military structure of the Alliance and consequently Allied military forces and military headquarters were removed from France. On 5 December 1995, the French government declared its intention to resume active participation of France in the military command structure. The military *coup d'état* in Cyprus and the subsequent landing of Turkish troops in July 1974 resulted in the withdrawal of Greek forces from the integrated military structure of the Alliance the following August. Greece rejoined the military structure on 20 October 1980. It is important to stress that, despite the temporary withdrawal by France and Greece of their military personnel from the integrated commands, neither country ever ceased to be a party to the Treaty which, therefore, remained unaffected.

Membership

There are now 26 countries in both Western and Eastern Europe and in North America. Albania, Croatia and Macedonia belong to the Organization's Membership Action Plan (MAP) designed to help aspiring partner countries meet the standards of the Alliance and prepare for possible future membership. Invitations to join to the countries meeting the standards are likely to be issued on the occasion of the next Summit to be held in 2008.

Objectives

The Organization was basically designed, in 1949, as a military alliance, linking West European countries (at that time numbering 10) with the US and Canada, to prevent or to repel aggression from the USSR and its Eastern European allies. It was also intended to provide a framework for continuous co-operation and consultation on political, economic and other non-military issues between member countries. During four decades, the Organization's basic aim was to maintain sufficient forces to preserve the military balance with the USSR and Eastern Europe (allied since May 1955 in the Warsaw Pact which was dissolved in 1991) and to provide a credible deterrent against aggression. After the end of the Cold War, co-operation with new partners in Central and Eastern Europe became an integral part of the strategy of NATO also in the

light of requirements for crisis management and peacekeeping.

The Preamble to the Treaty emphasizes the determination of the signatory countries to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law, with a view to promoting conditions of stability and well-being in the North Atlantic area. Under the Treaty, the member countries undertake to settle international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the UN. It is the intention of the member countries to contribute towards the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations, to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and to encourage economic collaboration between any or all of them. To this end, the member countries, separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid, agree to maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack. They are bound to consult together whenever the territorial integrity, political independence or security of any of them is threatened; joint consultation must take place whenever a member country believes that such a threat exists. Of great importance is the provision of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty stating that members agree to consider an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America as an attack against them all and consequently to assist the member or members so attacked. More precisely, each member is under the obligation to take at once, individually, and in concert with the other members, 'such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area'. Although members are committed to help each other in the event of an armed attack, it is for each individual member to decide on whatever action it considers appropriate. The area in which the provisions of the Treaty apply is the North Atlantic area north of the Tropic of Cancer. Article 5 was invoked by the European partners immediately after the attacks of 11 September 2001 against the US. However, the move remained an expression of broad political solidarity without any major consequence on the military plane.

Structure

The Treaty dealt very briefly with the institutional aspects, mentioning only the establishment of a Council empowered to set up subsidiary organs, in particular a defence committee; as a result, the organizational structure has developed in keeping with the growing requirements of co-operation and co-ordination. The highest decision-making body and forum for consultation and negotiation within the Alliance is the North Atlantic Council, composed of representatives of all member countries and 'so organized as to be able to meet promptly at any time'. At ministerial meetings of the Council, which are held at least twice a year, members are represented by Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The Council also meets on occasion 'at the summit', that is at the level of Heads of State and Government. In permanent session, at the level of permanent representatives with ambassadorial rank, the Council meets at least once a week. The Council, which is also empowered to give political guidance to the military authorities, is not bound to follow any voting procedure and, in practice, votes are never cast. Decisions are therefore expressions of the collective will of the members, arrived at by common consent. The Defence Planning Committee (DPC) is composed of the representatives of those countries which partake in the Organization's integrated military structure; France has been attending meetings with an agenda relevant to French interests since January 1994. The DPC deals with matters specifically related to defence and is the highest forum for discussion of military policy. Like the Council, the DPC meets both in permanent session at the level of permanent representatives and at ministerial level, twice a year, with the participation of Defence Ministers. The Council and the DPC are chaired by the Organization's Secretary-General, regardless of the level of the meeting. Opening sessions of ministerial meetings of the Council are presided over by the President, an honorary position held annually by the Foreign Minister of a member country, following the English alphabetical order. Nuclear matters are discussed by the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG) in which all countries participating in the DPC are represented. The NPG meets regularly at the level of permanent representatives and twice a year at the level of Defence Ministers.

The principal organs for NATO consultation and decision-making are assisted by a committee structure which has been developing over the years

according to necessity. All Committees perform advisory functions and are supported by an International Staff, made up of personnel drawn from all member countries, responsible to the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General promotes and directs the process of consultation within the Alliance. He may propose items for discussion and is empowered to use his good offices at any time in cases of dispute between members and, with their consent, to initiate enquiries or mediation, conciliation or arbitration procedures. The Deputy Secretary-General assists the Secretary-General in his functions.

Besides the civil structure, the Organization has a military structure which also operates under the authority of the Council. The Military Committee (MC), the highest military body in the Alliance, is responsible for addressing recommendations to the Council and the DPC on military matters and for providing guidance on military questions to Allied Commanders and subordinate military authorities. The MC, composed of the Chiefs-of-Staff, or their representatives, of all members, meets at Chiefs-of-Staff level normally three times a year but functions in permanent session, with effective powers of decision, at the level of Permanent Military Representatives. The Presidency of the MC rotates annually in the alphabetical order of countries; the Chairman, elected for a period of two to three years, represents the MC on the Council. The MC is assisted by an integrated International Military Staff (IMS), headed by a Director; the IMS is responsible for the implementation of the policies and decisions of the MC, the preparation of plans, the carrying out of studies and the formulation of recommendations on military matters.

According to the new military command structure agreed upon by Defence Ministers on 12 June 2003, at the strategic level there will be only one command with operational responsibilities, Allied Command Operations, performing the duties undertaken so far by Allied Command Europe and Allied Command Atlantic. Several civilian and military agencies have been gradually created and charged with specific tasks; generally, civilian agencies are under the authority of the Council while military agencies are responsible to the MC.

A parliamentary body 'unofficially' operates within the framework of the Organization. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly – formerly known

as North Atlantic Assembly – is basically a forum where members of parliaments from the countries of the Alliance as well as the associate members meet regularly with a view to encouraging Atlantic solidarity and co-operation in national parliaments. The 248-member Assembly meets in plenary session twice a year to discuss reports of its own Committees and to address recommendations to the Secretary-General of the Organization. The Assembly's outreach programme was designed to reinforce the work of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) and the Alliance's Partnership for Peace initiative (PfP).

Activities

The Organization was essentially conceived as a defensive coalition maintaining military preparedness in order to prevent war. Its political task was to provide for consultation on all political problems of relevance to members or to the Alliance as a whole and to give directions to the military side. In peacetime, the Organization was responsible for drawing up joint defence plans, setting up the necessary infrastructure and arranging for joint training and exercises. Apart from the integrated staffs at the Organization's different military headquarters and certain defence units on constant alert, all national forces have always received orders only from national authorities.

The Organization has substantially achieved its primary purpose, that is the safeguard of the security of member countries by deterring aggression, through a policy based on the twin principles of defence and *détente*. The dual approach of maintaining credible collective defence while at the same time pursuing a policy of *détente* through improved dialogue with the USSR and its Warsaw Pact allies provided the foundation for NATO policy until the events of late 1989 began to change fundamentally the European and global environment.

The new political and military goals of the Alliance were defined and progressively adjusted to rapidly changing realities through a number of meetings of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries held on 6 July 1990 in London, on 7–8 November 1991 in Rome and on 10–11 January 1994 in Brussels. The end of the Cold War was sanctioned by the 1990 London Summit which proposed to the former adversaries the conclusion of a non-aggression pact and of a conventional arms agreement. On 28–29 May 1991 the Organization's Defence Ministers agreed on a

sizeable reduction of troop strength (including a cutback of US forces in Europe) and the creation of an Allied Rapid Reaction Corps to confront small-scale crises.

The 1991 Rome Summit marked a watershed in the history of NATO as well as in the history of Europe, deciding: the establishment of a new relationship with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe; the elaboration of a new military strategy; the pursuit of the arms control process beyond the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty concluded on 19 November 1990 in Paris with a view to limiting the offensive potential of armed forces to the point at which surprise attack or major aggression would become impossible. Additional reductions were decided in Rome concerning conventional and nuclear forces; on the other hand, multinational formations were expected to play a greater role within the integrated military structure. The new 'strategic concept' of the Alliance – as illustrated by the Declaration adopted by the Rome Summit – maintained the 'core functions' of the Organization while making it possible, within the radically changed situation in Europe, to realize in full the members' approach to 'stability and security encompassing political, economic, social and environmental aspects, along with the indispensable defence dimension'. Within a broad concept of security, the Alliance retained 'its purely defensive purpose, its collective arrangements based on an integrated military structure as well as co-operation and co-ordination agreements, and for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of conventional and nuclear forces'.

The relationship between NATO and its former adversaries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia was put on a new basis with the inaugural meeting, on 20 December 1991, of the North Atlantic Co-operation Council (NACC) as a forum for consultation and co-operation on security matters and related issues. On 22 November 1992, NATO began to participate in the enforcement of the UN embargo against the 'Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' (Serbia and Montenegro) which represented the first major example of co-operation with the Western European Union (WEU). In February 1994, upon request by the UN, NATO aircraft conducted strikes against Serbian targets – the first direct military action in the history of the Alliance – which were repeated several times during 1995. The Organization's role in peacekeeping operations and crisis management gradually expanded in the

second half of the 1990s through participation in the multinational Implementation Force (IFOR) – with the task of putting into practice the military aspects of the Bosnian Peace Agreement signed in Paris on 14 December 1995 – and its successor, the Stabilization Force (SFOR), after IFOR's mandate expired.

At the 1994 Brussels Summit, the Partnership for Peace (PfP) programme was launched in order to establish formal ties not only with the former Warsaw Pact adversaries but also with all the other members of the then Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). The PfP programme, based on the wider political dialogue fostered by NACC, was accepted in a short period of time by previous Warsaw Pact signatories, former Soviet republics and long-time 'neutral' countries. Individual Partnership Programmes (IPPs) were developed jointly by the Organization and by the partner countries, with the approval of the North Atlantic Council. The PfP provides extended military co-operation, sharing of defence and security information and joint participation in peacekeeping missions. On 30 May 1997 at Sintra, Portugal, the NACC was succeeded by the EAPC with a view to raising to a qualitatively new level the political and military co-operation between NATO and its Partners. All EAPC members, except Tajikistan, participate in the PfP.

At the Madrid Summit meeting, on 8 July 1997, the historical decision was taken to enlarge the Alliance to include the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland, which were formally admitted in 1999. On 26 March 1999, NATO intervened in Kosovo to halt a humanitarian catastrophe and to restore stability in a strategic area lying between member countries. Operation Allied Force lasted until 10 June, for a total of 78 days of air strikes. In June 1999, NATO formed the core of the international peacekeeping mission in Kosovo – or Kosovo Force (KFOR) – with the aim of building a secure environment for all citizens of the Serbian province. The NATO-led KFOR operated with military personnel from over 30 countries.

Following the Prague Summit, on 21–22 November 2002, invitations to join the Alliance were issued to seven other Eastern European countries that were formally admitted in 2004. These are likely to be followed by a number of Balkan nations since the Organization's enlargement is viewed as an open and continuing process.

Besides enlargement, another major decision

taken in Prague regarded the setting-up of a NATO Response Force (NRF) in order to enable the Alliance to meet the new collective security challenges. The full operational capability of NRF was announced at the Riga Summit in 2006.

In August 2003 NATO assumed responsibility for commanding and co-ordinating the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, the first example of the Organization's readiness to undertake out-of-area operations and to develop dialogue with countries well beyond the Euro-Atlantic area such as Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan.

The end of the Cold War and the new balance of power in Europe and the world have brought about a far-reaching process of transformation involving all those political and military aspects of the Organization which had been built up over the previous decades. In the light of the growing challenges to security on a variety of planes, the role of NATO is being reconsidered. Persistent instability in certain European regions, especially the Balkans, and in the 'crisis belt' from the Maghreb to the Middle and Near East seem to call for the continued presence of NATO which remains the only functioning collective security alliance with binding treaty commitments among its members and common military assets. In an increasingly complex security environment further complicated by threats originating from international terrorism, NATO remains first and foremost a means of common defence through collective arrangements. In spite of the fact that changes and innovations are generally introduced in an atmosphere of shared purpose among the member countries, key questions remain to be solved concerning the Organization's future role and tasks as well as the ability to undertake military operations outside Europe and North America.

External relations

The delicate relationship of the Organization with Russia was put on a more effective basis by the 'Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Co-operation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation', signed in Paris on 27 May 1997. The Founding Act stressed the commitment of both the Organization and Russia to work together to build a lasting peace in the Euro-Atlantic area. A Permanent Joint Council (PJC) was set up as a forum for consultation and co-operation. The PJC was replaced on 28 May 2002 by the NATO-Russia

Council, a stronger mechanism aimed at bringing relations between NATO and Russia to a qualitatively higher level, especially with regard to the struggle against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Council, chaired by the Secretary-General of NATO, is called to deal with a wide spectrum of security issues in the Euro-Atlantic region. The Council meets at the level of foreign ministers and at the level of defence ministers twice a year, and at the level of heads of state and government as appropriate. Meetings of the Council at ambassadorial level are held at least once a month. Under the auspices of the Council, military representatives meet at least once a month while Chiefs of Staff convene at least twice a year.

Co-operation with Ukraine takes place within the framework of the 'Charter for a Distinctive Partnership between NATO and Ukraine' signed on 9 July 1997 in Madrid. The NATO-Ukraine Commission meets at least twice a year to review progress.

A dialogue has also been going on between the Organization and seven countries in the Mediterranean region (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) in order to contribute to security and stability in the region.

The crisis in the former Yugoslavia provided NATO with a major opportunity to co-operate with the UN, helping to enforce a naval blockade and a 'no-fly' zone. Close relations are maintained by the Organization with regional international institutions. In the new Europe, NATO is involved in the establishment of a security framework in which the Organization itself, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) which replaced in 1995 the CSCE, the European Union (EU), the WEU and the Council of Europe complement each other. Under consultation arrangements concluded by NATO and the EU in January 2001, meetings between the two organizations take place three times per semester at ambassadorial level and twice a year at the level of foreign ministers. The EU-NATO Declaration on the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), adopted on 16 December 2002, provides a formal basis for co-operation between the two organizations in the areas of crisis management and conflict prevention, thus facilitating the establishment of closer political and military links. This should ensure, *inter alia*, that the countries which

do not take part in the forging of a European identity in foreign and security policy and defence are involved in decisions which are likely to affect their own security.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Jaap de Hoop Scheffer

HEADQUARTERS: Blvd Léopold III, 1110 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 707 4111; fax: +32 2 707 4579)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nato.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *NATO Review*; *NATO Basic Fact Sheets*; *NATO Handbook*

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Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)

The Organization provides a forum for co-operation in the management of fishery resources in the Northwest Atlantic Ocean.

Origin and development

The Organization was set up under the Convention on Future Multilateral Co-operation in Northwest Atlantic Fisheries signed in Ottawa on 24 October 1978 and entered into force on 1 January 1979. It is a successor to the International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries (ICNAF) established in 1949.

Membership

The Organization currently groups six European countries (including Russia and Denmark which participates in respect of the Faroe Islands and Greenland) and the European Community (EC), plus Canada, Cuba, Japan, South Korea and the US.

Objectives

The Organization aims to investigate, protect and conserve fishery resources of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean and to encourage international co-operation and consultation.

Structure

The General Council, meeting annually, is the principal organ.

Activities

Guidelines are discussed concerning all fishery resources, with the exception of salmon, tuna and marlin, cetacean stocks managed by the International Whaling Commission (IWC), and sedentary species of the continental shelf.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Dr Johanne Fisher

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 638, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 3Y9, Canada (telephone: +1 902 468 5590; fax: +1 902 468 5538)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nafo.ca>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Statistical Bulletin* (annual)

REFERENCE: C.E. Lucas, *International Fishery Bodies of the North Atlantic* (Kingston, RI, 1970)



OECD Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA)

The Agency promotes, as a semi-autonomous body within the framework of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the development and application of nuclear power for peaceful uses.

Origin and development

The Agency was originally established as a Western European body – under the title of European Nuclear Energy Agency (ENEA) – by a decision adopted, on 20 December 1957, by the Council of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC); the decision took effect from 1 February 1958. The Agency represented a response, on a regional scale, to the creation, on 25 March 1957, of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) by the ‘Six’ (that is Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands). The Council of the OECD, which succeeded the OEEC in 1960, formally decided to retain the Agency within the new Organization. The Agency dropped the term ‘European’ from its official title and adopted its present name in May 1972. Between May 1972 and October 1976 four of the then five OECD members outside Europe (that is Australia, Canada, Japan and the US) as well as Finland were admitted to full participation.

Membership

At present, membership of the Agency includes all OECD countries, with the exception of New Zealand and Poland; two-thirds of members have nuclear power programmes at various stages of development. The majority of the more advanced countries in the nuclear field belong to the Agency which currently represents approximately 85 per cent of the world installed nuclear capacity. Nuclear power accounts for nearly 25 per cent of the electricity produced in member countries.

Objectives

The Agency’s basic task is to promote a common effort between member countries in the peaceful use of nuclear energy through international research and development projects, as well as the exchange of scientific and technical experience and information. It is also concerned with the safety and regulatory aspects of nuclear energy, including the adoption of uniform standards governing safety

and health protection, and a uniform legislative regime for nuclear liability and insurance.

Structure

The controlling body of the Agency is the OECD Steering Committee for Nuclear Energy presided over by a Chairman assisted by Vice-Chairmen. Seven specialized standing technical committees, composed of experts from member countries, develop and implement the Agency’s Programme of Work. The Secretariat performs administrative functions under a Director-General, assisted by the necessary staff.

Activities

The Agency conducts and publishes studies on world uranium resources, production and demand, long-term nuclear fuel cycle requirements, and nuclear legislation.

A high priority is given to the Agency’s work on the safety and regulation of nuclear power, including studies and projects for the prevention of nuclear accidents and the long-term safety of radioactive waste disposal systems. The Agency has made a significant contribution to the modernization of the international nuclear liability regime (Paris, Brussels and Vienna Conventions). Conferences and symposia on specific subjects are held under the sponsorship of the Agency from time to time.

A Data Bank was set up in January 1978 in Saclay, France, to allow the participating countries to share larger computer programmes used in reactor calculations and nuclear data applications. The Data Bank collects and verifies nuclear data and computing codes, before making them available to national laboratories, manufacturers and universities within and outside the OECD area.

The Agency continues to meet the requests of its member countries facilitating co-operation, especially in the safety, regulatory, scientific and economic aspects of nuclear power. Nuclear development and the fuel cycle, nuclear safety and regulation, radiation protection and public health, radioactive waste management and the revision of the international nuclear liability regime are at present among the Agency’s major areas of interest.

External relations

The Agency works in close contact with other international institutions, in particular the International

Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on the basis of a co-operation agreement. The Agency also assists countries of Central and Eastern Europe and republics of the former USSR to develop domestic nuclear legislation similar to that adopted by its members with a view to facilitating integration into the international regime.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Luis Enrique Echávarri

HEADQUARTERS: Le Seine Saint-Germain, 12 Boulevard des Îles, 92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux, France (telephone: +33 1 4524 1010; fax: +33 1 4524 1110)

WEBSITE: <http://www.nea.fr>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; World Energy Outlook* (annual); *NEA News* (quarterly); *Nuclear Energy Data* (annually); *Nuclear Law Bulletin* (two issues and supplement annually); *Uranium Resources, Production and Demand*

OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID)

The Fund – established by the members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) – assists developing countries that do not produce oil through the provision of financial support on appropriate terms.

Origin and development

A Special Fund to provide loans to finance balance-of-payments deficits and development projects was created by OPEC countries through an agreement signed in Paris in January 1976. In May 1980, OPEC Finance Ministers decided to convert the Special Fund into an autonomous development agency for financial co-operation and assistance enjoying legal personality, and renamed it the 'OPEC Fund for International Development'.

Membership

All OPEC member countries (with the exception of Angola) plus Gabon.

Objectives

The Fund is empowered to: (a) provide concessional loans for balance-of-payments support; (b) provide concessional loans for the implementation of devel-

opment projects and programmes; (c) contribute and provide loans to eligible international agencies; and (d) finance technical assistance, food aid, research and humanitarian emergency relief through grants. Beneficiaries of the assistance may be the developing countries other than OPEC members and international development agencies; countries with the lowest income are accorded higher priority. The loans are not tied to procurement from Fund members or any other countries.

Structure

The structure of the Fund is similar to that of other international financing institutions and comprises: the Ministerial Council, which is the supreme authority and consists of the Ministers of Finance of the member countries; the Governing Board performing executive functions and consisting of one representative and one alternate for each member country; and the Director-General.

Activities

The resources consist of voluntary contributions made by OPEC members, loan repayments and the accumulated income derived from the Fund's investments and loans. The resources of the Fund, initially set at \$800 million, have been replenished repeatedly. At the end of the year 2006, contributions pledged to the Fund by its members amounted to \$3435 million of which \$2455 million were direct contributions.

A variety of loans to about 120 developing countries have been granted, on advantageous terms, since the Fund began operations. The geographic distribution of lending operations concentrated mainly on African countries south of the Sahara. Most projects financed by the Fund are co-financed by other development agencies. Direct loans are supplemented by grants for technical assistance, food aid and research. By the end of July 2007, the level of cumulative development assistance extended by the Fund stood at \$8967 million and disbursements reached \$5692 million, mostly concerning project loans in the public sector.

External relations

The Fund has played a significant role in the co-ordination of the policies of its member countries in various international forums and *vis-à-vis* international organizations, in particular the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Suleiman Jasir Al-Herbish

HEADQUARTERS: Parkring 8, PO Box 995, 1011 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 515640; fax: +43 1 513 9238)

WEBSITE: <http://www.opecfund.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; OPEC Fund Newsletter* (three a year); *OPEC Aid and OPEC Aid Institutions – A Profile* (annual)

REFERENCES: I. Shihata, *The OPEC Fund for International Development: The Formative Years* (London, 1983); A. Benamara and S. Ifeagwu (eds), *OPEC Aid and the Challenge of Development* (London, 1987)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Organization promotes economic growth, employment and improved standards of living in member countries – currently among the world's advanced industrial economies committed to the principles of the market economy and pluralist democracy – by assisting them in the formulation and co-ordination of the appropriate policies, and stimulates and harmonizes its members' efforts in favour of developing nations.

Origin and development

The Convention establishing the Organization was signed in Paris on 14 December 1960 and entered into effect on 30 September 1961. The Organization succeeded – with a new title, an enlarged membership and wider aims and functions – the Organization for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). The OEEC had been created on 16 April 1948 primarily to administer Marshall Plan aid, in conjunction with the Economic Co-operation Administration (ECA) set up by the US, with the long-term objective of promoting the achievement of a sound European economy through the co-operative effort of its members. Although participation was formally open to 'any signatory European country', the OEEC became in fact a Western European body, since the USSR and the Eastern European countries refused to join; in particular, Poland and Czechoslovakia recanted, under Soviet

pressure, their affirmative replies to the Marshall Plan Conference held in Paris between July and September 1947. In early 1949, the USSR and the countries of Eastern Europe riposted on the institutional plane by establishing the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA; Comecon) with the basic goal of organizing multilateral economic co-operation between them. Notwithstanding the lack of any reference to the possibility of associate membership in the OEEC Convention, Canada, Japan, and the US were granted the status of associate members of the OEEC.

At the end of the 1950s, it was felt that the fundamental aims of the OEEC had been largely fulfilled with the economic recovery of Western Europe and that a new institution, with an emphasis on the promotion of members' economic growth and aid to developing nations and a broadened field of operation, should be set up, with the accession of Canada and the US as full members. A proposal to that effect was put forward in a communiqué issued in Paris in December 1959 by the representatives of France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the UK and the US. Discussions took place throughout 1960 and a Preparatory Committee was entrusted with the task of drafting the Convention creating the new institution. The reconstitution of the OEEC as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was eventually accomplished with the signature of the Convention by the representatives of 18 Western European countries plus Canada and the US. Another European country, Finland, and three non-European countries, Australia, Japan and New Zealand, acceded to the Convention between 1964 and 1973. The Organization's membership was unchanged for two decades until the accession of Mexico in May 1994. Among former socialist countries of Eastern Europe, the Czech Republic was the first to join the Organization in December 1995, followed by Hungary in March and Poland in July 1996, and Slovakia in December 2000. South Korea joined in October 1996. Any sovereign country may be invited, by unanimous decision, to join the Organization; the right of withdrawal may be exercised by giving 12 months' notice to that effect. Unlike the OEEC Convention, there is no provision concerning the expulsion of members.

Membership

The Organization groups 30 industrial countries in all continents; the European Commission takes part in

the work of the Organization. Members account for nearly 60 per cent of the world's production of goods and services. Relations of various types are maintained with more than 70 developing and emerging market economies. A number of these countries participate as observers in the work of the Committees or other subsidiary bodies. In May 2007 the Organization decided to invite Chile, Estonia, Israel, Russia and Slovenia to open discussions for membership; an enhanced engagement, with a view to possible membership, was offered to Brazil, China, India, Indonesia and South Africa.

Objectives

According to the Convention, the Organization is responsible for promoting policies designed: (a) to achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy; (b) to contribute to sound economic expansion in member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development; and (c) to contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis in accordance with international obligations.

To this end, the member countries undertake, both individually and jointly, obligations with regard to: the efficient use of economic resources; the promotion of research and vocational training and the development of resources in the scientific and technological field; the pursuit of policies for the achievement of economic growth and internal and external financial stability, without endangering the economies of other countries; the reduction or abolition of obstacles to the exchange of goods and services and current payments and the maintenance and extension of the liberalization of capital movements; the economic development of both member and non-member countries in the process of economic development by appropriate means, in particular the flow of capital, taking into account the importance of technical assistance and of securing expanding export markets.

With a view to fulfilling these undertakings, the member countries agree: (a) to keep each other informed and provide the Organization with the information necessary for the accomplishment of its tasks; (b) to consult together on a continuing basis, carry out studies and participate in agreed projects; and (c) to co-operate closely and, where appropriate, take co-ordinated action.

Since the mid-1990s the Organization's responsibilities and areas of competence have been growing with regard to emerging market economies, particularly the countries that are moving from centrally planned systems to integration into the global economy.

Structure

The Council, from which 'all acts of the Organization derive', is the supreme governing body, composed of one representative for each member country. It meets either at the level of permanent representatives (that is the heads of national delegations with rank of ambassador), about twice a month, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, or at ministerial level, usually once a year, under the chairmanship of a minister elected annually. The Council is responsible for all questions of general policy and is empowered to establish an Executive Committee and such subsidiary bodies as may be required to achieve the aims of the Organization. Each year the Council designates 14 of its members to form the Executive Committee, called upon to prepare the work of the Council itself and, where appropriate, to carry out specific tasks; the Committee has power of decision only upon express delegation by the Council. In addition to regular meetings, the Executive Committee holds twice a year special sessions with the participation of senior government officials.

The Organization is empowered to adopt decisions which, except as otherwise provided, are binding on all members, to address recommendations to members and to enter into agreements with members, non-members and international institutions. Decisions and recommendations are adopted by mutual consent of all members, each having one vote; in special cases, a majority vote may suffice, if the Organization unanimously agrees to that effect. Abstentions do not impair the vote and abstaining members are not bound by any act adopted without their consent. Moreover, no decision is binding on any member until it has complied with the requirements of its own constitutional procedures.

The Secretariat, performing technical and administrative functions, is headed by a Secretary-General appointed by, and responsible to, the Council. The Secretary-General assists the Council in all appropriate ways and has the power of submitting his own proposals to the Council or any other body of the Organization. Four Deputy

Secretaries-General as well as special counsellors and advisers assist the Secretary-General.

Each year the Secretary-General presents to the Council for approval an annual budget, accounts and such subsidiary budgets as may be necessary. The general expenses of the Organization are apportioned among member countries according to a scale fixed by the Council; other expenditures are financed on such basis as the Council may decide. The US is the largest contributor, providing about 25 per cent of the budget, followed by Japan.

The Council has made ample use of its authority to set up subsidiary organs for the performance of the Organization's functions. The largest part of the work is prepared and carried out by specialized committees, working parties and expert groups currently numbering about 200 and involving each year some 40,000 senior officials from national administrations. The Economic Policy Committee, composed of governments' senior officials with a major responsibility for the formulation of general economic policies and central bankers, is chiefly concerned with economic growth and the related policy measures. The Economic and Development Review Committee is in charge of the preparation of the annual economic surveys of individual member countries whose results are regularly published.

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) – consisting of the representatives of the Organization's major capital-exporting members and the European Commission – aims to expand the aggregate volume of resources made available to developing countries, to improve their effectiveness and to conduct periodical reviews of the amount and nature of its members' contributions to aid programmes, both bilateral and multilateral.

Other bodies, whose fields of action and competences have often evolved to meet changing needs, include those dealing with: Environment; Public Management; Trade; Financial, Fiscal and Enterprise Affairs; Science, Technology and Industry; Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs; Food, Agriculture and Fisheries; Territorial Development Services.

The variety of functions assigned to the Organization has involved the establishment of a number of operating agencies, related in varying degrees to the Organization's machinery, which enjoy autonomous or semi-autonomous status. These bodies, each one of them with its own governing committee, comprise – besides the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the OECD Nuclear Energy

Agency (NEA) – the Development Centre, created in 1962 for the analysis of development and aid problems and policies as well as for the training of specialists, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), established in 1968 to facilitate the introduction of reforms in the educational systems of member countries, and the Sahel and West Africa Club, providing a forum for consultation with the countries of the Sahel region of Western Africa.

In 1989, members of the Group of Seven (G-7) meeting in Paris called for the creation of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF). Although FATF is an independent body and not part of OECD, its Secretariat is based at the Organization's headquarters in Paris.

The Centre for Co-operation with Non-Members (CCNM), established in 1998 by merging two other bodies, is in charge of all activities related to emerging and transition economies. It manages two types of programmes: the first deals with policy themes (such as trade, investment, taxation and the environment) while the second is country- or region-based. Major country programmes are being implemented for Brazil, China and Russia. The Centre co-ordinates the Organization's relations with other international bodies.

OECD Centres have been established in Berlin, Mexico, Tokyo and Washington, DC.

Activities

The Organization has been actively engaged over four decades in a wide range of activities which have represented, to a certain extent, a continuation of the work of the OEEC within an expanded framework and with revised purposes to reflect the changes in the world and European contexts. In spite of the purely voluntary character of co-operation, since the ultimate implementation of the Organization's decisions rests with each member country, co-ordinated action has been carried out in a number of areas of major importance, such as international trade rules, capital movements, export credits and aid to developing countries. The publication of regular surveys, specialized reports and monographs, and statistics on economic and social subjects has largely contributed to a deeper understanding of the state of the economies of both member and non-member countries. Conferences, seminars and other meetings at different levels have often provided an in-depth analysis of many problems affecting the growth prospects of industrial countries and their relations with developing

nations. Periods of low growth in developed countries, inflation, high interest rates and unemployment have encouraged protectionist trading and industrial policies and consequently involved reductions in the level of concessional aid. On the other hand, conflicts of economic interests between the European countries and the US as well as long-standing tensions between all of them and Japan – as illustrated in the early 1990s in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations – have repeatedly affected co-operation between members. New tasks have emerged for the Organization in order to assist and sustain the transition process in Eastern Europe and the former USSR.

The situation in developing countries remains a major concern of the Organization with continuing scrutiny of the record of aid and co-operation and the attempt to link more effectively aid recipients to the design and execution of co-operation programmes. Sustainable economic and social development remains the basic goal of DAC through the promotion of co-ordinated and adequately financed international efforts to help populations of developing countries overcome poverty and participate fully in society.

Priority activities of the Organization include: the analysis of policy changes necessary to address the fiscal, financial and labour market implications of ageing; the preparation of a set of corporate governance standards to increase transparency and accountability of enterprises; the study and comparison of member countries' education and training systems and of their interaction with the labour market; the development of possible policy responses to electronic commerce in areas such as taxation, consumer fraud and protection, privacy and security; co-operation with non-member countries with a view to extending the Organization's norms and standards regarding taxation; and the prevention of international bribery and corruption, especially through the 'Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions' entered into force on 15 February 1999.

At present, the Organization's management is being reformed with regard to several aspects including burden-sharing of the budget, rules on decision-making and prospects of enlarging membership.

External relations

The Organization has gradually developed a complex network of co-operative relations with

many international agencies, including those belonging to the UN system. Particularly close relations exist with international economic and social institutions, intergovernmental as well as non-governmental, operating in Europe, in order to achieve an effective co-ordination of policies and efforts. Regular dialogue is under way with the most dynamic economies in East Asia and Latin America.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Angel Gurría

HEADQUARTERS: 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4524 8200; fax: +33 1 4524 8500)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oecd.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Activities of OECD* (Annual Report of the Secretary-General); *OECD Economic Outlook* (twice a year); *Employment Outlook* (annual); *The OECD Observer* (every two months); *Main Economic Indicators* (monthly); *Economic Survey* (annually for each member country); *Development Co-operation Report* (annual)

REFERENCES: H.G. Aubrey, *Atlantic Economic Co-operation: The Case of OECD* (New York, 1967); M.J. Esman and D.S. Cheever, *The Common Aid Effort. The Development Assistance Activities of the OECD* (Columbus, OH, 1967); M. Camps, *First World Relationships: The Role of the OECD* (New York, 1975); D.J. Blair, *Trade Negotiations in the OECD: Structures, Institutions and States* (London, 1993); B.L. Long, *International Environmental Issues and the OECD, 1950–2000: An Historical Perspective* (Paris, 2000); K. Armingeon and M. Beyeler (eds), *The OECD and European Welfare States* (Cheltenham, UK, 2004)

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

The Organization – called Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) until December 1994 – is the most important pan-European body for political and security consultation and co-ordination, bringing together on equal terms countries 'from Vancouver to Vladivostok'. It is active in early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation.

Origin and development

The origins of the Organization date back to the proposals put forward in the late 1960s by the USSR with a view to sanctioning the political and territorial *status quo* in Europe resulting from World War II. After considerable diplomatic efforts, an invitation of the Finnish government was accepted by nearly all European countries as well as by Canada and the US. Multilateral preparatory talks started in Helsinki in November 1972. The talks developed over three stages, the first and last taking place in Helsinki and the second in Geneva. At the end of the first stage, on 3–7 July 1973, the Foreign Ministers of the 35 participating countries approved the Final Recommendations, which were to constitute the scheme for the Final Act of the CSCE. Negotiations continued intermittently in Geneva from 19 September 1973 to 21 July 1975. From 30 July to 1 August 1975 the Conference was held in Helsinki with the participation of leaders from 35 countries and the European Communities.

The Final Act was signed in Helsinki on 1 August 1975 and represented a major achievement in the process of *détente*. The Final Act consisted of three main 'baskets': methods to prevent accidental confrontations between the opposing military blocs; proposals for economic, scientific and technological co-operation respecting the two different economic and social systems; an understanding on closer contacts between peoples of the two different systems, together with a reaffirmation of respect for human rights. Although no specific institutional mechanism was set up, the Final Act envisaged a series of follow-up conferences and experts' meetings, thus giving birth to the CSCE 'process'. Follow-up conferences were held in Belgrade (4 October 1977–9 March 1978), Madrid (11 November 1980–9 September 1983), and Vienna (4 November 1986–15 January 1989). The Vienna meeting brought about a new understanding on human rights and agreements on mandates for two new sets of negotiations on conventional armed forces, among the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact, and on Confidence and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) among all CSCE members. As a result of the political and military developments taking place since 1989, the East–West relationship changed beyond recognition and the Cold War came to an end.

A summit meeting of CSCE Heads of Government – only the second in the history of the Conference – took place on 19–21 November 1990 in

Paris, ending with the signature of the 'Charter of Paris for a New Europe' pledging steadfast commitment to democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms, prosperity through economic liberty and equal security for all countries. On the first day of the Summit, a far-reaching Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) was signed by 22 countries, that is the 16 members of NATO and the six members of the Warsaw Pact. The Office for Free Elections (which became in July 1999 the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights/ODIHR) was set up in Warsaw.

The fourth follow-up meeting of the CSCE, held in Helsinki, started in March 1992 and was concluded with the third Summit of the Heads of State or Government on 9–10 July. The CSCE Helsinki Document 1992 consists of the Helsinki Summit Declaration and the Helsinki Decisions entitled 'The Challenges of Change'. The Helsinki Document formally proclaimed the Conference a 'regional organization' under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter with a view to strengthening its role in conflict prevention and crisis management. The Helsinki meeting also decided the establishment of the High Commissioner on National Minorities and the creation of the Forum for Security Co-operation, laying the foundation for a new approach to military aspects of security.

On 24 March 1992 agreement was reached, by members of NATO and the former Warsaw Pact, on the 'Open Skies' Treaty, permitting aerial reconnaissance missions by one country over another on the basis of reciprocity.

The first CSCE Implementation Meeting on the Human Dimension took place in late 1993 in Warsaw to review the situation in member countries with respect to democracy, the rule of law, minorities, migration, torture and the death penalty.

A new role and a new name for the then CSCE resulted from the review conference held in Budapest from 10 October to 2 December 1994 and the following Summit of the Heads of State or Government (5–6 December) which adopted a Document entitled 'Towards a Genuine Partnership in a New Era'. Major differences emerged between participating countries on a number of issues, but agreement was eventually reached in several key areas. The Organization was established as a primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention and crisis management and the institutional structure was strengthened accordingly. A

'Code of Conduct' was adopted concerning the political and military aspects of security, including the democratic control of armed forces and their use in internal situations.

Membership

The Organization currently groups 56 countries (all European states, including republics of the former USSR and the former Yugoslavia, plus Canada and the US). Regular consultations on security issues of common concern are held with a number of non-European countries. Afghanistan, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia and Thailand are the Organization's 'Partners for Co-operation' while Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia are the 'Mediterranean Partners'.

Objectives

The Organization was originally devoted to the promotion of co-operation in three main areas: military security; economic and trade relations; and observance of human rights. It was later strengthened and extended to foster security and stability in all their dimensions on the basis of a comprehensive and co-operative approach. Since the Organization is based on the principle of co-operative security, all participating countries have equal status and decide on the basis of consensus. Mutual accountability, transparency and confidence at both the domestic and the foreign policy levels should characterize the partnership developing within the framework of the Organization.

The upgrading from CSCE to OSCE is clear evidence of the determination of countries from so extensive a 'region', including both the Transatlantic and Eurasian dimensions, to create an umbrella organization with wide-ranging objectives and competences in economic and security-related issues.

Structure

The institutionalization of the CSCE and then of the OSCE has been a lengthy and somewhat complicated process. The Western countries participating in the diplomatic exercise of the Conference were initially reluctant to adopt measures to create a permanent institutional framework. Only gradually did the organizational structure develop and become stronger. The inclusion of a section on 'New Structures and Institutions of the CSCE Process' in the 'Charter of Paris for a New Europe' in 1990 was a turning point in the establishment of a proper

operational mechanism. During the 1990s a whole system of structures and institutions materialized which comprises the following decision-making and negotiating bodies: Summits; Review Conferences; Ministerial Council; Permanent Council; Senior Council; and Forum for Security Co-operation.

Summits are periodic meetings of the Heads of State or Government of member countries to decide priorities and provide guidelines for the functioning of the Organization. Review conferences (formerly called follow-up meetings) precede and prepare for Summits. They provide for the assessment of the whole range of the Organization's activities and the final negotiation of documents, decisions and statements to be adopted by Summits. Special implementation reviews are also held on CSBMs and the human, economic and environmental dimension. The Ministerial Council (formerly called the CSCE Council of Ministers) consists of the Foreign Ministers and is the principal decision-making and governing body between the Summits; it is also endowed with extensive powers in the field of conflict prevention and crisis management. The Permanent Council (formerly Permanent Committee) is the body for regular political consultation and decision-making, which is in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Organization. It consists of the permanent representatives of member countries meeting weekly in Vienna. Besides formal sessions of the Permanent Council, numerous informal and committee meetings are held to ensure frequent exchanges of views and to follow developments in the Organization's area of competence. The Permanent Council has taken up most of the work previously carried out by the Senior Council (formerly called Committee of Senior Officials); the latter body, in fact, has been meeting since 1997 only as the Economic Forum. Within the economic and environmental dimension, the Economic Forum meets once a year in Prague. The Forum for Security Co-operation, consisting of the representatives of member countries, meets in Vienna, at weekly intervals, in order to consult and negotiate on arms control, disarmament and CSBMs.

The Organization's bodies make their decisions by consensus; decisions are politically but not legally binding for the member countries. The decision-making process is co-ordinated by the Chairman-in-Office who is responsible for setting the agenda and organizing the work of the

Organization's negotiating and decision-making bodies. The position of Chairman-in-Office is held by a minister of foreign affairs of a member country for a one-year term.

The Secretariat, based in Vienna and assisted by an office in Prague, provides operational support under the direction of the Secretary-General.

The post of High Commissioner on National Minorities was established in 1992 and the first incumbent took up his functions in January 1993 at The Hague. The role of the High Commissioner is to identify and seek early resolution of ethnic tensions likely to endanger peace, stability or friendly relations between member countries. As an 'instrument of conflict prevention' providing early warning and early action, the High Commissioner is empowered to conduct on-site missions and to engage in preventive diplomacy. Individual cases regarding persons belonging to national minorities are explicitly excluded from the mandate of the High Commissioner.

The ODIHR, under a Director, is active in the fields of election observation, democratization (from electoral assistance to training on constitutional and legal matters, from freedom of movement to gender issues) and works in close contact with international human-rights bodies.

The Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media was set up in 1997 in order to provide a rapid response in grave cases of non-compliance with the Organization's principles and commitments on freedom of media and of expression.

The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly gathers more than 300 parliamentarians from member countries in annual sessions with the aim of promoting parliamentary involvement in the Organization's activities and facilitating inter-parliamentary dialogue and co-operation. The Assembly, whose International Secretariat is located in Copenhagen, held its first formal session in Budapest in July 1992.

In December 1994 the Convention on Conciliation and Arbitration within the OSCE (signed in Stockholm in December 1992), establishing a Court to be based in Geneva, came into effect. Although it is related to the Organization, the Court is not an OSCE institution in the proper sense since the Convention binds only the countries that have accepted to become parties. The Court is not a permanent body but rather a roster of conciliators and arbitrators; only when a dispute is submitted, an ad hoc Conciliation Commission or an ad hoc Arbitral Tribunal is established. In 1999, the

Permanent Council decided to place the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe under the auspices of the OSCE.

The Organization has about 20 field missions or other activities operating in 17 countries.

Activities

Since the early 1990s, the Organization has carried out a series of initiatives intended to reduce dangerous tensions and prevent the outbreak of armed conflicts, ranging from long-term missions in regions of the former Yugoslavia and the Caucasus and sanction assistance missions to support UN sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) to the supervision of parliamentary and presidential elections and referendums in several Central and Eastern European countries. At the December 1995 Ministerial Meeting in Budapest, the Organization accepted the request of the signatory parties to the Dayton Peace Agreement to play a key role in building peace, democracy and stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Organization was therefore called to face a huge challenge supervising elections, monitoring respect of human rights and assisting the parties in negotiations on arms control and confidence-building measures. Involvement in police-related activities began for the Organization in 1998 in Croatia with advisory and monitoring tasks which further extended to other areas.

On the whole field operations represent one of the most innovative operational aspects of the Organization's activities.

The Lisbon Summit, held on 2-3 December 1996, adopted the 'Lisbon Declaration on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the 21st Century' outlining the security challenges that face member countries and the possibilities for co-operative approaches. The 'Charter for European Security' and the 'Istanbul Summit Declaration' were among the results of the Istanbul Summit which took place on 18-19 November 1999. The Charter contains a 'Platform for Co-operative Security' aimed at strengthening the relationship between the Organization and other relevant international institutions. Besides developing the Organization's role in peacekeeping operations, the Charter created a new mechanism to speed up staff deployment and established an Operations Centre at the Secretariat to facilitate the Organization's field operations. The 1992 CFE Treaty was also

adapted through the conclusion of an Agreement, signed in Istanbul by 30 countries, reflecting the need to foster arms reduction negotiations on a national and territorial basis.

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the Organization's Ministerial Council adopted the 'Bucharest Action Plan' in December of that year with a view to co-ordinating and strengthening efforts to counter terrorist activities. Conflicting political interests and views among major powers and longstanding ethnic rivalries, often degenerating into open conflicts, continue to represent a crucial test of the ability of the Organization to settle disputes by peaceful means and to inaugurate the 'new era of democracy, peace and unity' announced by the Charter of Paris. A thorough debate on strengthening the role and effectiveness of the Organization has been going on since the early years of the 21st century and suggestions for reform are being considered in line with the evolving security environment.

External relations

The building-up of an institutional framework has favoured the establishment of links with other international agencies concerned with the promotion of comprehensive security within the Organization's area. Co-operation takes place both at the level of political consultations and in the field. Since 1993 the Organization has enjoyed observer status at the General Assembly of the UN; agreement was reached in 1994 on a division of responsibilities between the Organization and the UN for operations in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. Close relations exist with the Council of Europe, with bilateral high-level meetings being held annually; co-operation is especially significant with regard to election monitoring and the human dimension. On the basis of the Declaration on Co-operation endorsed on 17 May 2005, in Warsaw, between the Organization and the Council of Europe further improvements in the mutual relationship are expected. Tripartite high-level meetings take place between the Organization, the Council of Europe, and the Geneva-based UN institutions and agencies to coordinate activities on issues and geographical areas of common concern. The Organization co-operates closely with the European Union (EU) in a growing number of fields. As regards security and peacekeeping questions, regular contacts and exchange of information are maintained with

NATO. Links are also expanding between the Organization and economic and financial institutions such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Marc Perrin de Brichambaut

SECRETARIAT: Kärntner Ring 5-7, 1010 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 514 36180; fax: +43 1 514 36105)

WEBSITE: <http://www.osce.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Secretary-General*; *OSCE Magazine*; *OSCE Factsheets*

REFERENCES: L.V. Ferraris (ed.), *Report on a Negotiation: Helsinki-Geneva-Helsinki 1972-1975* (Leiden, 1979); J. Freeman, *Security and the CSCE Process: The Stockholm Conference and Beyond* (London, 1991); S. Lehne, *The Vienna Meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1986-89: A Turning Point in East-West Relations* (Oxford, 1991); A. Heraclides, *Security and Co-operation in Europe: The Human Dimension 1972-1992* (London, 1992); V. Mastny, *The Helsinki Process and the Reintegration of Europe, 1986-1991: Analysis and Documentation* (London, 1992); A. Bloed (ed.), *The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe: Analysis and Basic Documents, 1972-1993* (Dordrecht, 1993); M.R. Lucas (ed.), *The CSCE in the 1990s: Constructing European Security and Co-operation* (Baden-Baden, 1993); J. Borawski, *A Better Peace: The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe* (Tampere, 1996); G. de Nooy, *Cooperative Security, the OSCE and its Code of Conduct* (The Hague, 1997); V.-Y. Ghebali and D. Warner (eds), *The Operational Role of the OSCE in South-Eastern Europe* (Aldershot, UK, 2001); M.R. Freire, *Conflict and Security in Former Soviet Union: The Role of the OSCE* (Burlington, VT, 2003); J. Leatherman, *From Cold War to Democratic Peace: Third Parties, Peaceful Change, and the OSCE* (Syracuse, NY, 2003); V.-Y. Ghebali and A. Lambert, *The OSCE Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security: Anatomy and Implementation* (Boston, 2005)

Organization for the Development of the Senegal River

[Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal] (OMVS)

The Organization groups four countries to exploit the resources of the Senegal basin.

Origin and development

Mali, Mauritania and Senegal decided the establishment of the Organization on 11 March 1972. After following the activities of the Organization as an observer since 1987, Guinea became a member in 1995. The founding treaty was amended in 1995 with a view to developing co-operation with foreign private entrepreneurs.

Membership

All four countries of the subregion.

Objectives

The Organization's purpose is to develop, by means of a close co-operation among member countries, the resources of the Senegal basin (agricultural, industrial and mining projects, hydroelectric power stations, ports).

Structure

The Conference of the Heads of State and Government of the member countries represents the highest decision-making body.

Activities

The Djama dam in Senegal was completed in 1986 and the Manantali dam in Mali was completed in 1988. Two companies were established on 7 January 1997 to manage the dams: the Société de Gestion et d'Exploitation du Barrage de Djama (SOGED), and the Société de Gestion de l'Energie de Manantali (SOGEM). Other programmes concern the development of hydroelectric power stations on the Senegal river.

HIGH COMMISSIONER: Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug

HEADQUARTERS: 46 rue Carnot, PO Box 3152, Dakar, Senegal (telephone: +221 823 4530; fax: +221 822 0163)

WEBSITE: <http://www.omvs.org>

Organization for the Management and Development of the Kagera River Basin

[Organisation pour l'aménagement et le développement du bassin de la rivière Kagera] (OBK)

The Organization groups four countries for the exploitation of the Kagera basin.

Origin and development

The Organization was formed in 1977 but recurring tensions and interstate and intra-state conflicts have hindered significant progress.

Membership

Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda are full members.

Objectives

The Organization aims to achieve the integrated development and management of the water and land resources of the Kagera river basin.

Activities

Projects have been envisaged in the fields of agricultural development, river transport, telecommunications, and construction of a hydroelectric dam and of a railway network linking member countries. Severe political instability in the region accompanied by factional fighting and civil wars have been negatively affecting co-operation efforts for several years.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Jean-Bosco Balinda

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 297, Kigali, Rwanda (telephone +250 7 84665; fax: +250 7 82172)

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

The Organization is an international disarmament body for the destruction of all stocks of chemical weapons within a fixed time frame and the prohibition of the use and development of this category of weapons through the regular inspection of chemical industries.

Origin and development

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons (CWC) was signed in Paris on 13 January 1993 and entered into force on 29 April 1997. The Organization was established, according to the CWC, to ensure the implementation of the relevant provisions, including the verification of international compliance, and to provide a forum for consultation and co-operation.

Membership

The Organization has 182 member countries that contribute to the budget according to the size of their economies. Among countries that have not signed or acceded to the CWC are Angola, Egypt, Iraq, North Korea and Somalia.

Objectives

Under the CWC, signatory countries commit themselves to never, under any circumstances: develop, acquire, stockpile, retain or transfer chemical weapons to anyone; use chemical weapons; engage in military preparations to use chemical weapons; assist or encourage anyone to engage in an activity forbidden by the CWC. Furthermore, parties to the CWC undertake: to destroy chemical weapons they possess or which are located in any place under their jurisdiction or control; to destroy all chemical weapons they abandoned on the territory of another party; to destroy chemical weapons production facilities they possess or that are located in places under their jurisdiction or control; and not to use riot control agents as a method of warfare.

Structure

The Conference of States Parties is the principal decision-making organ meeting annually to review all matters concerning the CWC and oversee its implementation. The 41-member Executive Council, under a Chair and four Vice-Chairs, follows all issues affecting the CWC with special regard to compliance; cases of non-compliance are brought by the Council to the attention of the Conference. Members of the Executive Council are elected for a two-year term paying due regard to equitable geographical representation, to importance of chemical industry, and to political and security interests. Ten members are elected from the group of Western European and Other States; nine members each are elected from Africa and Asia; seven from Latin America and the Caribbean; five

from Eastern Europe. A further seat rotates between Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Executive Council co-operates with the national authority of each State Party. The Technical Secretariat, headed by a Director-General elected for a four-year term, performs administrative duties and tasks related to inspections.

Activities

Intensive verification activities – including the planning and conduct of inspections covering chemical weapons-related facilities as well as chemical industry plants – have already been carried out by the Organization. A programme has been launched to help a number of States Parties set up their national implementation institutions and processes. Despite considerable challenges, the destruction of chemical weapons is going on in four of the six States Parties that have declared possession of such weapons.

External relations

The Organization is effectively supported in its activities by global, regional and subregional institutions such as the African Union (AU).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Rogelio Pflirter

HEADQUARTERS: Johan de Wittlaan 32, 2517 JR, The Hague, The Netherlands (telephone: +31 70 416 3300; fax: +31 70 306 3535)

WEBSITE: <http://www.opcw.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *OPCW Newsletter* (quarterly); *Chemical Disarmament* (quarterly)

Organization of African Unity (OAU)

See **African Union**.

Organization of American States (OAS)

The Organization, which is the oldest international regional agency in the world, aims to promote peace and security and economic and social development in the western hemisphere, to strengthen democracy and to speed the process of economic integration among the nations of the Americas.

Origin and development

The Organization's Charter was signed on 30 April 1948 in Bogotá, Colombia, by the representatives of 20 Latin American countries and the US, in order to consolidate the principles, purposes and policies that had been evolving since 1890 within the framework of the inter-American system. The Charter entered into effect on 13 December 1951. The original members were subsequently joined by several Commonwealth Caribbean countries, Suriname, Belize and Guyana. Although Cuba as a national entity is still considered a member, its 'present government' was excluded from participation in the inter-American system in 1962. Canada, a long-time permanent observer, eventually requested to join the Organization in October 1989 and acquired full membership in January 1990.

The first move towards a coalition of the American republics dates back to the signing by Colombia, Central America, Peru and Mexico in 1826 of the Treaty of Perpetual Union, League and Confederation at the Amphictyonic Congress of Panama convoked by Simón Bolívar. The bases for the inter-American system were formally laid at the First International Conference of American States (held in Washington DC from October 1889 to April 1890), with the establishment of the International Union of American Republics served by a central office, the Commercial Bureau located in Washington, for the promotion of trade and the exchange of commercial information among the member states. The 1890 agreement was signed on 14 April, a date that has ever since been celebrated as Pan American Day. The conferences held in 1901 and 1906 extended the scope of inter-American co-operation, approved conventions on international law and arbitration and developed the role of the Commercial Bureau. At the Fourth International Conference of American States in 1910 the name of the organization was changed to Union of American Republics and the Commercial Bureau was renamed the Pan American Union. The four conferences that followed in 1923, 1928, 1933 and 1938 laid the foundation for closer economic, social, cultural and juridical co-operation within the Union, established 'non intervention' as a basic principle of the inter-American system and proclaimed the solidarity of the member countries against all foreign intervention or aggression. Substantial headway towards the consolidation and strengthening of inter-American peace and security was made through the adoption in 1945 of the Act of

Chapultepec on Reciprocal Assistance and American Solidarity. The provisions of the Act were embodied in the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) of 2 September 1947 representing the first comprehensive convention on collective security to which all the American states became parties.

Finally, at the Ninth International Conference of American States which met at Bogotá in March-May 1948, a Charter was adopted and the Union of American Republics changed its name to Organization of American States, while the General Secretariat of the Organization continued to be called the Pan American Union until 1970. The Ninth Conference also approved the American Treaty on Pacific Settlement (Pact of Bogotá) intended to replace the existing agreements for the prevention and peaceful solution of disputes. The Organization's Charter was substantially revised by the Protocol of Amendment signed on 27 February 1967 at the Third Special Inter-American Conference held in Buenos Aires. The amendments, setting new standards for co-operation and establishing the General Assembly as the supreme organ in place of the Inter-American Conference, entered into effect on 27 February 1970. Other amendments to the Charter are contained in the Protocol of Cartagena de Indias, approved on 5 December 1985 and entered into force in November 1988; these amendments modified admission rules and increased the powers of the Secretary-General and of the Permanent Council. The Protocol of Washington, adopted on 14 December 1992 and entered into force in September 1997, also amended the Charter incorporating a provision for the suspension of any member whose democratic government had been overthrown by force. Further amendments were introduced on 10 June 1993 through the Protocol of Managua (entered into force in January 1996) creating an Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CID) to replace two existing Councils and strengthening the Organization's activities in the field of technical co-operation.

Any independent American state wishing to join the Organization may be admitted, upon recommendation of the Permanent Council, by decision of the General Assembly; both the recommendation and the decision require a two-thirds majority. The status of permanent observer was officially created in 1971 to enable co-operating non-member countries to participate in the Organization's meetings.

Membership

Member countries of the Organization now total 35, but Cuba's participation remains suspended despite calls from some members for its unconditional return. Permanent observer status has been granted to over 40 states, including several European, African and Asian countries as well as the European Union (EU).

Objectives

The Organization is devoted to the strengthening of the security of the western hemisphere, the settlement of inter-American disputes by pacific means, and the promotion, through co-operative efforts, of its members' economic, social and cultural development. The Organization has a formal relationship with the UN as a regional arrangement for the maintenance of peace and security.

The basic goals of the Organization are to achieve an order of peace and justice, promote and consolidate representative democracy, foster mutual solidarity and co-operation and defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the member states. The Charter reaffirms the principle that 'an act of aggression against one American state is an act of aggression against all the other American states' and solemnly proclaims the fundamental rights of the individual regardless of race, nationality, creed or sex and the equal rights and duties of states. The duty to abstain from intervention in the internal or external affairs of any other state is meant to imply proscription not only of armed force but also of 'any other form of interference or attempted threat against the personality of the state or against its political, economic and cultural elements'. Besides the submission of inter-American disputes to peaceful procedures and the safeguard of collective security, the Charter provides a wide range of mechanisms to improve economic, social, educational, scientific and cultural standards and to support regional economic integration. The eradication of 'extreme poverty which constitutes an obstacle to the full democratic development of the peoples of the hemisphere' was included among the Organization's basic goals by the 1992 Protocol of Washington. Through the Summit of the Americas process, the Organization has been given the mandates to strengthen freedom of speech and thought as a basic human right, to promote greater participation by civil society in decision-making at all levels of government and to improve co-operation to address the problem of illegal drugs.

Structure

The governing bodies of the Organization are: the General Assembly; the Permanent Council; and the Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI).

The General Assembly consists of the representatives of all members, each having one vote, and holds its regular sessions during the second quarter of the year, either in one of the member countries or at headquarters. Special sessions may be convoked by the Permanent Council with the approval of two-thirds of the member countries. It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to determine the basic policies and actions of the Organization and to consider any matter of common interest to the member states; decisions are taken by absolute majority, except in those cases such as budgetary questions that require a two-thirds vote.

The Permanent Council is composed of one representative of each member country, with the rank of ambassador, and meets regularly at the Organization's headquarters in Washington. The office of the Chair of the Permanent Council is held for a rotating three-month term, according to the alphabetical order in Spanish of the names of the members. The Permanent Council deals with any matter referred to it by the General Assembly or by the Meetings of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs; these Meetings may be held to consider urgent problems of common interest to the American states. The Permanent Council also examines any other matter brought to its attention by the Secretary-General on issues concerning peace and security in the hemisphere or the development of member countries. Among the powers and functions of the Permanent Council are those related to the peaceful settlement of disputes; the Council functions as the Organ of Consultation as provided in the 1947 Rio Treaty. According to the Protocol of Cartagena, the Permanent Council is now allowed to try to resolve a dispute among members regardless of the fact that all the parties concerned (as previously stipulated) agree to take the matter before the Organization. Moreover, the Permanent Council is responsible for supervising the operation of the General Secretariat, improving the functioning of the Organization and developing co-operation with the UN and other international agencies.

The aim of CIDI, set up in January 1996, is the promotion of co-operation among member countries with a view to accelerating economic and social

development and fostering the elimination of poverty in America.

Several Committees and Commissions have been established including: the Inter-American Juridical Committee; the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the Inter-American Court of Human Rights; the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission; the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission; and the Inter-American Committee on Ports. The Inter-American Juridical Committee, consisting of 11 jurists from different member states and functioning in Rio de Janeiro, advises the Organization on legal matters, promotes the development and codification of international law and investigates problems related to the integration of the developing members and the possibility of achieving uniformity in their legislation. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights – a consultative organ set up in 1960 and composed of seven members chosen from panels presented by governments – seeks to promote the observance and protection of human rights and recommends measures and legislation conforming to the rules of the American Convention on Human Rights (Pact of San José) signed on 22 November 1969 and entered into force on 18 July 1978. The Inter-American Court of Human Rights, based in San José, Costa Rica, was established in 1978 as an autonomous judicial institution. It is composed of seven members and is responsible for the application and interpretation of the Pact of San José.

The General Secretariat, located in Washington, is the central and permanent organ carrying out the policies and programmes decided upon by the General Assembly, the Meetings of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Councils. It performs several functions assigned to it in other inter-American treaties and agreements. The Protocol of Cartagena has strengthened the role of the Secretary-General who is now empowered to bring to the attention of the Permanent Council matters that 'might threaten the peace and security of the hemisphere or the development of the member states'. According to the Protocol of Washington, the General Secretariat promotes economic, social, juridical, educational, scientific and cultural relations among member countries 'with special emphasis on co-operation for the elimination of extreme poverty'. Both the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General are elected by the General Assembly for a five-year term and may not be re-elected more than once or

succeeded by a person of the same nationality. The Assistant Secretary-General, who serves as adviser to the Secretary-General and may act as his delegate, is also Secretary of the Permanent Council and of its subsidiary organs, agencies and committees.

A significant role is played by the Specialized Organizations which are intergovernmental agencies established by multilateral agreements with specific functions concerning technical matters. While preserving their status as integral parts of the Organization and complying with the recommendations of the General Assembly and the Councils, these agencies enjoy full technical autonomy and maintain close relations with international bodies working in the same fields. At present there are Specialized Organizations dealing respectively with the promotion of health, the protection of children, the fight against terrorism, the extension of women's rights, geographical and historical studies, the welfare of indigenous peoples, and agricultural co-operation. The headquarters of the organizations are located in different member countries on the basis of geographical representation. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), whose seat is in Washington, is the oldest international sanitary agency in the world, serving also as the regional office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO).

In addition to the Specialized Organizations, a number of other agencies co-operate with various bodies of the Organization for the achievement of specific objectives within fields of common interest to all American countries. These agencies, all of which are based in Washington, include the Inter-American Defence Board, the Pan American Development Foundation, and the Administrative Tribunal, competent to pass judgment upon applications alleging non-observance of conditions established in appointments or contracts regarding staff members of the Organization's General Secretariat.

Activities

The Organization's status and role have changed remarkably over the past decades as a result of a number of critical issues emanating from within the inter-American system and not always conducive to the strengthening of an association embracing the US, Latin American and later also Caribbean countries. In addition, the evolution of the inter-American system itself has been importantly affected by crucial extra-hemispheric events and worldwide problems and pressures. The fundamental questions of peace

and security have increasingly been linked to economic and social development, the effective exercise of representative democracy and the respect for human rights. As regards the maintenance of international peace within the hemisphere, the Organization has been dealing with inter-American disputes (mainly occurring in the Caribbean and Central American region) and with threats of subversion and extra-continental intervention. Apart from the crises in Guatemala (1954) and the Dominican Republic (1965) and several boundary disputes, it was the Cuban issue which imposed the major strain upon inter-American relations. Despite the suspension of Cuba in 1962 and the repeated condemnation of Cuban sponsorship of subversive activities and acts of terrorism, the Organization proved unable to adopt a common policy towards the Castro regime. A resolution leaving the parties to the Rio Treaty free to normalize relations with Cuba was eventually approved in 1975. The recurring troubles and tensions in Central America pose other major challenges to the Organization's functions in the sphere of peace-keeping.

As regards the longstanding dispute between Argentina and the UK over the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs called on both parties to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the conflict, taking into account Argentina's 'rights of sovereignty' as well as the interests of the islanders.

Inter-American co-operation in the economic and social fields has been given growing attention over the past three decades in an effort to reconcile the primary concern of the US for hemispheric security with Latin American economic interests and rising expectations. The foundation in 1959 of a regional development bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), as an autonomous agency designed to finance loans to governments and public and private enterprises, represented a significant step towards more effective financial co-operation. A vast co-operative plan (the Alliance for Progress) to stimulate economic and social development in Latin America during the 1960s was officially launched at a Special Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in August 1961. However, despite the strong initial commitment of the US, only modest results were attained. The Organization has been effectively operating through comprehensive development programmes and specific projects in the field of technical assis-

tance and co-operation, while mostly leaving to the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) the task of encouraging and supporting the establishment of regional integration groups and 'common markets'. The protectionist practices and trade restrictions that are frequently used as instruments of 'economic aggression' against Latin American countries, and problems connected with unemployment, food shortages, strong inflationary pressures and the energy crisis have constituted matters of serious concern. Various records of achievement are to be found in other areas of inter-American co-operation – tourism, educational services, statistics, protection of the historical and archaeological heritage and improvement of traditional handicrafts.

The Organization – through its highly controversial organ, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights – has become deeply involved with the alleged violations of human rights by some of its members. Several resolutions on the subject have been adopted by the General Assembly, recommending *inter alia* the creation of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights subsequently installed in Costa Rica. The questions related to the consolidation of democracy and to the observance of human rights and their full legal recognition in the juridical as well as economic, social and cultural spheres exert considerable influence on inter-American relations and on the prospects for the integral development of the Latin American countries. Electoral assistance and observer missions have been sent by the Organization to a number of member countries. In June 1991 a resolution on representative democracy was adopted providing for an emergency meeting of the Permanent Council in the case of the abandonment of democratic procedures or the overthrow of a democratically elected government in a member country; the resolution was subsequently incorporated into the Protocol of Washington. Constitutional crises in Haiti, Peru and Guatemala were closely followed by the Organization in the early 1990s through *ad hoc* meetings of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The treatment reserved by the US to Cuba continued to represent a point of contention within the Organization in the mid-1990s. This was particularly the case with the 'Helms-Burton' legislation passed by the US Congress to tighten economic sanctions and punish foreign companies trading with Cuba. A 'leading role' had been assigned to the Organization by the First Summit of the Americas, convened in Miami on 9–11

December 1994 with the participation of Heads of State and Government of the western hemisphere, for the eventual creation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the implementation of a Plan of Action to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development. The Second Summit of the Americas, held in Santiago, Chile, on 18–19 April 1998, gave new mandates to the Organization in areas including human rights, trade, education, regional and national efforts against drugs and summit follow-up. The Third Summit met in Quebec City, Canada, in April 2001 and approved a Plan of Action to strengthen representative democracy, promote good governance and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Fourth Summit took place in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in November 2005 and adopted a Plan of Action with a view to creating jobs to fight poverty and strengthen democratic governance. The Fifth Summit is scheduled to take place in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009.

In fact, besides political and security issues, those of terrorism, organized crime, drug-trafficking and poverty are currently perceived by the Organization as major challenges to its efforts to establish a hemispheric order. The need to support and protect shared democratic principles and values in the Americas at the beginning of the twenty-first century led the General Assembly to approve the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The Charter, adopted on 11 September 2001 in Lima, declares that the peoples of the Americas 'have a right to democracy and their governments have an obligation to promote and defend it', and establishes procedures to exclude from the Organization any country experiencing a serious impairment of the democratic order.

External relations

Besides the formal link with the UN as a regional arrangement, the Organization co-operates more or less closely with ECLAC and UN specialized agencies as well as with many inter-American economic, technical and financial institutions.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: José Miguel Insulza

HEADQUARTERS: 17th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20006, USA (telephone: +1 202 458 3000; fax: +1 202 458 3967)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oas.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Secretary-General*; *Américas* (six times a year); *Statistical Bulletin* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: G. Connell-Smith, *The Inter-American System* (London, 1966); M.M. Ball, *The OAS in Transition* (Durham, NC, 1969); G. Plaza, *The Organization of American States: Instrument for Hemispheric Development* (Washington, DC, 1969); L.J. LeBlanc, *The OAS and the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights* (The Hague, 1977); L.R. Scheman, *The Inter-American Dilemma: The Search for Inter-American Co-operation at the Centennial of the Inter-American System* (New York, 1988); O.C. Stoetzer, *The Organization of American States*, (New York, 2nd edn, 1993); V.P. Vaty and H. Muñoz, *The Future of the Organization of American States* (New York, 1993); C.R. Thomas and J.T. Magloire, *Regionalism versus Multilateralism: The Organization of American States in a Global Changing Environment* (Boston, 2000); K. Dykmann, *The Human Rights Policy of the Organization of American States in Latin America: Philanthropic Endeavours or the Exploitation of an Ideal?* (Princeton, NJ, 2004); C. Gaviria Trujillo, *The OAS in Transition, 1994–2004* (Washington, DC, 2004); C.M. Shaw, *Cooperation, Conflict, and Consensus in the Organization of American States* (New York, 2004)

Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC)

The Organization groups Arab oil-exporting countries in the Middle East and Africa and aims to develop their co-operation in the petroleum sector.

Origin and development

Established by an agreement signed in Beirut on 9 January 1968 by the governments of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Libya, the Organization was subsequently joined by other Arab oil-exporting countries in Africa (Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia) and Asia (Bahrain, Iraq, Qatar, Syria and the United Arab Emirates). Tunisia withdrew at the end of 1986 since its status had changed from net exporter to net importer of energy. Egypt's membership, suspended in April 1979 after the signing of the bilateral peace treaty with Israel, was restored in May 1989.

Membership

Membership is restricted to Arab countries with oil revenues representing a significant part of GNP. Current members are: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates.

Objectives

The basic aim of the Organization is to safeguard the interests of member countries and to determine ways and means to implement mutual co-operation and co-ordination in various forms of economic activity in the petroleum industry. Besides the establishment of close co-operative links and the protection of the legitimate interests, individual as well as collective, of member countries, the Organization is entrusted with the tasks of securing the supply of petroleum to consumer countries at equitable and reasonable prices and creating favourable conditions for capital and technological investments in the oil industry.

Structure

The basic institutional structure of the Organization includes the Ministerial Council, the Executive Bureau and the General Secretariat. The Council, which is the supreme authority meeting at least twice a year, consists of the representatives of all members, normally the Ministers of Petroleum, each with one vote. The Council formulates the general policy of the Organization, directs its activities and lays down its governing rules; it is chaired for one-year terms by the representative of each country in turn. The Executive Bureau, whose members are senior officials appointed by each country, is the principal executive organ, normally meeting before the sessions of the Council and responsible for the management of the Organization's affairs, the implementation of resolutions and recommendations and the drawing up of the Council's agenda. The General Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, performs administrative functions. Within the framework of the Secretariat operate four Departments (Finance and Administrative Affairs; Information and Library; Economics; and Technical Affairs). There is also a Tribunal consisting of seven judges whose task is to settle differences in the interpretation and application of the Organization's Charter as well as disputes among member countries on petroleum activities falling within the Organization's competences.

Activities

A number of joint undertakings have been set up in order to supplement the Organization's activities in several specialized fields and thus to promote and strengthen Arab participation. These undertakings, based in different member countries, include: the Arab Maritime Petroleum Transport Company (AMPTC) and the Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard Company (ASRY), both created in the early 1970s to increase Arab participation in the transport of hydrocarbons; the Arab Petroleum Services Company (APSCO), providing various services and training specialized personnel; the Arab Petroleum Training Institute (APTI); the Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation (APICORP), with an authorized capital of \$1200 million (of which \$460 million subscribed), granting funds for a wide range of projects related to the oil industry, with priority being given to Arab joint ventures.

The Organization has played a significant role in its efforts to improve inter-Arab co-operation on vital petroleum issues and to co-ordinate, as far as possible, Arab policies within the broader framework of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Several conferences and seminars as well as training and research programmes have been carried out under the auspices of the Organization. Special emphasis was placed on the promotion of inter-Arab trade in petroleum products and petrochemicals. The invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in August 1990 and the subsequent Gulf War severely affected the Organization's activities. In December 1990 headquarters were temporarily moved to Cairo; the reopening of the Kuwaiti headquarters took place in June 1994. Fluctuating oil prices, recurring tensions among member countries over OPEC production quotas, and the Iraq crisis continue to hinder the Organization's efforts to foster effective co-operation and co-ordination. On the other hand, the steady growth forecast in world oil consumption and the soaring demand for oil and its derivatives, especially in China and India, represent a factor of paramount importance for oil product exporters in the Arab region.

External relations

The Organization maintains close working relations with the League of Arab States and its specialized institutions. It also co-operates with several UN organs and agencies, such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN

Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and other international and national bodies.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: Arabic

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Abdulaziz A. Al-Turki

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 20501, Safat, 13066 Kuwait (telephone: +965 4959000; fax: +965 4959755)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oapecorg.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Secretary-General's Annual Report*; *OAPEC Monthly Bulletin*; *Annual Statistical Report*; *Oil and Arab Cooperation* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: M.A. Tétreault, *The Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries: History, Policies and Prospects* (Westport, CT, 1981); A. Maachou, *OAPEC: An International Organization for Economic Cooperation and an Instrument for Regional Economic Integration* (New York, 1983)

Organization of Central Asian Co-operation (OCAC)

FOUNDED: 28 February 2002 as the result of several attempts initiated in the early 1990s to organize regional co-operation among countries of Central Asia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union

OBJECTIVES: To foster co-operation and integration among member countries in the sphere of economic reform, political, security, trade, cultural, scientific and technical relations

MEMBERS: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Observer status has been granted to Georgia, Turkey and Ukraine. Merger with Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEc/EAEC) is under consideration

Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECs)

The Organization groups the smaller countries of the Eastern Caribbean in order to strengthen their security, foster their development and harmonize their foreign policies.

Origin and development

The Organization's current members (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) were participants of a pre-independence grouping – the West Indies Associated States Council of Ministers (WISA) – created in 1966 following the collapse of the West Indies Federation. In June 1968, these same countries, initially reluctant to join the newly-created Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), had formed their own customs union, the Eastern Caribbean Common Market (ECCM).

The attainment of independence led the seven countries, belonging to the least-developed group of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which had succeeded CARIFTA, to join forces and to establish the Organization. The relevant instrument was signed at Basseterre, Saint Kitts, on 18 June 1981 and entered into force on 2 July. According to the provisions of the Treaty of Basseterre, the WISA Secretariat became the Central Secretariat of the new Organization, and the ECCM the Economic Affairs Secretariat.

Membership

Seven Eastern Caribbean countries plus the British Virgin Islands and Anguilla that have joined as associate members.

Objectives

The aims of the Organization are to foster co-operation among member countries and at regional and international levels, to defend their sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence, to promote economic integration and to establish, as far as possible, common positions on international issues.

Structure

The Authority of Heads of Government is the supreme policy-making body meeting twice a year. The Foreign Affairs Committee and the Defence and Security Committee are responsible for the co-ordination of external relations and the preparation of a common position of the Organization in multilateral forums. The Secretariat, based in Saint Lucia, performs technical and administrative functions and oversees the general functioning of the Organization. In 1997, following a restructuring of the Secretariat, the Economic Affairs Secretariat originally located in Saint Johns, Antigua, became a Division of the central Secretariat in Saint Lucia.

Activities

The Organization formally requested the intervention of troops from the US following serious political unrest in Grenada in October 1983; troops from the Organization's member countries and other Caribbean islands also participated in the operations. Proposals for the formation of a political union among the member countries have been put forward several times, the Windward countries (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent) having been the most active, but domestic difficulties have caused plans to be temporarily shelved. All trade barriers among member countries, including import duties, have been removed and a single market was established on 1 January 1988. At present, work is going on with a view to drafting a new Treaty establishing the OECS Economic Union which has been proposed over the past few years.

External relations

The Organization has developed links with other subregional and regional institutions such as the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), CARICOM, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and at global level with the World Bank. Among aid donors are the European Union (EU) and a number of countries, notably the UK, the US and Canada.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Dr Len Ishmael

HEADQUARTERS: Morne Fortune, PO Box 179, Castries, Saint Lucia (telephone: +1 758 452 2537; fax: +1 758 453 1628)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oecs.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Trade Policy Review; OECS Geneva Mission* (newsletter)

REFERENCES: N.C. Duncan, *Caribbean Integration: The OECS Experience Revisited* (Kingston, 1995); P. Lewis, *Surviving Small Size: Regional Integration in Caribbean Ministates* (Barbados, 2002); S.B. Jones-Hendrickson, *Essays on the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Economies* (Lincoln, NE, 2006)

Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture

[Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura] (OEI)

The Organization groups Ibero-American countries with a view to fostering peace and solidarity between them through co-operation in the fields of education, science and technology and culture.

Origin and development

The Organization came into being in 1949 as the Ibero-American Bureau of Education, later transformed into an intergovernmental institution according to the Charter adopted on 15 March 1957 and in force till 1985. On 2 December 1985 a new Charter was signed in Panama City broadening the competence and scope of the Organization.

Membership

Members are all Latin American countries plus Portugal and Spain in Europe and Equatorial Guinea in Africa.

Objectives

The basic goal of the Organization is to contribute to strengthening mutual understanding, solidarity and peace between Ibero-American peoples through education, science and technology, the encouragement of cultural exchanges and the promotion of the Portuguese and Spanish languages.

Structure

The General Assembly holding ordinary sessions at the highest level every four years is the supreme body. The Governing Council consists of the Ministers of Education dealing with the programme of activities, budgetary and other issues. The General Secretariat performs technical and administrative functions. Regional bureaux have been established in all major member countries.

Activities

Projects have been implemented in the Organization's fields of interest, including training courses and other forms of technical assistance.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Portuguese, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Alvaro Marchesi Ullastres

HEADQUARTERS: Calle Bravo Murillo 38, 28015 Madrid, Spain (telephone +34 91 594 4382; fax: +34 91 594 3286)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oei.es>

PUBLICATION: *Boletín Oficial de la OEI; Revista Iberoamericana de Educación* (quarterly)

Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC)

The Organization fosters economic and technological co-operation, both bilaterally and multilaterally, among countries belonging to the Black Sea region.

Origin and development

The creation of an economic grouping of the countries of the Black Sea region had been originally proposed by the then President Turgut Özal of Turkey in the late 1980s as a subregional framework to promote peace, stability and prosperity in a dramatically changing environment. Following several preparatory meetings in 1990 and 1991, the representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine adopted a declaration outlining the basic objectives of the grouping in February 1992. The Heads of State and Government of these countries, joined by Albania and Greece, meeting on 25 June 1992, signed the Istanbul Declaration on Black Sea Economic Co-operation (BSEC) and adopted the Bosphorus Statement with the aim of contributing to the political stability and economic development of the region. The establishment on 10 March 1994 of a Permanent Secretariat represented a milestone in the institutionalization of co-operation. The shape of the future Black Sea organization was further defined by the Summit meetings taking place in Bucharest on 30 June 1995 and in Moscow on 25 October 1996. The Istanbul Declaration was eventually replaced by a legally binding instrument – that is the Charter of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation, retaining the acronym BSEC – at the Yalta Summit convened on 5 June 1998 with the participation of 11 countries. The Charter, marking the transformation of BSEC into a ‘regional economic organization’, entered into force on 1 May 1999.

Membership

The 11 countries participating in the 1998 Summit plus Serbia which joined in April 2004. A number

of countries have been granted observer status: Poland became the first observer in December 1992, followed by Egypt, Israel, Slovakia and Tunisia in 1993, by Austria and Italy in 1995 and subsequently by a few other countries including Israel and the US.

Objectives

Comprehensive multilateral and bilateral co-operation is to be developed ‘in the fields of economics, including trade and industrial co-operation, of science and technology and of the environment’. The signatory countries, with the participation of their competent organizations, enterprises and firms, are to implement projects of common interest in fields such as transport and communications, mining, energy, agriculture and the agro-industries, health care and pharmaceuticals, tourism, informatics, and science and technology. Special emphasis is given to environmental issues as well as to the promotion of individual and collective initiative of the enterprises and firms directly involved in the co-operation process.

Structure

The Charter has strengthened the Organization’s legal and institutional basis as a regional economic organization.

Besides meetings of the Heads of State or Government, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs is the principal regular decision-making body. It is convened every six months in rotation in a member country, following the English alphabetical order, under the Chairman-in-office. The Council decides on all issues related to the functioning of the Organization and is empowered to establish subsidiary organs. The Committee of Senior Officials represents the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and acts on their behalf reviewing all the Organization’s matters, including preparation of the budget, before submitting them to the approval of the Council. The bulk of the Organization’s activities is carried out by its subsidiary bodies operating in specific areas.

The Permanent International Secretariat (PERMIS), headed by a Secretary-General under the authority of the Chairman-in-office, is based in Istanbul.

The institutional mechanism is completed by the ‘BSEC Related Bodies and Affiliated Centres’ having their separate budgets. These bodies include: the Parliamentary Assembly of BSEC

(PABSEC), based in Istanbul and representing national parliaments and performing consultative functions; the BSEC Business Council (BSEC BC), also based in Istanbul, consisting of representatives of the business communities of member countries; the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB) established in Thessaloniki, Greece, with a view to financing regional projects and providing other banking services; the BSEC Co-ordination Centre for the Exchange of Statistical Data and Economic Information; and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS).

Activities

The creation of BSEC has represented a significant effort to promote a spirit of friendship and enhance mutual respect and confidence in a region comprising extremely different geopolitical and economic realities. The Organization aims to operate on five different 'platforms' involving governments, parliaments, businessmen and entrepreneurs, banking and finance, and scholars and scientists. Special emphasis is being devoted to co-operation in the fields of energy, transport, communications, health care, tourism, environmental protection, and science and technology. The fight against organized crime, illicit trafficking of drugs, weapons and radioactive materials, acts of terrorism and illegal migration is another area where the Organization attempts to develop bilateral and multilateral co-operation among member countries. The above-mentioned priority areas for the Organization's activities with the eventual adoption of new legal instruments were reconfirmed on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the creation of the Organization celebrated at a Summit of the Heads of State and Government held in Istanbul on 25 June 2007. The Summit Declaration also stressed the need for a more active role of BSTDB in project financing.

External relations

The UN General Assembly granted observer status to BSEC on 8 October 1999. The Organization co-operates with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Central European Initiative (CEI), the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI), the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) and the Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC). Relations with the European Union (EU) are being gradually developed and strengthened.

WORKING LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY GENERAL: Leonidas Chrysanthopoulos

PERMANENT INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT: Sakip Sabanci Caddesi, Müsir Fuad Pasa Yalisi, Eski Tersane, 34460 Istanbul, Turkey (telephone: +90 212 229 6330-35; fax: +90 212 229 6336)

WEBSITE: <http://www.bsec-organization.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Black Sea News*; *BSEC Economic Agenda Brochure*

REFERENCE: T. Aybak (ed.), *Politics of the Black Sea: Dynamics of Cooperation and Conflict* (London, 2001)

Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

The Organization aims at fostering solidarity and policy co-ordination on major international issues among Islamic countries throughout the world.

Origin and development

The Organization was formally established in May 1971, following a summit meeting of the Heads of State and Government of 24 Islamic countries held in Rabat, Morocco, on 25 September 1969 and conferences of the Foreign Ministers held in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, on 23–25 March 1970, and Karachi, Pakistan, on 26–28 December 1970. The Charter of the Organization was adopted by the Foreign Ministers in March 1972 and entered into force in January 1973. The second meeting of the Heads of State and Government took place in Lahore, Pakistan, on 22–24 February 1974 with the participation of 36 countries. At the third Summit Conference, held in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, on 25–28 January 1981 and attended by representatives of 38 countries, the 'Proclamation of Mecca' and a plan of action strengthening economic co-operation were adopted. Palestine is a founder member.

Membership grew in the early 1990s, after the fall of the Communist regimes, when Albania, Mozambique and several republics of the former USSR (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) joined the Organization. Suriname became a member in 1996 followed by Togo in 1997, Guyana in 1998 and Côte d'Ivoire in 2001. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Central African Republic and Thailand enjoy

observer status. Observer status has also been granted to the Turkish Muslim Community of Cyprus and to the Moro National Liberation Front of the southern Philippines. Egypt's membership was suspended in May 1979 after it signed a peace treaty with Israel and restored in March 1984. The suspension of Afghanistan took place in January 1980 in consequence of the Soviet invasion; Afghanistan was readmitted in March 1989.

Membership

Fifty-seven Islamic countries throughout the world.

Objectives

The purpose of the Organization is to promote effective solidarity and to strengthen co-operation among Islamic countries in the economic, social and political fields.

Besides the general promotion of Islamic solidarity, the Organization's basic aims are: to improve co-operation in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and other vital fields; to arrange consultations among members participating in international institutions; to endeavour to eliminate racial segregation and discrimination as well as colonialism in all its forms; to take the necessary measures to support the establishment of international peace and security based on justice; to co-ordinate all efforts for the safeguard of the Muslim Holy Places and to help the Palestinian people; to help Muslim peoples preserve their dignity, independence and national rights; to create a suitable atmosphere for the development of co-operation and mutual understanding between members and other countries.

Structure

The basic institutional structure of the Organization is fairly simple and comprises the Conference of Kings and Heads of State and Government, the Conference of Foreign Ministers and the Secretariat; several subsidiary bodies have been created over the past two decades. The Heads of State and Government had met at irregular and rather long intervals until the session held in 1981 when it was decided that the Islamic Summit Conference should be convened every three years. Issues of paramount importance to Islamic countries are usually discussed on the basis of reports prepared by the Conference of Foreign Ministers. This latter organ holds ordinary sessions once a year in the capital or other important town of a member country and is entrusted with the functions of fulfilling the

Organization's tasks and setting the guidelines for relations with third countries. Administrative services are provided by the General Secretariat, based in Jeddah, which is composed of a Secretary-General (elected by the Conference of Foreign Ministers for a four-year term renewable only once), Assistant Secretaries-General, and the necessary staff.

The Islamic Summit held in 1981 decided the creation of the International Islamic Court of Justice composed of seven members and based in Kuwait; however, no further steps towards the establishment of the Court have apparently been taken thus far.

A number of subsidiary organs have been established to supplement the Organization's activities in selected fields, such as: the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for the Islamic Countries, located in Ankara; the Islamic University of Technology, in Dhaka; the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture, in Istanbul; the Islamic Centre for Development of Trade, in Casablanca; the Islamic University in Niger, near Niamey; and the Islamic University of Uganda, inaugurated in February 1988.

Among specialized institutions are: the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), in Jeddah; the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), in Rabat; the International Islamic News Agency, in Jeddah; and the Islamic States Broadcasting Organization, also in Jeddah.

Affiliated institutions include the Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in Karachi, and the Organization of the Islamic Shipowners Association, in Jeddah.

Activities

The effective pursuit of the Organization's goals has been adversely affected by recurring tensions and disputes between member countries that hold differing views on many fundamental issues. A general unity on the Palestinian question and the status of Jerusalem was maintained until Egypt's recognition of Israel. With regard to Afghanistan, the Conference of Foreign Ministers held an extraordinary session in January 1980 and called for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Soviet troops. Resolutions were also adopted opposing foreign pressures exerted on Islamic countries in general, and Iran in particular, and condemning armed aggression against Somalia. The problems in Afghanistan and Iran, and the armed conflict

between Iran and Iraq, continued to be major topics of discussion within the framework of the Organization in the 1980s.

The fourth Summit Conference, held on 16–19 January 1984 in Casablanca with the participation of 42 countries, agreed to restore the full membership of Egypt, despite the opposition of seven member countries. The fifth Summit Conference took place in Kuwait on 26–29 January 1987 and debated issues related to the Iran-Iraq War as well as to conflicts in Chad and Lebanon.

In August 1990 a majority of Ministers of Foreign Affairs condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and demanded the withdrawal of the occupation forces. The situation in the Gulf led to the deferment of the sixth Summit Conference which was held in Dakar on 9–12 December 1991 with limited participation of Heads of State; Iraq did not participate and was condemned for its failure to comply with UN resolutions. In the following months the Foreign Ministers discussed the problems arising from the critical situation of the Moslem communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and from increased fundamentalist militancy in several Islamic countries. The peace agreement negotiated between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel was welcomed by the Conference in late 1993. A contact group was set up by Foreign Ministers in 1994 to deal with 'human rights violations' in Jammu and Kashmir and to promote the Kashmiri cause.

The seventh Conference of Heads of State and Government, which took place in Casablanca on 13–14 December 1994, established a fund to provide further humanitarian and economic assistance to Bosnian Moslems and declared that the UN arms embargo on Bosnia-Herzegovina could not be applied. The Casablanca Summit adopted a Code of Conduct for Combating International Terrorism in an effort to repress the activities of Moslem extremist groups and to build up Islamic solidarity against fundamentalism.

The Conference of Foreign Ministers, meeting in Conakry, Guinea, on 9–13 December 1995, urged the return of Jerusalem to Palestinian control and expressed support for the Dayton peace accords on Bosnia-Herzegovina. A mediation role was played by the Organization in 1996 in an attempt to solve the prolonged conflict between the government of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front.

The eighth Summit was held in Tehran on 9–11 December 1997 and adopted the 'Tehran

Declaration' calling for the creation of an autonomous Palestinian state. Leaders meeting in Tehran also asked for the cessation of conflicts in Afghanistan and between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Foreign Ministers meeting on 15–17 March 1998 in Doha, Qatar, demanded the end of the international sanctions against Iraq. The crisis in Kosovo was discussed by the Organization in 1999 and measures were adopted to co-ordinate aid provided by member countries to the local Albanian population.

The ninth Summit took place in Doha, Qatar, on 12–13 November 2000 and dealt with the pressing challenges facing Islamic countries throughout the world, including the spread of extremism and fundamentalism. An Extraordinary Summit was convened in Doha in early March 2003 to deal with the crisis in Iraq. The tenth Summit met in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on 16–17 October 2003, and decided the creation of a Fund for the reconstruction of war-affected areas in Sudan. The third Extraordinary Summit, held on 7–8 December 2005 in Mecca, adopted a ten-year programme of action in the intellectual, political, economic and social fields and stressed the need to establish a free trade area among member countries. Calls have been made by mid-2007 for continuing the Organization's reforms, including its restructuring and revision of the Charter, besides strengthening specialized and affiliated organs.

External relations

The Organization, which was granted observer status by the UN General Assembly in October 1975, has taken part in UN efforts to reduce tensions in Islamic countries such as Afghanistan, Somalia and Tajikistan. In order to promote understanding and co-operation between Islamic and non-Islamic countries in the relevant areas, links are maintained with several international bodies, such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Prof. Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu

HEADQUARTERS: Madinah Road, PO Box 178, Jeddah 21411, Saudi Arabia (telephone: +966 2 690 0001; fax: +966 2 275 1953)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oic-oci.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *OIC Weekly Newsletter*; *The OIC Journal* (quarterly)

REFERENCES: H. Moinuddin, *The Charter of the Islamic Conference. The Legal and Economic Framework* (Oxford, 1987); N.A. Baba, *Organization of the Islamic Conference: Theory and Practice of Pan-Islamic Cooperation* (Karachi, 1994); I. Suny, *The Organization of the Islamic Conference* (Jakarta, 2000); S.S. Khan, *Reasserting International Islam: A Focus on the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other Islamic Institutions* (Karachi, 2001)

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

The Organization groups several developing countries that are heavily reliant on oil revenues as their main source of income and acts to safeguard its members' interests *vis-à-vis* major oil-importing countries.

Origin and development

Established on 14 September 1960 at a conference held in Baghdad with the participation of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, the Organization was subsequently joined by several other oil-exporting countries: Qatar in 1961; Indonesia and Libya in 1962; Abu Dhabi in 1967 (membership afterwards transferred to the United Arab Emirates); Algeria in 1969; Nigeria in 1971; Ecuador in 1973 (after a few months as an associate member); the United Arab Emirates in 1974; and Gabon in 1975 (an associate member from 1973). In September 1992 Ecuador announced its intention to withdraw from the Organization, the first member to do so in more than 30 years. The withdrawal of Ecuador was followed by that of Gabon. Angola joined in 2007.

Initially established to consider measures for coping with cuts in the posted price for crude oil introduced by oil companies in the late 1950s, the Organization gained increasing importance as a result of the admission of new countries and of the development of a strategy using oil supplies as an instrument of political as well as economic pressure.

Membership of the Organization is open to any country which is a substantial net exporter of crude and has fundamentally similar interests to those of

member countries. Admission requires acceptance by a majority of three-fourths of the full members, including the concurrent vote of the five founders. A country not fulfilling all the requirements for full membership may be admitted as an associate member.

The Organization's Statute, adopted by the Conference held in January 1961 in Caracas, has been entirely revised in April 1965 and amended on several occasions, the last time in December 1997.

Membership

Current members are: Algeria, Angola, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela. As of 31 December 2006, the Organization's members proven crude oil reserves amounted to 922,482 million barrels, representing 77.2 per cent of the world's total; proven natural gas reserves represented 49.3 per cent.

In 2006, members accounted for about 44.5 per cent of the world's crude oil output (compared with 39.4 per cent in 2002, 29.0 per cent in 1985 and 55.7 per cent in 1973) and produced 17.8 per cent of the world's natural gas. Oil exports of member countries represented 53.6 per cent of the oil traded internationally.

Objectives

The basic aim of the Organization is the co-ordination and unification of the petroleum policies of member countries and the protection of their individual and collective interests. To achieve its basic aim, the Organization devises methods to ensure the stability of prices in international oil markets with a view to eliminating harmful fluctuations. Under the Statute, this goal is to be attained giving due regard to the necessity of securing a steady income to the producing countries, an efficient, economical and regular supply to the consuming countries, and a fair return on their capital to those investing in the oil industry.

Structure

The main organs are the Conference, the Board of Governors, and the Secretariat. The Conference, which is the supreme authority meeting at least twice a year, consists of the representatives of all members (normally the Ministers of Oil, Mines and Energy), each with one vote. All decisions, other than those concerning procedural matters, must be adopted unanimously. The Conference formulates

the general policy of the Organization and determines the ways and means for its implementation; confirms the appointments of the members of the Board of Governors, whose activities it directs; considers or decides upon the reports and recommendations submitted by the Board of Governors; and approves the budget. The Conference's resolutions become effective 30 days after the conclusion of the meeting at which they were adopted, unless in the meantime one or more members have given to the Secretariat notification of their opposition.

The Board of Governors, whose members are appointed for a two-year term by each country and confirmed by the Conference which appoints the Chairman, is responsible for the management of the affairs of the Organization and for the implementation of the decisions of the Conference. The Board of Governors, each of whom has one vote, meets no less than twice a year and adopts its decisions by a simple majority of attending members.

The Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, carries out the executive functions under the direction of the Board of Governors. The Secretariat, originally established in Geneva in 1961, was later moved to Vienna where it started operations in September 1965.

The Ministerial Monitoring Committee, set up in 1988 and consisting of all national representatives, is responsible for following the evolution of oil prices and ensuring the stability of the world oil market. The Committee established in February 1993 a Ministerial Monitoring Sub-Committee (MMSC), comprising three Heads of Delegation and the Secretary-General, to monitor oil production and exports by member countries.

The Heads of State and Government of member countries have met only twice in the Organization's history, in 1975 in Algiers and on 29 September 2000 in Caracas. The Caracas Summit, celebrating the Organization's fortieth anniversary, decided, *inter alia*, that the meetings of the Heads of State and Government had to take place at regular intervals to be decided after consultation among member countries.

Activities

Despite frequent disagreements between the 'moderates', led by Saudi Arabia, and the 'radicals', such as Algeria, Libya and Iraq, over the policies to be followed on pricing, production, export capacity and royalties, the Organization showed during the 1970s a remarkable degree of cohesion *vis-à-vis* the

major industrial countries, especially Western Europe and Japan (which are more or less heavily dependent on oil imports). On the other hand, the setting and maintenance of a single level of prices throughout the Organization proved to be an extremely difficult goal.

For a long period, almost from the end of World War II to 1973, oil prices had been decreasing appreciably in both monetary and real terms, thus contributing to the establishment in the industrial countries of a development pattern based on the extensive use of low-cost energy sources. Following the Teheran agreement of 1971 between the producing countries of the Gulf and the major oil companies, the situation began to change radically. The failure of subsequent negotiations with oil companies to revise the Teheran agreement and to adjust prices induced the Organization's members to increase prices unilaterally. The posted price of crude oil (which at the beginning of the 1970s was less than \$2 per barrel) was raised to \$11.65 per barrel in December 1973. Subsequent meetings of the Organization decided on further increases, some of them to take place in several stages, but not all members agreed or observed the various stages. After the 1979 Iranian revolution and the further deterioration of the overall climate in the Middle East, including the armed conflict between Iran and Iraq, agreement on a long-term pricing and production strategy applicable by all member countries became even harder to reach.

In order to defend an OPEC-wide price structure, it was decided in March 1982 (for the first time in the Organization's history) to impose an overall production ceiling of 18 million barrels per day (bpd). No agreement, however, was reached on individual production quotas. Despite continuing efforts over the following years, it proved very difficult to establish and maintain an official marker price and production ceiling effectively applicable to all members of the Organization. Differences over the Organization's strategy, particularly with respect to production quotas, became even more intractable in early 1986 when the collapse in the oil market and the continued decline of the United States dollar brought prices, in real terms, to their lowest level since the middle of 1973. A return to production quotas and to a fixed pricing system, decided in late 1986, succeeded in stabilizing prices, despite the fact that a number of members had exceeded the agreed production limit. Increases in production were allowed in 1989 but again some member countries

declared that they did not feel bound to respect the limits, thereby further weakening the Organization's credibility. Effective co-operation with non-OPEC members for common production strategies has also proved unfeasible. After Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and the subsequent international embargo on oil exports from the two countries there was a marked increase in the price of oil which reached a peak of \$40 a barrel in early October but subsequently fell to about \$25 per barrel. During the last months of 1990 and the beginning of 1991 several members of the Organization produced in excess of their agreed quotas. In September 1991 an agreement was reached to raise the collective production ceiling to 23.6 million bpd. Overproduction and falling demand led the Organization in February 1992 to reintroduce individual production quotas for the first time since August 1990. New collective quotas were negotiated in 1993 but prices continued to fall, reaching a five-year low at \$12.9 per barrel in February 1994. A ministerial meeting in March 1994 decided to maintain the ceiling of 24.5 million bpd, effective since late 1993. The ceiling was confirmed in November 1994 for one year and subsequently extended until June 1996. Fluctuations in the world markets in the following years frustrated several times the Organization's efforts to stabilize prices, despite repeated commitments to reduce overall production and to act against countries that persistently exceeded their own quotas. The recurring tensions between the UN and Iraqi authorities over petroleum sales and afterwards the US-led military intervention in Iraq and the frequent interruptions in that country's production have further contributed to the instability of the oil market. A combination of political, economic and meteorological events have caused oil prices to attain record levels over the past few years, reaching a peak of nearly \$100 a barrel in late 2007.

External relations

The Organization has maintained formal relations with the UN Economic and Social Council, and with a number of bodies such as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Abdalla Salem El-Badri

HEADQUARTERS: Obere Donaustrasse 93, 1020 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 211 12-0; fax: +43 1 216 4320)

WEBSITE: <http://www.opec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *OPEC News*; *OPEC Bulletin* (monthly); *Monthly Oil Market Report*; *World Oil Outlook*; *Annual Statistical Bulletin*

REFERENCES: F. Ghadar, *The Evolution of OPEC Strategy* (Lexington, KY, 1977); T.H. Moran, *Oil Prices and the Future of OPEC: The Political Economy of Tension and Stability in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries* (Washington, DC, 1978); I. Seymour, *OPEC: Instrument of Change* (London, 1980); D. Aperjis, *OPEC Oil Policy and Economic Development* (Cambridge, MA, 1982); J. Griffin and D. Teece (eds), *OPEC Behaviour and World Oil Prices* (London, 1982); P. Terzian, *OPEC: The Inside Story* (London, 1985); M.E. Ahrari, *OPEC: The Failing Giant* (Lexington, KY, 1986); S.M. Ghanem, *OPEC: The Rise and Fall of an Exclusive Club* (London, 1986); I. Skeet, *OPEC: 25 Years of Oil and Politics* (Cambridge, UK, 1988); F. Al-Chalabi, *OPEC at the Crossroads* (Oxford, 1989); J. Amuzegar, *Managing the Oil Wealth: OPEC's Windfalls and Pitfalls* (London, 1999); A.D. Kayal, *The Control of Oil: East-West Rivalry in the Persian Gulf* (London, 2002); R.J. Leary, *Over a Barrel: Breaking the Middle East Oil Cartel* (Nashville, TN, 2005)

Oxfam International

FOUNDED: 1995 by a group of like-minded independent organizations wanting to work together internationally. The name 'Oxfam' comes from the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief founded in 1942 in Britain

OBJECTIVES: To find lasting solutions to poverty, suffering and injustice and to work with people affected by humanitarian disasters with preventive measures and emergency relief

MEMBERS: A confederation of 13 organizations working together with over 3000 partners in more than 100 countries worldwide

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Jeremy Hobbs

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT: Suite 20, 266 Banbury Road, Oxford, OX2 7DL, UK (telephone: +44 1865 339 100; fax: +44 1865 339 101)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oxfam.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *E-newsletter* (monthly); *Annual Report*; *Policy papers*

Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC)

The Council is a non-governmental body grouping senior business leaders representing major corporations in countries of the Pacific Rim and dedicated to ensuring open trade and investment.

Origin and development

The Council was established in 1967 to provide a forum for business leaders. The Council plays a significant role in advising governments as well as serving as a liaison between business representatives and government officials.

Objectives

The Council aims at increasing trade and investment flows through open markets in the Pacific and at promoting co-operation with governments and international agencies on key issues affecting the development of the Pacific region.

Structure

The Annual International General Meeting is a conference bringing together business leaders, government ministers and heads of state to discuss emerging business opportunities and trade issues. Policy position conferences, Regional Executive Meetings and other small off-the-record gatherings are frequently organized.

Activities

Several business symposia focused on improving the business climate have taken place under the sponsorship of the Council which has also been carrying on since 1993 a programme of business missions. The Council is an 'institutional member' of the Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC), participating in all its activities but without voting power. Close working relationships are enjoyed by the Council with key multilateral institutions in the Asia-Pacific. The Council's policy positions are frequently used as a reference by the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC).

HEADQUARTERS: 111 Connaught Road, Suite 1304, Central, Hong Kong (telephone: +852 2815 6550; fax: +852 2545 0499)

WEBSITE: <http://www.pbec.org>

Pacific Community

The Community, known until 1997 as the South Pacific Commission, is the leading regional technical and development organization of the Pacific, promoting the professional, scientific, research, planning and management capability of Pacific Islands people.

Origin and development

The South Pacific Commission was established by an agreement signed on 6 February 1947 in Canberra, Australia, and effective from July 1948. The founder members were six governments with territories in the region: Australia, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the UK and the US. The Netherlands withdrew in 1962 when it ceased to administer the western part of New Guinea. The UK withdrew at the end of 1995, rejoined in 1998 and withdrew again in January 2005. The original agreement has been supplemented by several documents in order to extend the territorial scope of the organization and to adapt its functions and powers to the changing needs and aspirations of the peoples of the region. The single greatest change occurred in 1983 when associate members joined founding members as full voting and contributing partners thus creating a truly regional institution with a comprehensive membership and equally distributed voting power, regardless of political status. In 1997, the 50th anniversary Conference in Canberra decided to change the name of the South Pacific Commission to 'Pacific Community'. Changes were clarified in 1998 when the organization was designated 'Secretariat of the Pacific Community' and the South Pacific Conference became the 'Conference of the Pacific Community'.

Membership

The four remaining founding countries (Australia, France, New Zealand and the US) plus 22 island countries and territories in the Pacific.

Objectives

The Community, as a consultative and advisory body to participating governments in matters affecting the economic and social development of the region, is empowered to make recommendations in respect of agriculture, fisheries, forestry, industry, labour, marketing, production, public works, trade and finance, transport, communications, education,

health, housing and social welfare. Due regard must be given to the necessity of co-ordinating local projects having a regional impact. In addition, the Community has the responsibility of facilitating research in scientific, economic and social fields, of ensuring the maximum co-operation among research bodies and of providing technical assistance.

Structure

The Conference of the Pacific Community, consisting of representatives of all member countries and territories, is the supreme organ which is convened to discuss basic policies and to adopt the programme of activities and the budget. The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) comprises delegates of all members with equal voting rights. It meets annually to consider the work programme and policy issues and examine the draft budget presented by the Secretariat. Decisions are usually taken by way of consensus rather than a formal vote. The Director-General, appointed by the Conference of the Pacific Community, performs technical and administrative functions with the assistance of two Deputy Directors-General and the necessary staff.

Voluntary contributions from governments, international organizations and other sources account for a substantial proportion of the total budget; assessed contributions from members fund the Community's core budget.

Activities

The first Conference of the Pacific Community, held in December 1999, adopted the 'Déclaration de Tahiti Nui' to streamline and rationalize the Community's structure and operational policies. The Community arranges regional conferences, technical meetings and training courses and provides assistance to applied research, information services and data analysis. Special attention is given to the needs of smaller members not endowed with mineral resources such as phosphates and nickel and largely based on subsistence farming and fishing. Main areas of interest currently include agriculture, animal health, natural forest management and conservation, inshore fisheries, health promotion programmes and disease control, socio-economic and statistical services, cultural conservation and exchanges. Technical assistance is provided through courses, workshops and seminars at the regional, sub-regional and national levels.

External relations

The Community maintains working relations with several regional and national institutions directly concerned with the Pacific, including the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The Community supervises the maritime programme and telecommunications policy activities of the Pacific Islands Forum. A memorandum of understanding has been signed with the World Health Organization (WHO).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

DIRECTOR GENERAL: Dr Jimmie Rodgers

HEADQUARTERS: BP D5, 95 Promenade Roger Laroque, Anse Vata, 98848 Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia (telephone: +687 262000; fax: +687 263818)

SUVA REGIONAL OFFICE: Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji (telephone: +679 337 0733; fax: +679 337 0021)

WEBSITE: <http://www.spc.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Fisheries Newsletter* (quarterly); *Pacific Island Nutrition* (quarterly)

Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC)

The Council is a non-governmental organization of senior individuals from business and industry, government and academic and other intellectual circles dedicated to the promotion of growth and economic development in the Pacific Rim. In January 1992 the organization changed its original name – Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference – to the present one.

Origin and development

The organization traces its origins to the Pacific Community Seminar held in Canberra, Australia, in September 1980 at the initiative of the Australian and Japanese Prime Ministers. Among the special features of what turned out to be the first PECC General Meeting was the tripartite structure of the delegations, comprising: (a) representatives from business and industry, mainly members of the Pacific Basin Economic Council (PBEC); (b) academics, mainly members of the Pacific Trade and Development Conference (PAFTAD), holding meetings since 1968; and (c) government officials. All participants

acted in their private capacity deciding on the basis of consensus. Particular emphasis was laid on the need for all members – industrial and developing – to be placed on an equal footing, excluding any form of special membership for the developing economies of the region. Particular elements of Pacific regional co-operation were identified in the exclusion of military and security issues – so as ‘to create a sense of community without creating a sense of threat’ – and the furtherance of the ‘economic aims and interests’ of the countries belonging to ASEAN and to the South Pacific Forum (SPF), renamed in 1999 the Pacific Islands Forum.

Membership

At present PECC consists of 26 Member Committees (including two associate members) representing 14 economies in the Asia-Pacific (Australia, Brunei, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam), two in North America (Canada and the US), five in Latin America (Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Peru) plus Russia and the Pacific Island Nations which are collectively represented by the Pacific Islands Forum. Taiwan participates under the name of Chinese Taipei. Associate membership has been granted to the Pacific Territories of France and to Mongolia. Two international non-governmental organizations – PBEC and PAFTAD, the latter being a region-wide body grouping academic economists – are ‘institutional members’, participating in all activities but without voting power.

Objectives

The Council is a tripartite non-governmental organization bringing together academics, business people and government officials to discuss co-operation and policy co-ordination in areas that would promote economic growth and development in the Pacific Rim. It has become a clearing house for policy and business research and serves as a catalyst for new initiatives in policy change.

Structure

The Standing Committee is the governing body meeting annually. It is made up of the 22 full Member Committees and two Institutional Members and invited Associate Member Committees in a limited capacity. The Chair is

elected on a three-year term. The day-to-day activities of PECC are run by the Executive Committee consisting of 11 members plus the Secretary General in an ex officio capacity.

Activities

Besides its main work on trade and investment policy development and forecasts of economic trends, the organization is also committed to promoting opportunities for sectoral programmes of development and co-operation in infrastructure and key market areas. By virtue of its peculiar tripartite structure reflecting the concerns of a wide constituency of interests and its accumulated experience, PECC appears to be in a position to complement and support the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) process, laying the foundations for stronger economic links among Pacific Rim countries as well as promoting the further strengthening of openness in the region and in the global economic system. After the 1980 Canberra Seminar, a follow-up meeting – under the official name of Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference and now known as PECC II – was held in Bangkok in June 1982 to concentrate on economic issues ‘which are neither sufficiently nor effectively dealt with at international and bilateral forums’.

Over the past decades PECC meetings have focused on major economic and trade issues concerning the development of the Asia-Pacific region and its role on the global arena.

The seventeenth General Meeting (PECC XVII) took place in Sydney on 29 April–2 May 2007 with ‘Managing the Challenges of Growth’ as the main theme, recognizing the momentum provided by economies such as China and the difficulties that sustained growth poses to effective economic management.

HEADQUARTERS: 4 Nassim Road, Singapore 258372 (telephone: +65 6737 9823; fax: +65 6737 9824)

WEBSITE: <http://www.pecc.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Issues PECC* (quarterly); *Pacific Economic Outlook* (annual)

Pacific Islands Forum

The Forum – formerly known under the name of South Pacific Forum (SPF) – is the gathering of the

Heads of State and Government of all the independent and self-governing countries of the South Pacific offering its members the opportunity to express their joint political views and to co-operate in areas of political and economic concern.

Origin and development

The Forum's first meeting was held in Wellington, New Zealand, on 5 August 1971 by the Heads of State and Government of Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, New Zealand, Tonga and Western Samoa. The Forum was subsequently joined by Papua New Guinea and several Pacific islands as they gained independent or self-governing status. The Forum's activities, functions and powers are not governed by any formal instrument. A meeting is held every year by the Heads of State and Government to discuss political and economic issues of common concern. Decisions are arrived at by consensus and no formal vote is taken.

Each meeting has been followed since 1989 by 'dialogues' with representatives of major countries influential in the region. The present dialogue partners are: Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). France's dialogue status was suspended in October 1995 because of nuclear tests conducted in French Polynesia and was re-established in 1996.

Membership

At present the Forum has 16 members. Timor-Leste was granted the status of 'special observer' in 2002. New Caledonia and French Polynesia, previously enjoying observer status, became associate members in 2006.

Objectives

The objectives of the Forum have been gradually extending from regional trade and economic issues to cover all major political and security topics concerning the countries of the South Pacific.

Structure

Ministerial meetings are held from time to time to consider key issues of concern to the region. The Forum Officials' Committee, consisting of representatives from all member countries, meets twice a year, immediately before the meeting of the Heads of State and Government and at the end of the year to examine the Secretariat's work programme and annual budget. Australia and New Zealand each

contribute one-third of the annual budget, the remaining third being equally shared among the other members.

The Forum Secretariat was at first established in 1973 as an intergovernmental regional organization under the name of South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation (SPEC). The Secretariat – originally headed by a Director whose status was upgraded to that of Secretary-General in 1988 when SPEC was renamed the Forum Secretariat – performed administrative functions for all Forum-related meetings; since 1981 it acted also as the Secretariat to the Pacific Group Council of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries receiving assistance from the European Community. An important role was also played by the Secretariat in the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). A new agreement establishing the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat was signed in October 2000.

Activities

The initial Forum meetings were mainly concerned with regional trade and economic issues as well as with French nuclear testing in the South Pacific. In the late 1970s attention focused on transport and fisheries and led to the creation of the Pacific Forum Line, a joint venture to provide shipping services, in 1977 and the Forum Fisheries Agency in 1978. The Association of South Pacific Airlines and the South Pacific Trade Commission were both established in 1979. The Forum has undertaken practical measures for the expansion of regional commercial relations through the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers and the promotion of trade in products of particular interest to the smaller countries. The then SPEC had assisted these countries in negotiating, with Australia and New Zealand, the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA), in force since January 1981. Under the SPARTECA, Australia and New Zealand allow duty-free and unrestricted access to specified products originating from the developing island members; additional liberalization measures have been gradually introduced by Australia and New Zealand.

Political issues, including the decolonization of New Caledonia, acquired major importance in the 1980s. The August 1984 meeting, held in Tuvalu, charged a group of experts to draft a treaty for establishing a South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone. The treaty was eventually signed in August 1985 in

Rarotonga, Cook Islands, and entered into force in December 1986. Major nuclear powers were invited to sign protocols in support of the treaty but the offer was initially accepted only by the then USSR and China. France, the UK and the US, in response to increased diplomatic pressure from the Forum members, eventually signed the protocols in March 1996. However, no further signatures or ratifications of the Rarotonga Treaty have taken place since 1997; the US was urged by Forum leaders, meeting in October 2000, to ratify the protocols to the Treaty.

In the 1990s, the Forum's interests and activities were further enlarged to include the preparation of programmes for the revitalization of specific traditional industries, the protection of the environment, the promotion of private sector development and tourism, the co-ordination of efforts related to the improvement of intra-regional transport and communications and the provision of advisory services. Since the late 1980s meetings of the Forum have been discussing topics of paramount importance to South Pacific islands such as the threats posed by the predicted rise in sea level (caused by heating of the atmosphere in consequence of the 'greenhouse effect') and by the extensive and indiscriminate use of drift-net fishing. The 1993 Forum stressed the need to establish closer ties with Asia-Pacific bodies, especially the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and to promote the expansion of intra-regional trade. The adoption of measures to control the exploitation of forestry resources was considered by the Forum meetings in 1994 and 1995. A treaty to ban the import into the region of radioactive and other hazardous wastes (the Waigani Convention) was adopted at the 1995 meeting.

At their Palau meeting in 1999, the Heads of State and Government decided to change the name of the South Pacific Forum to Pacific Islands Forum and consequently to give the Secretariat the name of Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. A decision was taken in principle for the creation of a Forum Free Trade Area (FTA); further progress on the establishment of the FTA was made at the meeting held in August 2001 in Nauru. At the 33rd Forum that took place in Suva, Fiji, in August 2002, the Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security was adopted, stressing the need for region-wide action against international terrorism and transnational crime. Leaders meeting in October 2005 endorsed the 'Pacific Plan' for strengthening regional co-operation and integration and promoting economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security. A wide

range of regional initiatives were envisaged for the first three years (2006–2008). A revised version of the Plan was adopted in October 2006.

External relations

The Forum's maritime programme and telecommunications policy activities are supervised by the Pacific Community. Among regional organizations reporting to the Forum are the Pacific Islands Development Programme, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission and the University of the South Pacific. The Forum has enjoyed observer status at the UN General Assembly since the end of 1994.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Gregory Lawrence Urwin

HEADQUARTERS: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Private Mail Bag, Suva, Fiji (telephone: +679 331 2600; fax: +679 331 2696)

WEBSITE: <http://www.forumsec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Secretary-General's Annual Report*; *Forum News* (quarterly); *Forum Trends*

REFERENCE: J. Bryant-Tokalau and I. Frazer (eds), *Redefining the Pacific? Regionalism Past, Present and Future* (Aldershot, UK, 2006)

Paris Club

[Club de Paris]

The Club is an informal forum where industrial creditor countries negotiate co-ordinated and sustainable solutions for the settlement of official loans with countries unable to meet their debt-servicing obligations.

Origin and development

The Club first met in 1956 to deal with the rescheduling of the debt of Argentina and throughout the 1970s was concerned with the liquidity problems faced by several debtor countries, most of them from Latin America. Subsequently, rescheduling negotiations have increasingly involved countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

Membership

The 19 permanent members are governments with large claims on various other governments

throughout the world. Claims may be held directly by the government or through appropriate institutions. The following countries enjoy permanent membership: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, US.

Subject to the agreement of permanent members and of the debtor country, other official creditors may join in rescheduling sessions. Among creditors invited on a case-by-case basis are Argentina, Brazil, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal and Turkey.

Objectives

The Club provides the framework where debtor countries (mostly from the developing world) usually negotiate the rescheduling of debt-service payments on loans extended or guaranteed by the governments or the official agencies of participating creditor countries (generally those of Western Europe, North America and Japan). Debts to commercial banks are not renegotiated within the Club but with committees of the banks involved.

Structure

The Club has not been endowed with a legal basis or with a proper institutional mechanism and its membership varies from one meeting to another. Meetings are convened at the request of debtor countries and are chaired by a senior official of the French Treasury. A permanent Secretariat is maintained in Paris by a division of around 15 people of the French Treasury.

The burden of debt relief is evenly divided among the creditor countries which are usually members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); although OECD countries are the principal members, other creditor countries with similar claims are encouraged to participate. The Club decides on the basis of consensus among all creditor countries; decisions are taken on the basis of a case-by-case assessment of the special needs of each individual debtor country. No creditor can demand larger payments or more favourable terms than those jointly decided within the Club.

Activities

The debt crisis of the 1980s represented a major challenge for the Club; with the Toronto agreement of 1988, creditor governments recognized the need for debt reduction with regard to non-concessional offi-

cial debt owed by low-income countries. The 'Toronto terms' were subsequently modified and other specific 'terms' have been adopted to meet new challenges, such as the 'London terms', deepening concessional treatment on existing debt-relief measures, and the 'Naples terms', agreed upon by the Group of Seven (G-7) at the July 1994 Summit meeting and raising the level of cancellation up to 67 per cent. In November 1996, the cancellation effort of creditors was raised to 80 per cent (the 'Lyon terms') for those countries that were eligible under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. After approval by the international financial community of the Enhanced HIPC initiative, creditors decided, in November 1999, to increase the level of cancellation up to 90 per cent ('Cologne terms') or even more if required to ensure debt sustainability.

Besides debt cancellation, the Club has constantly had recourse to longer repayment periods. At present, the maximum repayment period is 23 years (including 6 years of grace in which only payments of interest on the consolidation are due) for commercial loans, and up to 40 years for official development aid loans (including 16 years of grace). Settlements take place in the form of debt consolidation, involving a rescheduling of redemption obligations and interest payments. However, debt relief becomes effective only when bilateral agreements negotiated with individual creditor countries establish the debts covered by the rescheduling and the relevant interest rate.

The Club has adopted an increasingly differentiated treatment of debtors, depending on their situation, and an increased flexibility in the coverage of rescheduling. Over the past few years, negotiations within the framework of the Club have involved substantial debt cancellation depending on the actual implementation by the debtor country of an appropriate adjustment programme agreed with the IMF.

Since 1956, members of the Club have reached over 400 agreements concerning more than 80 debtor countries. The total amount of debt covered in these agreements since 1983 has been nearly \$510 billion.

SECRETARIAT: Secrétariat du Club de Paris,
Direction générale du Trésor et de la Politique
Economique, 139 rue de Bercy, 75572 Paris Cedex
12, France

WEBSITE: <http://www.clubdeparis.org>

REFERENCES: M. Kahler (ed.), *The Politics of International Debt* (Ithaca, NY, 1986); B. Eichengreen and P.H. Lindert (eds), *The International Debt Crisis in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge, MA, 1989); D. Sevigny, *The Paris Club: An Inside View* (Ottawa, 1990); UNCTAD, *The Conversion of Paris Club Debt: Procedures and Potential* (Geneva, 2001)

Permanent Commission for the South Pacific

[*Comisión Permanente del Pacífico Sur*] (CPPS)

FOUNDED: 1952

OBJECTIVES: To co-ordinate international action and act as the Secretariat for several protocols and agreements covering environmental issues and conservation and management of all living marine resources in the South Pacific, including fisheries and marine mammals

MEMBERS: Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru

SECRETARY GENERAL: Dr Gonzalo Pereira Puchy

HEADQUARTERS: Guayaquil, Ecuador (telephone: +593 4 222 1202; fax: +593 4 222 1201)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cpps-int.org>

Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel

[*Comité permanent inter-états de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel*] (CILSS)

The Committee groups Sahel countries to combat the effects of chronic drought in the region.

Origin and development

The western parts of the Sudano-Sahelian region of Africa were affected by severe droughts in the late 1960s and early 1970s with disastrous consequences for vegetation and livestock, threatening to destroy traditional ways of life. The affected countries established the Committee on 12 September 1973 with a view to organizing joint efforts to combat drought and alerting the international community to the seriousness of the situation. The UN Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) was set up in the same year to alleviate the impact of future droughts and to help the affected countries achieve food self-sufficiency. UNSO, transferred

in 1976 to the UN Development Programme (UNDP), has played a significant role in the preparation of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, which was signed by 87 countries in October 1994.

Membership

The Committee includes as full members Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal.

Objectives

The prime objective of the Committee is to overcome the effects of chronic drought and promote co-operative development in the Sahel region by improving grain production and irrigation, halting deforestation and creating regional food reserves.

Structure

The structure of the Committee is relatively simple and flexible with Summit meetings held by the Heads of State to consider major initiatives. Besides the Conference of Heads of State there are periodic meetings of the Council of Ministers where all members are represented. An Executive Secretariat is charged with monitoring all the Committee's operations, including the preparation of the budget. Within the framework of the Committee operate two specialized institutions: the Institut du Sahel (INSAH), located at Bamako, Mali, devoted to research; and the Centre Régional Agrhymet (AGHRYMET), based at Niamey, Niger, in charge of the collection and dissemination of information on food security and management of natural resources and responsible for training in the above fields. A Convention for the setting-up of a 'Fondation pour le développement durable du Sahel' was signed in early 2002.

Activities

The Committee has undertaken a major effort in developing an early warning system for food shortages, expanding water supplies, protecting vegetation, promoting alternative energy sources and also raising external aid from donor governments and international agencies. In the 1990s the traditional aims of the Committee were expanded to include economic integration while the administrative mechanism was streamlined and made more efficient. Major programmes concern the fight

against desertification, food security policies and natural resources management policies.

External relations

International organizations such as the European Community (EC) provide financial support for the Committee's programmes. An important forum for reflection and consultation between the Committee's member countries and donor countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is represented by the Sahel and West Africa Club. Co-operative links have been developed by the Committee also with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO).

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Dr Alhousseini Bretaudeau

HEADQUARTERS: 03 BP 7049, Ouagadougou 03, Burkina Faso (telephone: +226 374125; fax: +226 374132)

WEBSITE: <http://www.cilss.bf>

PUBLICATIONS: *Reflets Sahéliens* (quarterly); *Flash CILSS* (every two months)

REFERENCES: A. de Lattre and A.M. Fell, *The Club du Sahel: An Experiment in International Co-operation* (Paris, 1984); C.M. Somerville, *Drought and Aid in the Sahel: A Decade of Development Co-operation* (London, 1986)

Rio Group

The Group represents a regional forum for political consultation and policy co-ordination on major topics on the international agenda among 20 Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Origin and development

The Group was established at a meeting of eight Latin American Heads of State, held at Rio de Janeiro on 18 December 1986, as a Permanent Mechanism of Political Consultation and Co-ordination. Initially known as the 'Group of Eight', the Mechanism was the result of the fusion of the Contadora Group (Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela) and the Support Group (Argentina, Brazil, Peru and Uruguay), both concerned with political crises in Central America. Regional security arrangements and debt and development issues were the main focus of the Mechanism.

Panama was suspended from participation in October 1988, expelled in March 1990, and later readmitted after the return of a democratic government. The eight founder members have been progressively joined by other Central American and South American countries. The gradual enlargement of the Rio Group (as the Mechanism has become generally known since the early 1990s) has enhanced its importance as a framework for intra-Latin American consultation and negotiation and joint political action *vis-à-vis* third countries and major multilateral institutions.

Membership

The Group consists of Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, plus Guyana that currently represents the countries of the Caribbean.

Objectives

The Group aims to expand political co-operation among member countries, to expedite the process of Latin American integration and promote co-ordination among Latin American organizations, to present appropriate solutions to the problems and conflicts affecting the region, to strengthen the initiatives and actions undertaken to improve inter-American relations, and to explore new fields of co-

operation in order to enhance economic, social, scientific and technological development. The liberalization of regional trade and the establishment of a free trade area are also among the objectives of the Group.

Structure

The Group has no legal status and no permanent headquarters. The annual Summits of the Heads of State and regular meetings of the Foreign Ministers share the decision-making power. The Secretariat rotates between member countries according to the location of the Summit meeting.

Activities

The Veracruz Act of March 1999 consolidated the objectives and principles that had materialized within the framework of the Group and stressed the importance of promoting democracy, protecting human rights and intensifying the fight against terrorism, corruption and drug trafficking. Over the past few years measures have been considered to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers and to start a progressive co-ordination of macroeconomic policies.

External relations

The political and economic dialogue between the Group and the European Union (EU), institutionalized in December 1990 through regular meetings, is based on the tightening of political ties, the stepping-up of economic integration and free trade and the focusing of co-operation on priority areas. Co-operation is also being developed in the areas of social reform, consolidation of civil society, support for the private sector, and culture, education, science and technology. Increased investment and technology transfers and trade liberalization on the part of EU members have been repeatedly urged by the Group. The last Ministerial Conferences between the Group and the EU have dealt with several key issues including sustainable development; trade and investment; social cohesion and democratic governance; drug-trafficking; and the fight against transnational crime and terrorism.

The further development and effectiveness of the activities of the Group will depend also on closer co-ordination with other regional bodies such as the Latin American Economic System (SELA) and the Latin American Integration Association (LAIA).

Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC)

[Club du Sahel et de l'Afrique de l'ouest]

The Club represents a forum for reflection and consultation between the countries of the Sahel region and other countries in West Africa and the aid agencies of members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Origin and development

The Club was established in 1976 as Club du Sahel to provide an informal forum of dialogue between donor countries belonging to the OECD and the members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). Besides CILSS, the Club developed an effective partnership with other institutions and groups in West Africa such as the Municipal Development Programme in Cotonou (comprising the region's mayors), farmers' organizations, and the West African Enterprise Network based in Accra and grouping businessmen from several countries in the region. In April 2001 the geographic coverage of the Club was expanded beyond the Sahel region to include the other parts of the space covered by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Membership

All 17 West African countries.

Objectives

The main purpose of the Club is to help increase the impact of development aid by fostering a more rapid transfer of the management of development co-operation to emerging economies and by supporting these economies in drawing up their own development strategies.

Structure

The Strategy and Policy Group (SPG), the Club's Board of Directors, meets twice a year to set the broad outlines of the work programme. Thematic working groups have been established for major topics. The Club Secretariat acts as a change agent for development co-operation practices in the field and provides members with practical and up-to-date information. The Secretariat is located at 4 Boulevard des Iles, 92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux, near Paris.

Activities

The Club has supported the economic and social development of the Sahelian region, gradually adapting to changing conditions such as the emerging of civil society groups, the movement towards decentralization and the growing importance of the private sector. The reform of aid systems with a view to increasing transparency, harmonizing partner agencies' procedures and practices, and improving the quality of public policy choices is one of the major challenges currently confronting the Club. The development of African entrepreneurship through the creation of a number of networks is another area where the Club has played a significant role. The present work programme concentrates on regional integration dynamics, identifying growth centres and linkages between rural and urban areas, formal and informal sectors and private and public sectors. The implementation of concrete measures for accelerating regional co-operation and integration in West Africa could contribute to the strategy of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). In November 2006 the Club concluded with ECOWAS a 'Framework for Co-operation' summing up past achievements and delineating forthcoming joint initiatives. A 'Framework for Co-operation' was also signed in October 2006 with the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

DIRECTOR: Normand Lauzon

POSTAL ADDRESS: c/o OECD, 2 rue André Pascal, 75775 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4524 8987; fax: +33 1 4524 9031)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oecd.org/swac>

PUBLICATION: *SWAC News* (electronic newsletter)

Shanghai Co-operation Organization (SCO)

The Organization, established in 2001 as a successor to the 'Shanghai Five' group of countries, promotes co-operation with a view to ensuring peace, security, stability and economic development in Central Asia.

Origin and development

The Organization grew out of a very loose and informal grouping, the 'Shanghai Five', consisting of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, that held its first Summit meeting on 26 April 1996 in Shanghai when the Treaty on Deepening Military Trust in Border Regions was signed. The Treaty on the Reduction of Military Forces in Border Regions followed on 24 April 1997. Further Summit meetings were held in Russia and Kazakhstan and managed to settle longstanding border disputes and ease military tensions among members. The Summit meeting that took place on 24–26 August 1999 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, focused on regional security and co-operation with a view to combating international terrorism, drugs and arms trafficking, illegal immigration and other transnational criminal activities. The Chiefs of law enforcement agencies of participating countries signed a memorandum on co-operation and interaction, including the conduct of joint operations, in December 1999.

At the following Summit, held on 5 July 2000 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, the participants stressed again the political goals of the grouping of turning Central Asia into a 'region of peace, good neighbourhood, stability and equal co-operation', while excluding any interference in each other's internal affairs on the grounds of 'humanitarian intervention' and protection of 'human rights'. Support was expressed for China's pursuit of its 'one-China' policy and for Russia's stance on the Chechen issue.

At the Summit meeting in Shanghai, on 14–15 June 2001, the presidents of the 'Shanghai Five' plus Uzbekistan decided to transform the group into a more structured regional political and security body bearing the name of Shanghai Co-operation Organization. Besides the Declaration on the establishment of the new Organization, the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism was also adopted.

Membership

China, Russia and the former Soviet republics in Central Asia with the exception of Turkmenistan. A number of countries, such as Afghanistan, India, Iran, Mongolia and Pakistan, currently enjoy observer status and might eventually be considered for membership. Countries outside the region may apply for observer status.

Objectives

Originally set up as a confidence-building mechanism to deal with border issues, the Organization has gradually shifted its focus to regional security. The struggle against the 'three evil forces' of 'international terrorism, national separatism and religious extremism' through co-ordinated efforts at both the multilateral and bilateral levels is the Organization's primary concern. A prerequisite of regional security and stability is the crackdown on hostile groups in the region such as the organizations of 'East Turkistan', the radical Chechens and the fundamentalist Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The improvement of co-operation in a variety of trade, economic, scientific and cultural areas is also envisaged. The Organization is based on the principles of mutual respect of the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders, non-intervention in domestic affairs, non-use of force or threat of force, respect for different civilizations and equality of all members.

Structure

The Council of Heads of State is the Organization's supreme decision-making body that determines priority areas and basic directions of activities. The Council meets once a year in member countries in rotation, according to the alphabetical order of names in Russian. The Council of Heads of Government, also meeting annually, establishes the principal matters of co-operation in specific areas and adopts the Organization's budget. The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs deals with current issues, prepares meetings of the Council of Heads of State, implements decisions and holds consultations on international issues. The Conference of Heads of Agencies is in charge of specific questions of co-operation in specialized areas such as law-enforcement, security, defence, emergency and disaster relief. The Council of National Co-ordinators, meeting at least three times a year, is responsible for the management of the Organization's routine activities.

The Secretariat, based in Beijing and inaugurated on 15 January 2004, provides administrative and technical support under the direction of a Secretary appointed by the Council of Heads of State for a three-year term. A Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), based in Tashkent, was established in January 2004 as a permanent body of the Organization with a view to co-ordinating the

activities of member countries against terrorism, separatism and extremism.

Activities

An extraordinary meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Beijing on 7 January 2002 discussed the role of the Organization in securing a solution to the Afghan crisis and continuing the international struggle against all forms of terrorism.

On the basis of the June 2001 Shanghai Declaration, a full-fledged Charter was formally adopted at the summit that took place in St Petersburg on 7 June 2002; the Charter entered into force on 19 September 2003. Besides the Organization's Charter, leaders meeting in St Petersburg signed the Agreement on the creation of a regional anti-terrorist agency. The Agreement offers a firm legal basis for substantive co-operation and more concrete actions in the crackdown on terrorism, separatism and extremism. The necessity to develop a long-term programme of multilateral economic co-operation creating favourable conditions for trade and investment was also stressed, especially in view of the participation of the Organization's member countries in the World Trade Organization (WTO). At the summit held in Moscow on 28–29 May 2003 agreements and regulations were adopted concerning organizational and budgetary matters. Comprehensive plans for strengthening the Organization's work were decided at the summit that took place in Tashkent on 17 June 2004. Further summits were held: on 5 July 2005 in Astana, Kazakhstan; on 15 June 2006 in Shanghai; and on 16 August 2007 in Bishkek, reconfirming the top priorities of the Organization. Agreements are being worked out to foster co-operation in the fight against arms smuggling, drug-trafficking, illegal migration and other criminal activities and for the preservation of information security. Projects to improve transportation, power generation, water use, and energy are considered of paramount importance.

External relations

The Organization is gradually developing co-operative relations with non-member countries, the UN system and other regional associations such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with special regard to the fight against international terrorism.

OFFICIAL AND WORKING LANGUAGES: Chinese, Russian

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Bolat K. Nurgaliev

HEADQUARTERS: 41, Liangmaqiao, Chaoyang District, 100600 Beijing, China (telephone: +86 10 653 29807; fax: +86 10 653 29808)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sectsc.org>

South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC)

The Association, representing the first significant attempt at organizing co-operation among the countries of South Asia, is intended to promote collective action in agreed areas for the acceleration of the process of economic and social development.

Origin and development

The Association originated on 8 December 1985 in Dhaka, Bangladesh, when a solemn document, known as the Dhaka Declaration, and a Charter setting out the objectives and structure of the new organization were signed at a Summit meeting attended by the Heads of State and Government of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. The meeting was held at the recommendation of the Foreign Ministers of the seven countries grouped in the Committee for South Asia Regional Co-operation (SARC).

The need for closer co-operation among the countries of South Asia had been recognized since the early 1980s. Between 1981 and 1983 several multilateral meetings were convened at foreign secretariat level in order to forge operational and institutional links for the pursuit of common goals. A declaration setting up the SARC Committee was eventually approved in August 1983 in New Delhi by a ministerial conference which launched an integrated programme of action (IPA) covering agriculture, rural development, health and population and telecommunications, as well as arts and culture. The tasks of supervising the programme, identifying additional areas of co-operation and mobilizing regional and external resources, were entrusted to the Committee while a technical body was created to oversee the actual implementation of the co-ordinated programmes in the various fields. The ministerial meetings held in the Maldives in July 1984 and in Bhutan in May 1985 reviewed the implementation of the action programme and paved the way for the Dhaka Summit which agreed upon the formal establishment of the Association.

Regional co-operation is envisaged by the Dhaka Declaration as a 'logical response' to the dramatic challenges posed to the countries of South Asia by 'poverty, underdevelopment, low levels of production, unemployment and pressure of population compounded by exploitation of the past and other adverse legacies'. Effective co-operation is expected to lay the grounds for optimum use of national and regional strengths, human and natural resources and economic complementarities.

Membership

All seven countries of South Asia plus Afghanistan which was officially admitted in April 2007. A number of countries enjoy observer status including China, Iran, Japan, Korea and the US, plus the European Union (EU).

Objectives

The Association basically aims at increased economic, social, cultural and technical collaboration among the countries of South Asia with a view to accelerating the pace of economic development and strengthening collective self-reliance.

According to the Charter, the objectives of the Association are: (a) to improve the welfare and quality of life of South Asian peoples; (b) to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development; (c) to promote collective self-reliance among the member countries; (d) to contribute to mutual trust, understanding and appreciation of one another's problems; (e) to promote active collaboration and mutual assistance in the economic, social, cultural, technical and scientific fields; (f) to strengthen co-operation with other developing countries; (g) to improve co-operation among member countries in international forums on matters of common interest; and (h) to co-operate with international and regional organizations having similar aims and purposes.

These widely phrased objectives appear to leave ample room for further negotiations on specific issues and areas of operational activity. Co-operation within the framework of the Association should not interfere with existing bilateral and multilateral obligations and should be conducted according to the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

The Association's institutions and decision-making powers bear no supranational features and are fairly limited by the unanimity principle which is required for all deliberations at all levels; 'bilat-

eral and contentious issues' are excluded from the competence of the Association.

Structure

The basic structure of the Association is made up of the Summit Meeting of Heads of State or Government taking place annually, the Council of Ministers meeting at least twice a year, the Standing Committee of Foreign Secretaries, the Technical Committees, and the Secretariat. The Standing Committee meets as often as necessary, usually prior to the meetings of the Council of Ministers, and plays an important operational role. The Technical Committees, established to study and supervise co-operation programmes, were reduced in 1999 from eleven to seven and deal with: agriculture and rural development; transport and communications; environment, meteorology and forestry; social development; science and technology; human resource development; and energy. Each member country assumes the chairmanship of a Technical Committee.

Following the decision taken at the Second Summit in Bangalore on 17 November 1986 to establish a Secretariat, a Secretary-General assumed charge in January 1987 and further steps were taken to recruit and establish the Secretariat itself in Kathmandu. The Secretary-General is appointed on the basis of rotation by country in alphabetical order; in 1997 the tenure of the Secretary-General was extended from two to three years. The Secretariat is not a policy-making body but co-ordinates the implementation of the Association's activities and services its meetings. The annual budget of the Secretariat is shared by member countries on the basis of an agreed formula.

Activities

At the Third Summit of the Association, held in Kathmandu on 2-4 November 1987, member countries signed the Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism that entered into force in August 1988. Proposals were made for a SAARC Audio Visual Exchange Programme and a SAARC Documentation Centre. An agreement was also concluded with a view to establishing a SAARC Food Security Reserve which began operations in 1988 to meet emergency food needs in member countries. The SAARC Agricultural Information Centre was set up in 1988 in Dhaka.

The Fourth Summit was held in Islamabad on 29-31 December 1988. At the Fifth Summit – held

in Malé, Maldives on 21–23 November 1990 – members signed the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances which entered into force in September 1993. In Malé, member countries also asked for Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait. The Sixth Summit took place in Colombo on 21 December 1991 and stressed as a high priority the alleviation of poverty in all South Asian countries. After two postponements, the Seventh Summit was held in Dhaka on 10–11 April 1993 and approved the Framework Agreement for the liberalization of intra-regional trade under the so-called SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). The SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC) was set up in New Delhi in May 1994 and the SAARC Meteorological Research Centre (SMRC) established in Dhaka in January 1995.

At the Eighth Summit, which took place in New Delhi on 2–4 May 1995, the Heads of State or Government declared 1995 as the 'SAARC Year of Poverty Eradication'. Calls were made by leaders participating in the Summit for broadening and deepening co-operation 'within a specific and rapid time-frame in the core areas of trade and economic relations in the region' and for the implementation of SAPTA. The Eighth Summit also endorsed the establishment of a three-window (social, infrastructural and economic) South Asian Development Fund with the merger of existing funds.

The Ninth Summit – held in Malé, Maldives on 12–14 May 1997 – focused on issues relating to economic and trade co-operation among member countries and eradication of poverty from the region. Agreement was also reached on a process of 'informal political consultations' as a means for promoting 'peace, stability and amity' in the region. The Tenth Summit (Colombo, 29–31 July 1998) adopted the Colombo Declaration giving, *inter alia*, the mandate to draft a comprehensive treaty regime for creating a free trade area.

The Eleventh Summit, originally scheduled to take place in 1999, was postponed several times as a result of the deteriorating relationship between India and Pakistan. The tense political situation led to the suspension not only of Summits but also of all other political level meetings and to a decline of the Association's activities. The Eleventh Summit was eventually convened on 4–6 January 2002 in Kathmandu; participants reaffirmed their commitment to regional co-operation to be implemented in a step-by-step manner. Commitments were under-

taken to remove tariff and non-tariff barriers and structural impediments to free trade with a view to completing negotiations under SAPTA. The Summit decided also to re-establish the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation with the specific mandate of formulating strategies to confront poverty. The Twelfth Summit took place in Islamabad on 2–6 January 2004; participants reaffirmed the commitment to the objectives, principles and provisions of the SAARC Charter. With the objective of moving towards a South Asian Economic Union, the Agreement on the establishment of a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) was signed and has been subsequently ratified by all members; the first tariff reductions have already been implemented. The Thirteenth Summit, held at Dhaka on 12–13 November 2005, decided the setting up of the SAARC Energy Centre (SEC) in Islamabad in order to initiate and facilitate joint programmes in the sector.

The Fourteenth Summit, held on 3–4 April 2007 in New Delhi with the participation of Afghanistan for the first time, stressed *inter alia* the need to make fully operational the SAARC Development Fund (SDF) with resources coming both from within and outside the region.

The extension and strengthening of co-operation to vital areas such as trade, industry, financial and monetary issues and energy could gradually bring about the hoped-for increase in 'collective self-reliance', one of the basic goals of the Association. Among the results of co-operation within the Association's framework are the Convention on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion of Child Welfare in South Asia and the Convention on Preventing and Combating the Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution; both instruments were signed at the Eleventh Summit in early 2002.

The creation of the Association has represented no small achievement for South Asia, a region where 20 per cent of the world's population lives and which had not yet set up an institutional machinery of its own to promote full-scale co-operation. Despite recurring setbacks, it may well be that the very existence of a multilateral framework will help South Asian countries concentrate on common problems and solutions and ultimately lessen tensions arising from crucial issues such as the activities of separatist and terrorist groups.

External relations

The Association has developed various forms of co-operation with major international agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). On the regional plane, links have been established with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Asian Development Bank (AsDB). In July 1996 a Memorandum of Understanding on Administrative Co-operation was signed with the EU as a first step in setting up a framework for strengthening mutually beneficial links.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Chenkyab Dorji

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 4222, Tridevi Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal (telephone: +977 1 4221785; fax: +977 1 4227033)

WEBSITE: <http://www.saarc-sec.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *SAARC News* (official newsletter); *SAARC Energy Newsletter* (biannual); *Spectrum: The Magazine of SAARC Secretariat*

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Southeast European Co-operation Process (SEECP)

The SEECP is an original form of co-operation among countries of the region with the aim of consolidating good neighbourly relations and political stability and promoting economic progress.

Origin and development

The SEECP was launched in 1996 in Sofia at a meeting of countries of the region acting on their own initiative rather than implementing proposals of other international organizations or states. Several meetings followed at the levels of Heads of State and Government and Ministers of Foreign Affairs. Yugoslavia was not invited to the meetings during the Kosovo crisis but resumed its full participation on 25 October 2000. The Heads of State and Government, meeting on 12 February 2000 in Bucharest, reaffirmed their commitment to the basic goals of the SEECP and adopted the Charter on Good Neighbourly Relations, Stability, Security and Co-operation in Southeastern Europe. The Charter defines the scope, principles, goals and mechanisms of regional co-operation.

Membership

Countries currently participating include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Turkey.

Objectives

The basic aims of the SEECP are to strengthen political and security co-operation, to foster economic relations and to build closer links for promoting democracy and respect for human rights and fighting against terrorism and illegal activities. The gradual transformation of the region into an area of peace and stability is intended to facilitate the full integration of member countries into the European and Euro-Atlantic political, economic and security structures, especially the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Structure

The main decision-making body is the Meeting of the Heads of State and Government that takes place, as a rule, at yearly intervals in the country holding the rotating presidency. Meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and political directors are held regularly. Other ministers meet according to the various

needs. Security co-operation is developed through the Southeast European Defence Ministerial framework.

Activities

Activities carried out within the structure of the SEECP cover the areas of security and stability, economic and environmental issues, the strengthening of humanitarian, social and cultural ties as well as co-operation in the areas of justice, the struggle against terrorism, organized crime, and the illegal traffic of drugs, weapons and human beings. At the meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers held in Belgrade on 19 June 2002, the commitment was reaffirmed to implement the basic goals of the 'Charter' adopted in Bucharest and to define the SEECP as complementary to the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe and the Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI). In order to reflect the new role of the SEECP in the regional co-operation architecture a protocol amending the 'Charter' was signed on 11 May 2007 in Zagreb by the Heads of State and Government. The amendments adopted will involve, *inter alia*, the establishment by February 2008 of a Regional Co-operation Council whose Secretariat will be based in Sarajevo.

External relations

Close links are maintained with major European and pan-European institutions including the European Commission and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

WEBSITE: <http://www.stabilitypact.org>

Southeast European Co-operative Initiative (SECI)

SECI encourages economic and environmental co-operation among the countries of the region with a view to facilitating their integration into European structures.

Origin and development

SECI was launched in 1996 at the instigation of the US and the European Union (EU) in order to enhance regional co-operation and stability among the countries of Southeastern Europe. The participating countries held an inaugural meeting in Geneva on 5–6 December 1996 and formally adopted the SECI Statement of Purpose. SECI represents a forum for

discussion of common regional economic and environmental problems in order to take concerted action on the basis of region-wide plans. As a flexible framework for launching and implementing concrete projects and programmes of interest to two or more participating countries, SECI does not interfere with but rather complements existing plans and proposals.

Membership

Countries participating in SECI include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Turkey.

Objectives

The general purposes of SECI are to promote and co-ordinate region-wide planning, to identify needed follow-up and missing links, to provide for deeper involvement of the private sector in economic and environmental efforts, to assist in the establishment of a regional climate that supports the transfer of know-how and greater investment in the private sector, and to foster the harmonization of trade policies and laws.

Structure

The main decision-making body is the Agenda Committee, consisting of high-ranking officials appointed by participating countries and meeting four to five times a year. The Agenda Committee, assisted by a Co-ordinator and with the technical support of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), reviews project outlines for possible implementation and follows the development of ongoing projects. The Co-ordinator chairs the Agenda Committee meetings, monitors the implementation of programmes and holds regular consultations with the Executive Secretary of ECE. For each project retained, the Agenda Committee sets up a working group consisting of representatives from the interested countries and other national and international experts.

The Business Advisory Council for Southeastern Europe (BAC SEE) is composed of some 40 businessmen from 20 different countries meeting four times a year in order to give advice on private business issues to both SECI and the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe.

Activities

SECI has been acting as a catalyst to bring together countries of the region, lending institutions and

technical agencies and to encourage the involvement of the private sector. It took over responsibilities from the Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe as external facilitator for the Sava River Basin Initiative.

External relations

Besides its close links with the ECE, SECI co-operates with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the EU.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

CO-ORDINATOR: Erhard Busek

OFFICE OF THE CO-ORDINATOR: SECI c/o
OSCE Hofburg, Heldenplatz 1, Vienna 1010,
Austria (telephone: +431 53137 422; fax: +431 53137
420)

WEBSITE: <http://www.secinet.info>

Southern African Customs Union (SACU)

SACU is the oldest operating customs union in the world. The institutional structure and revenue-sharing formulas have been recently adapted to changes in the regional and multilateral environments with a view to fostering the integration of member countries into the world economy.

Origin and development

The establishment of a customs union in southern Africa dates back to 29 June 1910 when an agreement was reached between South Africa, Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. After the three British protectorates obtained independence, a new customs union agreement between South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland was concluded on 11 December 1969 and entered into force on 1 March 1970. Customs and excise revenue collected in the common area went to a pool administered by South Africa and redistributed among members under a revenue-sharing formula. Transfers under SACU have traditionally accounted for a large part of the state revenues of smaller members. Namibia joined SACU as a full member upon achieving independence in 1990.

Membership

Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland.

Objectives

Besides implementing the customs union, SACU envisages common policies on agriculture, industrial development, competition and unfair trade practices.

Structure

The Council of Ministers is the supreme decision-making body. Other organs are the Customs Union Commission, the Tariff Board making recommendations on tariff levels and the Technical Liaison Committees responsible for agriculture, customs, trade and industry and transport. The settlement of disputes will be achieved through a specially-created Tribunal. All decisions are taken by the institutions on the basis of consensus, except the Tribunal, composed of three members, that shall decide by majority vote. The Secretariat is located in Windhoek, Namibia.

Activities

The demise of apartheid and the changed political circumstances in South Africa led to a renegotiation of the 1969 agreement that was officially launched on 11 November 1994 in Pretoria. The long negotiating process culminated in the signing on 21 October 2002 in Gaborone, Botswana, of a new Agreement that eventually came into force on 15 July 2004. A revised revenue distribution system, a dispute settlement mechanism and a more effective and democratic institutional framework were agreed upon. Despite the disparate interests of member countries and the prominence of South Africa as the largest and most diversified economy in the region, the new SACU is expected to play a significant role in the development of a trading arrangement gradually expanding to cover the whole of southern Africa.

External relations

A reciprocal trade agreement has been concluded with the European Union (EU). Negotiations towards a free trade agreement (FTA) between members of SACU and the US have been launched in June 2003 in order to strengthen a growing trade and investment partnership. Trade agreements have been signed with Mercosur and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Ms Tswelopele C. Moremi

SECRETARIAT: Private Bag 13285, Windhoek, Namibia (telephone: +264 61 295 8000; fax: +264 61 245 611)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sacu.int>

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Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The Community – established in 1992 by the then ten members of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) – promotes economic co-operation and integration among the countries of Southern Africa.

Origin and development

One of the original goals of SADCC, besides the promotion of economic co-operation in all major areas, was to reduce the region's economic dependence on the Republic of South Africa. With the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the Council of Ministers of SADCC, meeting in January 1992, approved proposals to convert the Conference into a fully integrated regional Community, ultimately including a democratic non-racial South Africa. The relevant treaty was signed at Windhoek, Namibia, on 17 August 1992 and entered into force on 5 October 1993. The ten founder members of the Community were subsequently joined by South Africa in 1994, Mauritius in 1995, and the Congo Democratic Republic and the Seychelles in 1997. Madagascar enjoys observer status.

The SADCC had originated in July 1979 when the first Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference took place in Arusha, Tanzania, with the participation of the economic ministers of the Front-Line States (FLS) – Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia – and of representatives from governments of industrial countries and international agencies that had been promoting closer co-operation among majority-ruled states in the subregion. After a series of contacts at different levels, the Heads of State or Government of the five FLS, joined by Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland and

Zimbabwe, meeting on 1 April 1980, signed the Lusaka Declaration on Economic Liberation and formally brought SADCC into existence. A programme of action was approved, allotting specific studies and tasks to member countries. Namibia joined the Conference upon achieving independence in 1990.

Membership

Fourteen countries of the subregion (Angola, Botswana, Congo Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe). All SADCC members were eligible for membership in the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA), a body which was formally replaced in December 1994 by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). The largely overlapping membership first of SADCC and PTA and afterwards of SADC and COMESA represented a controversial issue with recurring proposals either for a merger of the two organizations or for a clearly defined 'division of labour' between them.

Objectives

The general purpose of the Community is to deepen economic co-operation and integration, with the goal of establishing a regional common market, and to strengthen regional solidarity, peace and security.

Structure

Following the adoption of the report on the restructuring of the institutions by the Extraordinary Summit held on 9 March 2001 in Windhoek, Namibia, the formal structure of the Community is made up of: the Summit Meeting of Heads of State or Government which used to take place annually but should meet twice a year; the Troika, consisting of the Chair, Incoming Chair and Outgoing Chair of SADC; the Organ on Politics, Defence and Security; the Council of Ministers consisting of Ministers from each member country (usually ministers of foreign affairs, economy and finance) whose meetings should take place four times a year; the Integrated Committee of Ministers (ICM), comprising at least two ministers from each member country, responsible for overseeing the four core areas of integration (Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment; Infrastructure and Services; Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources; Social and Human Development and Special Programmes);

the Secretariat headed by an Executive Secretary. SADC National Committees are to be established in each member country to assist in the formulation of regional policies and oversee the implementation of regional programmes at the national level. The establishment of the SADC Tribunal, decided in 1992, eventually materialized in its inauguration and the swearing in of judges on 18 November 2005 in Windhoek. The Tribunal, whose members are appointed for a five-year term renewable only once, ensures the adherence to law in the interpretation and application of the SADC Treaty.

Activities

The transformation of SADCC into SADC has given new impetus to efforts at achieving close economic co-operation and the eventual establishment of a common market along with increased political and security co-ordination. Joint infrastructure development, establishment of regional production policies and co-ordination of investment procedures were among the major tasks of the newly-created Community. Each member country is responsible for the co-ordination of regional policies and programmes in designated areas acting on behalf of the Community as a whole. The entry of South Africa inevitably changed the balance of power within the organization. At the end of the 1990s the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) aggravated by the participation of troops from neighbouring countries, the civil war in Lesotho and the continued hostilities in Angola were among the factors having a negative impact on the region's stability and security. Military intervention under the auspices of the Community was proposed but remained highly controversial. Since 2001 the deteriorating situation in Zimbabwe has been a major cause of concern for several members of the Community, especially South Africa. Obstacles to the Community's actions have also originated from the failure of a number of member countries to pay in full their contributions to the budget.

Programmes have been adopted and implemented at varying degrees in the transport and communications sector, in food, agriculture and natural resources, in management of water resources and watercourse systems, and in energy, industry and mining. Community strategies and programmes aim to take into account a broader continental framework such as the one that is being developed within the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A Charter of Fundamental

Social Rights in SADC was approved on 26 August 2003 at the Dar-es-Salaam Summit Meeting.

External relations

Close links have been developed, building on the SADCC experience, with several organizations – notably the European Community (EC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB). On the whole EC member countries remained the major contributors, bilaterally and collectively through the Lomé Convention, succeeded by the Cotonou Agreement of 2000.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Portuguese

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Tomaz Augusto Salomão

HEADQUARTERS: SADC House, Private Bag 0095, Gaborone, Botswana (telephone: +267 3951 863; fax: +267 3972 848)

WEBSITE: <http://www.sadc.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *SADC Annual Report*; *SADC Energy Bulletin*; *SADC Today* (six times a year)

REFERENCES: D.G. Anglin, 'Economic Liberation and Regional Co-operation in Southern Africa: SADCC and PTA', *International Organization*, 37 (1983), 681-711; D.G. Anglin, 'SADCC in the Aftermath of the Nkomati Accord', *Confrontation and Liberation in Southern Africa: Regional Directions after the Nkomati Accord*, ed. I.S.R. Msabaha and T.M. Shaw (London, 1987) 173-97; J. Hanlon, *SADCC in the 1990s: Development on the Frontline* (London, 1989); M.C. Lee, *SADCC: The Political Economy of Development in Southern Africa* (Nashville, TN, 1989); D. Evans, P. Holmes and I. Mandaza, *SADC: The Cost of Non-Integration* (Mount Pleasant, Harare, 1999); T. Hartzenberg (ed.), *SADC-EU Trade Relations* (Mount Pleasant, Harare, 2000); C. Jenkins, J. Leape and L. Thomas (eds), *Gaining from Trade in Southern Africa: Complementary Policies to Underpin the SADC Free Trade Area* (New York, 2000); R. de Villiers and K. Lambrechts (eds), *The IGD Guide to the Southern African Development Community* (Johannesburg, 2001)

Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe

The Pact is a political declaration of commitment and a framework agreement on co-operation with a

view to developing among all partners a common strategy for stability and growth in the region.

Origin and development

The proposal for a Pact to guarantee stability in Southeastern Europe through a comprehensive, long-term conflict prevention approach was first aired in late 1998 and relaunched after the intervention of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Kosovo. At the initiative of the European Union (EU), the Pact was formally adopted on 10 June 1999 in Cologne by the representatives of over 40 partner countries and international organizations. The essential idea was that conflict prevention and peace building activities should be carried out in parallel in three sectors: the creation of a secure environment, the establishment of sustainable democratic systems, and the promotion of economic and social well-being. It is important to emphasize that the EU has formally undertaken the commitment to draw the countries of Southeastern Europe 'closer to the perspective of full integration' into its own structures, including eventual full membership. The Pact was reaffirmed at a Summit meeting held in Sarajevo on 30 July 1999.

Membership

Partners of the Pact include all EU members and the European Commission, Norway, Russia, Switzerland and Turkey, plus the countries of Southeastern Europe, Japan, Canada and the US. Other partners include major global and regional organizations involved in providing aid in various forms to Southeastern Europe.

Objectives

The Pact aims at supporting the countries of Southeastern Europe 'in their efforts to foster peace, democracy, respect for human rights and economic prosperity in order to achieve stability in the whole region'.

Structure

The Pact is not an international organization and does not possess any financial resources of its own. The Special Co-ordinator and his office, based in Brussels, are at the centre of the embryonic organizational structure of the Pact. As his title suggests, the Special Co-ordinator is in charge of the harmonization of the political strategies and initiatives of the participants. The Special Co-ordinator chairs the

key political instrument of the Pact, the Regional Table that comprises three Working Tables devoted respectively to: Democratization and Human Rights; Economic Reconstruction, Co-operation and Development; and Security Issues (with two Sub-Tables concerning Security and Defence, and Justice and Home Affairs respectively). At Regional and Working Tables meetings, representatives of the Southeastern European countries are, for the first time, on an equal footing with those of international organizations and financial institutions in setting priorities for their region. The EU, through the European Commission, and the World Bank were appointed to co-ordinate the economic assistance measures for the region.

The parliamentary dimension of the Pact is co-sponsored by the European Parliament and the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Activities

Agreements have already been signed with a view to liberalizing trade and lowering tariff barriers among the countries of the region. Interim steps towards membership are envisaged by the EU for the countries of the region; Croatia and Macedonia have already applied for EU membership. Since the conclusion of the Pact, the Heads of State and Government of the Southeastern European countries have met for consultation within the framework of the Southeast European Co-operation Process (SEEC) and a number of documents have been adopted, including a 'Charter on Good Neighbourliness, Stability, Security and Co-operation in Southeast Europe' signed in February 2000. A number of funding conferences have been held to provide financing for key infrastructure sectors and projects. Economic, political and social co-operation between the EU and countries of the region is being carried out through the aid regulation CARDS (Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Democratization and Stabilization) for which an amount of €4.65 billion was allocated for the period 2002–2006.

SPECIAL CO-ORDINATOR: Erhard Busek

SECRETARIAT: Rue Wiertz 50, 1050 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 401 8700; fax: +32 2 401 8712)

WEBSITE: <http://www.stabilitypact.org>

Union of Banana Exporting Countries

[*Unión de Países Exportadores de Banano*]
(UPEB)

FOUNDED: 17 September 1974

OBJECTIVES: To provide a forum for co-ordinating policies in order to protect the interests of member countries, to promote the technical and economic development of the banana industry and to further international co-operation in connection with world banana problems

MEMBERS: Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Venezuela. Ecuador, despite being a major banana exporter, never joined the Union

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 4273, Panama City 5, Panama (telephone: +507 263 6266; fax: +507 264 8355)

PUBLICATIONS: *Informe UPEB; Estadísticas Bananeras*

United Nations (UN)

The UN is a voluntary association of sovereign countries which have committed themselves, through signing the Charter, to ensure international peace and security and to further international co-operation in solving economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Origin and development

The name 'United Nations' was devised by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and was first used in the Washington Declaration by United Nations of 1 January 1942, when representatives of 26 countries pledged their governments to continue fighting together against the Axis Powers. In addition to the original 26 signatories, 21 other countries subscribed to the Declaration. On 30 October 1943, the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers of the UK, the US and the USSR and the Chinese Ambassador to Moscow recognized the necessity of establishing 'a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, and open to membership by all such states, large and small, for the maintenance

of international peace and security'. The following year, the basic principles of the proposed organization were worked out during the discussions, held at Dumbarton Oaks (near Washington DC), between the UK, the US and the USSR from August to September and between China, the UK and the US from September to October. At the Yalta Conference (4–11 February 1945), an agreement was reached by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin on the voting procedure to be adopted in the Security Council of the UN and the granting of the 'veto power' to the permanent members.

The Charter of the new institution was drawn up by the representatives of 50 countries at the UN Conference on International Organization, held in San Francisco between 25 April and 26 June 1945, and was eventually signed on 26 June. Poland, not represented at the Conference, signed the Charter later and became the fifty-first original member of the Organization. The UN formally came into existence on 24 October 1945, when the Charter became effective following ratification by China, France, the UK, the US and the USSR, and by a majority of other signatories; 24 October is now universally celebrated as United Nations Day. In April 1946, the League of Nations, predecessor of the UN, was officially dissolved following a decision of its Assembly.

Amendments to the Charter enter into effect when they have been adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members of the General Assembly and ratified by two-thirds of the members of the UN, including all the permanent members of the Security Council. The amendments introduced so far have related to the expansion of two main organs, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

Membership of the UN is open to all peace-loving nations that accept the obligations of the Charter and, in the judgment of the Organization, are able and willing to carry out these obligations. The original members of the UN are those countries which, having participated in the San Francisco Conference of 1945 or having previously signed the Declaration by the United Nations of 1942, have signed and ratified the Charter. Other countries may be admitted to membership by a two-thirds majority vote by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. The Assembly, therefore, may decide to reject the application of a candidate country having the support of

the Security Council but may not admit a country in the absence of a recommendation of the Security Council. Members may be suspended or expelled by the Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council; they may be suspended if the Security Council is taking enforcement action against them or expelled if they persistently violate the principles of the Charter. The rights of a suspended member may be restored by the Security Council.

Membership

The number of member countries of the UN has risen from the original 51 to 192, embracing practically all independent nations in the world, the most recent additions having been Switzerland and Timor-Leste, admitted in September 2002, and Montenegro in June 2006. The only notable exceptions are Taiwan (which occupied the Chinese seat from 1945 till 1971, when replaced by the People's Republic of China), and the Vatican City State (Holy See). The Holy See, although not a member of the UN, participates in certain activities. After the dissolution of the USSR, all its former constituent republics have been granted separate UN membership. The Russian Federation has succeeded the USSR in all organs of the UN, thereby occupying a permanent seat in the Security Council. The Byelorussian SSR (now Belarus) and the Ukrainian SSR (now Ukraine), although being at the time of the signature of the Charter integral parts of the USSR and therefore not independent countries, have been enjoying separate UN membership as 'original members' since 1945.

Objectives

The primary purpose of the UN, as it was with the League of Nations, is to maintain peace and security throughout the world and to develop friendly relations among nations. In the Charter, the peoples of the UN express their determination to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. To this end, they pledge themselves to live in peace as good neighbours, to unite their strength in order to maintain peace and security, and to ensure that armed force shall not be used except in the common interest. The UN is based on the sovereign equality of all its member countries which undertake: to fulfil in good faith their Charter obligations; to settle their international disputes by peaceful means and without endangering peace, security and justice; to refrain in their international relations from the

threat or use of force against other countries; to give the UN every assistance in any action it may take in accordance with the Charter, and not to assist countries against which preventive or enforcement action is being taken. The UN is to ensure that non-member countries act in accordance with these principles insofar as it is necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security. However, the UN as such has no competence in matters 'which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction' of any country, and its member countries are not required 'to submit such matters to settlement' under the Charter.

Unlike the Covenant of the League of Nations, the UN Charter reflects the awareness among its draftsmen of the close relationship existing between the maintenance of world peace and the promotion of international economic and social stability, including the safeguard of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The UN must act as 'a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these common ends' in both the political and non-political fields through the furtherance of co-operation and co-ordination.

Structure

There are six principal organs of the UN: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat. Actually, both the Economic and Social Council and the Trusteeship Council are auxiliary bodies whose basic task is to assist and advise the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ and consists of all the members of the UN, each country having one vote and being entitled to be represented at meetings by five delegates and five alternates. According to a resolution adopted in 2002, regular sessions are held once a year, 'commencing on the Tuesday of the third week in September, counting from the first week that contains at least one working day'. The general debate starts on the Tuesday following the opening of the regular session and is held, without interruption, over a period of nine working days. Special sessions may be convened by the Secretary-General at the request of the Security Council, of a majority of the members of the UN or of one member if the majority of the members concur. An emergency

United Nations – Growth of Membership

Year	No.	Original Member States
1945	51	Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia
New Member States		
1946	55	Afghanistan, Iceland, Sweden, Thailand
1947	57	Pakistan, Yemen
1948	58	Burma (Myanmar)
1949	59	Israel
1950	60	Indonesia
1955	76	Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Democratic Kampuchea, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nepal, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sri Lanka
1956	80	Japan, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia
1957	82	Ghana, Malaysia
1958	83	Guinea
1960	100	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, Zaire (Dem. Rep. of the Congo)
1961	104	Mauritania, Mongolia, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania
1962	110	Algeria, Burundi, Jamaica, Rwanda, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda
1963	112	Kenya, Kuwait
1964	115	Malawi, Malta, Zambia
1965	118	Gambia, Maldives, Singapore
1966	122	Barbados, Botswana, Guyana, Lesotho
1967	123	Democratic Yemen
1968	126	Equatorial Guinea, Mauritius, Swaziland
1970	127	Fiji
1971	132	Bahrain, Bhutan, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates
1973	135	Bahamas, Federal Republic of Germany, German Democratic Republic
1974	138	Bangladesh, Grenada, Guinea-Bissau
1975	144	Cape Verde, Comoros, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Surinam
1976	147	Angola, Samoa, Seychelles
1977	149	Djibouti, Vietnam
1978	151	Dominica, Solomon Islands
1979	152	Saint Lucia
1980	154	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Zimbabwe
1981	157	Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Vanuatu
1983	158	Saint Kitts and Nevis
1984	159	Brunei
1990	159 ¹	Liechtenstein, Namibia
1991	166	Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Estonia, Federated States of Micronesia, Latvia, Lithuania, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea
1992	179	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, San Marino, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
1993	184	Andorra, Czech Republic, ² Eritrea, Monaco, Slovakia, ² Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
1994	185	Palau
1999	188	Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga
2000	189	Tuvalu, Serbia
2002	191	East Timor, Switzerland
2006	192	Montenegro

Notes:

1. In 1990 the gain of two members was offset by the loss of two members because of the unification of Democratic Yemen and Yemen, and of the two German states.
2. The Czech Republic and Slovakia were admitted as successor states to Czechoslovakia.

Membership of the United Nations

<i>Member</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>
Afghanistan	19 Nov 1946	Ethiopia	13 Nov 1945
Albania	14 Dec 1955	Federated States of Micronesia	17 Sep 1991
Algeria	8 Oct 1962	Fiji	13 Oct 1970
Andorra	28 July 1993	Finland	14 Dec 1955
Angola	1 Dec 1976	France	24 Oct 1945
Antigua and Barbuda	11 Nov 1981	Gabon	20 Sep 1960
Argentina	24 Oct 1945	Gambia	21 Sep 1965
Armenia	2 Mar 1992	Georgia	31 July 1992
Australia	1 Nov 1945	Germany	18 Sep 1973
Austria	14 Dec 1955	Ghana	8 Mar 1957
Azerbaijan	2 Mar 1992	Greece	25 Oct 1945
Bahamas	18 Sep 1973	Grenada	17 Sep 1974
Bahrain	21 Sep 1971	Guatemala	21 Nov 1945
Bangladesh	17 Sep 1974	Guinea	12 Dec 1958
Barbados	9 Dec 1966	Guinea-Bissau	17 Sep 1974
Belarus	24 Oct 1945	Guyana	20 Sep 1966
Belgium	27 Dec 1945	Haiti	24 Oct 1945
Belize	25 Sep 1981	Honduras	17 Dec 1945
Benin	20 Sep 1960	Hungary	14 Dec 1955
Bhutan	21 Sep 1971	Iceland	19 Nov 1946
Bolivia	14 Nov 1945	India	30 Oct 1945
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22 May 1992	Indonesia	28 Sep 1950
Botswana	17 Oct 1966	Iran	24 Oct 1945
Brazil	24 Oct 1945	Iraq	21 Dec 1945
Brunei Darussalam	21 Sep 1984	Ireland	14 Dec 1955
Bulgaria	14 Dec 1955	Israel	11 May 1949
Burkina Faso	20 Sep 1960	Italy	14 Dec 1955
Burundi	18 Sep 1962	Jamaica	18 Sep 1962
Cambodia	14 Dec 1955	Japan	18 Dec 1956
Cameroon	20 Sep 1960	Jordan	14 Dec 1955
Canada	9 Nov 1945	Kazakhstan	2 Mar 1992
Cape Verde	16 Sep 1975	Kenya	16 Dec 1963
Central African Republic	20 Sep 1960	Kiribati	14 Sep 1999
Chad	20 Sep 1960	Kuwait	14 May 1963
Chile	24 Oct 1945	Kyrgyzstan	2 Mar 1992
China	24 Oct 1945	Lao People's Democratic Republic	14 Dec 1955
Colombia	5 Nov 1945	Latvia	17 Sep 1991
Comoros	12 Nov 1975	Lebanon	24 Oct 1945
Congo (Democratic Republic of)	20 Sep 1960	Lesotho	17 Oct 1966
Congo (Republic of)	20 Sep 1960	Liberia	2 Nov 1945
Costa Rica	2 Nov 1945	Libya	14 Dec 1955
Côte d'Ivoire	20 Sep 1960	Liechtenstein	18 Sep 1990
Croatia	22 May 1992	Lithuania	17 Sep 1991
Cuba	24 Oct 1945	Luxembourg	24 Oct 1945
Cyprus	20 Sep 1960	Macedonia (the former Yugoslav Republic of)	8 Apr 1993
Czech Republic	19 Jan 1993	Madagascar	20 Sep 1960
Democratic People's Rep. of Korea	17 Sep 1991	Malawi	1 Dec 1964
Denmark	24 Oct 1945	Malaysia	17 Sep 1957
Djibouti	20 Sep 1977	Maldives	21 Sep 1965
Domenica	18 Dec 1978	Mali	28 Sep 1960
Dominican Republic	24 Oct 1945	Malta	1 Dec 1964
East Timor	27 Sep 2002	Marshall Islands	17 Sep 1991
Ecuador	21 Dec 1945	Mauritania	27 Oct 1961
Egypt	24 Oct 1945	Mauritius	24 Apr 1968
El Salvador	24 Oct 1945	Mexico	7 Nov 1945
Equatorial Guinea	12 Nov 1968	Moldova	2 Mar 1992
Eritrea	28 May 1993	Monaco	28 May 1993
Estonia	17 Sep 1991		

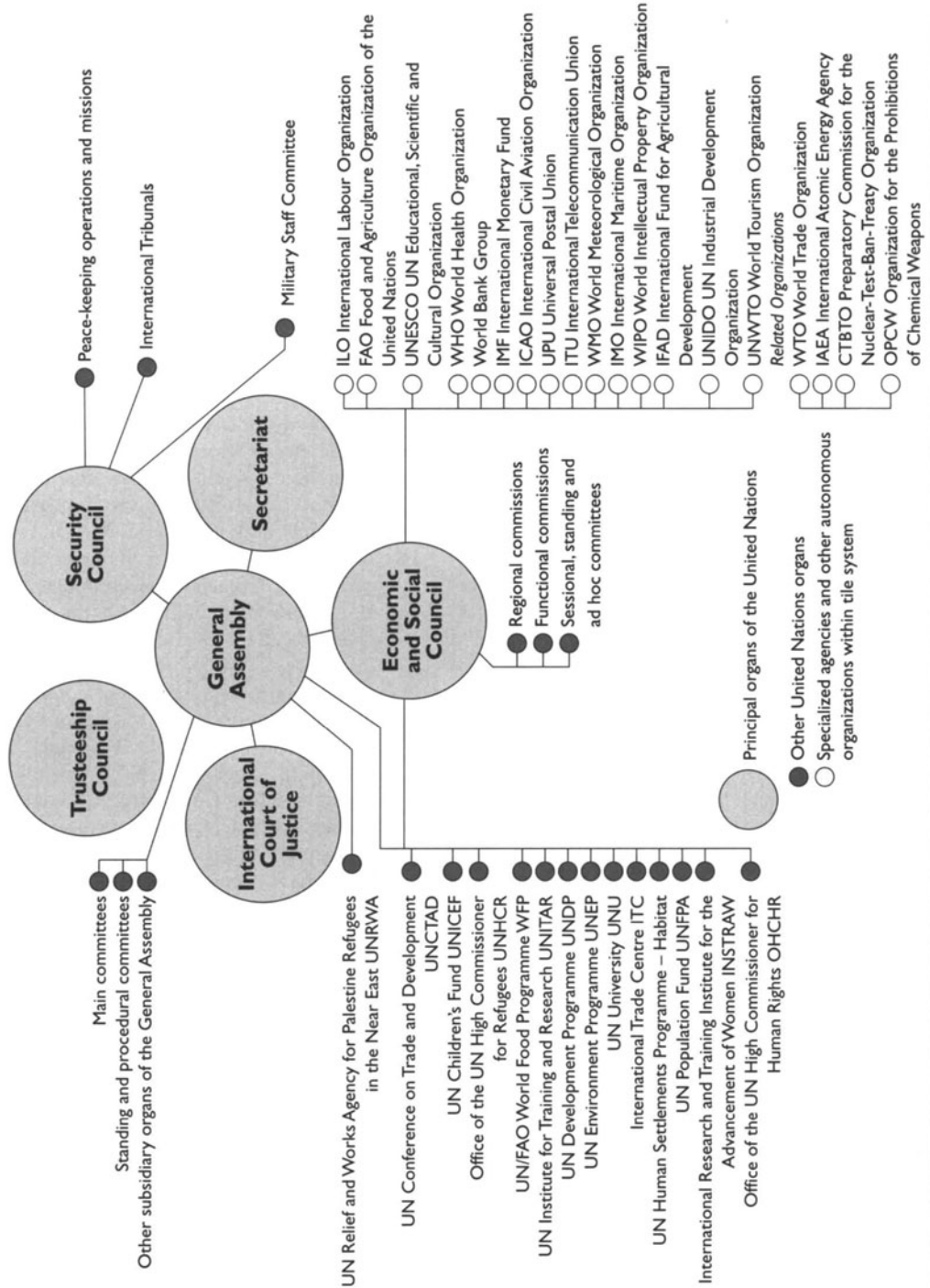
<i>Member</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Date of Admission</i>
Mongolia	27 Oct 1961	Sierra Leone	27 Sep 1961
Montenegro	28 Jun 2006	Singapore	21 Sep 1965
Morocco	12 Nov 1956	Slovakia	19 Jan 1993
Mozambique	16 Sep 1975	Slovenia	22 May 1992
Myanmar	19 Apr 1948	Solomon Islands	19 Sep 1978
Namibia	23 Apr 1990	Somalia	20 Sep 1960
Nauru	14 Sep 1999	South Africa	7 Nov 1945
Nepal	14 Dec 1955	Spain	14 Dec 1955
Netherlands	10 Dec 1945	Sri Lanka	14 Dec 1955
New Zealand	24 Oct 1945	Sudan	12 Nov 1956
Nicaragua	24 Oct 1945	Surinam	4 Dec 1975
Niger	20 Sep 1960	Swaziland	24 Sep 1968
Nigeria	7 Oct 1960	Sweden	19 Nov 1946
Norway	27 Nov 1945	Syria	24 Oct 1945
Oman	7 Oct 1971	Switzerland	10 Sep 2002
Pakistan	30 Sep 1947	Tajikistan	2 Mar 1992
Palau	15 Dec 1994	Thailand	16 Dec 1946
Panama	13 Nov 1945	Togo	20 Sep 1960
Papua New Guinea	10 Oct 1975	Tonga	14 Sep 1999
Paraguay	24 Oct 1945	Trinidad and Tobago	18 Sep 1962
Peru	31 Oct 1945	Tunisia	12 Nov 1956
Philippines	24 Oct 1945	Turkey	24 Oct 1945
Poland	24 Oct 1945	Turkmenistan	2 Mar 1992
Portugal	14 Dec 1955	Tuvalu	1 Nov 2000
Qatar	21 Sep 1971	Uganda	25 Oct 1962
Republic of Korea	17 Sep 1991	Ukraine	24 Oct 1945
Romania	14 Dec 1955	United Arab Emirates	9 Dec 1971
Russian Federation	24 Oct 1945	United Kingdom	24 Oct 1945
Rwanda	18 Sep 1962	United Republic of Tanzania	14 Dec 1961
Saint Kitts and Nevis	23 Sep 1983	United States	24 Oct 1945
Saint Lucia	18 Sep 1979	Uruguay	18 Dec 1945
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	16 Sep 1980	Uzbekistan	2 Mar 1992
Samoa	15 Dec 1976	Vanuatu	15 Sep 1981
San Marino	2 Mar 1992	Venezuela	15 Nov 1945
São Tomé and Príncipe	16 Sep 1975	Vietnam	20 Sep 1977
Saudi Arabia	24 Oct 1945	Yemen	30 Sep 1947
Senegal	28 Sep 1960	Zambia	1 Dec 1964
Serbia	1 Nov 2000	Zimbabwe	25 Aug 1980
Seychelles	21 Sep 1976		

special session may be convoked within 24 hours of receipt by the Secretary-General of a request by the Security Council on the vote of any nine members of the Council itself or by a majority of the UN members or by one member concurred with by the majority of the members. The Assembly elects a new President, 21 Vice-Presidents and the Chairmen of its six Main Committees at the start of each regular session.

The General Assembly is empowered to discuss any matter within the scope of the Charter or affecting the powers and functions of any UN organ and, except where a dispute or situation is being

discussed by the Security Council, to make recommendations on it. In addition, the following specific competences of the Assembly are envisaged by the Charter: (a) to make recommendations on the principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments; (b) to make recommendations for the peaceful settlement of any situation, regardless of origin, which might impair friendly relations among nations; (c) to initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international political co-operation, the development of international law and its

The United Nations System



codification, the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and international collaboration in economic, social, cultural, educational and health fields; (d) to receive and consider reports from the Security Council, the Secretary-General and other organs; (e) to supervise, through the Trusteeship Council, the execution of the trusteeship agreements for all areas not designated as strategic; (f) to approve the UN budget, to apportion the contributions among members, and to examine the budgets of specialized agencies; (g) to elect the non-permanent members of the Security Council, the members of the Economic and Social Council and those members of the Trusteeship Council that are elected; (h) to take part with the Security Council in the election of judges of the International Court of Justice; and (i) to appoint the Secretary-General upon recommendation of the Security Council.

Under the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution, adopted by the General Assembly in November 1950, the Assembly may take action if the Security Council, because of lack of unanimity of the permanent members, fails to exercise its primary responsibility in any case where there appears to be a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression. More precisely, the Assembly is empowered to consider the matter immediately with a view to making recommendations to members for collective measures – including, in the case of a breach of the peace or act of aggression, the use of armed force when necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. If the Assembly is not in session, an emergency special session may be convened at very short notice.

The General Assembly has a substantive right of decision only with regard to the internal affairs of the UN; as a general rule, recommendations, whatever their political and/or moral force, have no legally binding character and cannot create direct legal obligations for members. All members are entitled to equal voting rights, with decisions on 'important questions' – such as recommendations on peace and security, election of members to organs, admission, suspension and expulsion of members, trusteeship questions and budgetary matters – being taken by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting, and decisions on 'other questions' by a simple majority. The term 'decision', in relation to the General Assembly and the other organs of the UN, is used in a wide sense and covers all types of actions, including 'recom-

mendations', 'resolutions' and the like. The vote can be by 'acclamation', show of hands, roll-call, secret ballot or 'consensus', this last practice being followed whenever direct confrontation is to be avoided.

An elaborate structure of committees and subsidiary organs is required to enable the General Assembly to carry out its wide range of functions. There are six Main Committees on each of which every member has the right to be represented by one delegate. They are: First Committee (Disarmament and International Security); Second Committee (Economic and Financial); Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural); Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization); Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary); and Sixth Committee (Legal). In addition, there is a 28-member General Committee – composed of the President and 21 Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the Chairmen of the Main Committees – which meets frequently during a session to co-ordinate the proceedings of the Assembly and its Committees and generally to supervise the smooth running of the Assembly's work. The Credentials Committee, consisting of nine members appointed on the proposal of the President at the beginning of each session of the Assembly, is charged with the task of verifying the credentials of representatives. There are also two standing committees – an Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), consisting of 16 members, and a Committee on Contributions, composed of 18 members, which recommends the scale of members' payments to the UN. Many subsidiary and *ad hoc* bodies have been set up by the Assembly in order to deal with specific matters.

As a rule, the Assembly refers all questions on the agenda to one of the Main Committees, to a joint committee, or to an *ad hoc* committee; these bodies, which decide by a simple majority, submit proposals for approval to a plenary meeting of the Assembly. Although regular sessions last about three months each year, the work of the Assembly goes on continuously: in special committees and commissions, such as those dealing with peace-keeping operations, disarmament, effects of atomic radiation, peaceful uses of outer space, human rights, economic, social and cultural rights, international law; in the activities of specialized bodies established by the Assembly itself, such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's

Fund (UNICEF), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and many others; in the work programme of the Secretariat, and at international conferences on specific problems, such as the environment, food, population, status of women, law of the sea, peaceful uses of atomic energy and outer space.

The Peacebuilding Commission, created in December 2005, is an advisory subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Security Council, the first such body of its kind. It is intended to facilitate an institutional and systematic connection between peacekeeping and post-conflict operations and the international network of assistance and donor mobilization including the World Bank. The Commission, advising the Security Council on planning and commencement of peacebuilding activities, aims at strengthening a country's own capacity to recover after conflict and reduce the long-term necessity for recurring peacekeeping operations.

The Security Council

The Security Council has the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security and consists of 15 members, each of which has one representative and one vote. There are five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the UK and the US, and ten non-permanent members elected for a two-year term by a two-thirds majority of the General Assembly and ineligible for immediate re-election. Any member of the UN not on the Council may participate, without vote, in the discussion of questions specially affecting its interests. Both members and non-members of the UN, if they are parties to a dispute being considered by the Council, are invited to take part, without vote, in the discussions; the conditions regulating the participation of non-members are laid down by the Council. The Presidency of the Council is held by members in monthly rotation in the English alphabetical order of their names. The Security Council is so organized as to be able to function continuously, and a representative of each of its members must be present at all times at the seat of the UN. The Council may meet elsewhere than at UN Headquarters if it considers this advisable; in 1972 a session was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and in the following year another session took place in Panama City. On 31 January 1992 the first-ever Summit meeting of the Council was held at Headquarters, with the participation of Heads of State and Government of 13

members and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the other two members.

Besides its basic function relating to the maintenance of international peace and security in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN, the Security Council is empowered: (a) to investigate any dispute or situation which might lead to international friction and to recommend methods of adjustment or appropriate terms of settlement; (b) to determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and to make recommendations or decide what action should be taken; (c) to call on members to apply economic sanctions and other measures not involving the use of force in order to prevent or stop aggression; (d) to take military action against an aggressor; (e) to formulate plans for the establishment of a system to regulate armaments; (f) to exercise trusteeship functions in 'strategic areas'; (g) to recommend the admission of new members and the terms on which states may become parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice; and (h) to recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of the Secretary-General and, together with the Assembly, to elect the judges of the International Court of Justice.

The Security Council acts on behalf of all UN members which 'agree to accept and carry out' its decisions; members also undertake to make available to the Council 'armed forces, assistance, and facilities' necessary to maintain international peace and security. While other organs of the UN make recommendations to governments, the Council alone has the power to take decisions which members are obligated under the Charter to carry out. Decisions on procedural matters are made by an affirmative vote of at least nine of the fifteen members of the Council; decisions on substantive matters also require nine votes, including the concurring votes of all five permanent members. Any of the permanent members may therefore exercise a 'veto right' in relation to all questions, except those of a procedural character, and prevent the taking of a decision having the support of a majority of the Council; the veto, however, may not be exercised if the permanent member concerned is itself a party to a dispute. All five permanent members have exercised the right of veto at one time or another. The practice of abstention of a permanent member is generally accepted and not regarded as a veto; a valid decision may therefore be taken.

The Committee of Experts on Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Council Meetings away from Headquarters, and the Committee on the Admission of New Members are composed of representatives of all the members of the Council. The Military Staff Committee is composed of the chiefs of staff of the permanent members of the Council or their representatives; this body, although established since 1946 in order to advise and assist the Council on the application of armed force, has performed so far no real function despite proposals made from time to time for its 'revitalization'. The *ad hoc* Committees comprise all Council members and meet in closed session; currently these bodies deal with matters regarding sanctions imposed by the UN. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the Council created the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) to monitor implementation of resolution 1373 concerning measures and strategies to combat the threat of international terrorism. Under resolution 1535 of 2004 the Council established the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) with a view to promoting closer co-operation and co-ordination in the field.

The Council has resorted in several cases to mandatory sanctions as an enforcement tool when peace has been threatened and diplomatic efforts have been unsuccessful.

The Council established in the early 1990s the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR).

The Economic and Social Council

The Economic and Social Council, under the authority of the General Assembly, is the organ responsible for the economic and social work of the UN and the co-ordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and institutions – known as the UN 'family' of organizations. It consists of 54 members, 18 of whom are elected each year by the General Assembly for a three-year term; each member has one representative and one vote. Retiring members are eligible for immediate re-election. The Council meets throughout the year and holds a major session in July. The President is elected for one year and may be re-elected immediately.

The Economic and Social Council is empowered: (a) to make or initiate studies, reports and recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; (b)

to make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms; (c) to call international conferences and prepare draft conventions for submission to the General Assembly on matters within its competence; (d) to negotiate agreements with the specialized agencies, defining their relationship with the UN; (e) to address recommendations to the specialized agencies, the General Assembly and members of the UN; (f) to perform services, approved by the Assembly, for members of the UN and, upon request, for the specialized agencies; and (g) to make arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations concerned with matters falling within its competence. Decisions of the Council are made by a simple majority of members present and voting.

At the 2005 World Summit the Economic and Social Council was given new functions: (a) to hold Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) in order to assess progress in achieving the internationally agreed development goals arising out of major conferences and summits; and (b) to hold a biennial Development Co-operation Forum (DCF) in order to improve the coherence and effectiveness of activities of different development partners by providing policy guidance and recommendations.

A number of standing committees, commissions and other subsidiary bodies have been set up by the Economic and Social Council and meet at UN Headquarters or in other locations. The functional commissions include the Statistical Commission, Commission on Population and Development, Commission for Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), Commission on Science and Technology for Development, Commission on Sustainable Development, Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Commission on Human Rights, previously related to the Economic and Social Council, was replaced, according to a General Assembly resolution adopted on 15 March 2006, by a 47-member Human Rights Council as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly itself.

Also under the Economic and Social Council's authority are the regional economic commissions aimed at assisting the development of the major regions of the world and at strengthening economic relations of the countries in each region, both among themselves and with other countries of the world. These are the Economic and Social Commission

for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), based in Bangkok, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), based in Beirut, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), based in Addis Ababa, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), based in Geneva, and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), based in Santiago. The Commissions are responsible for studying the problems of their respective regions and recommending courses of action to member countries and specialized agencies.

The Economic and Social Council has made arrangements for consultation with international non-governmental organizations and, after consultation with the member countries, with national organizations. There are over 1500 non-governmental organizations, classified into three categories, having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; they may send observers to public meetings of the Council and its subsidiary bodies and may submit written statements. They may also consult with the Secretariat of the UN on matters of mutual concern.

The Trusteeship Council

The Trusteeship Council bore prime responsibility for supervising the administration of territories placed under the International Trusteeship System established by the UN. The basic goals of the system – that is the promotion of the advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence – have been fulfilled. The trust territories, mostly in Africa, have attained independence, either as separate states or by joining neighbouring independent countries. The Council acts under the authority of the General Assembly or, in the case of a ‘strategic area’, under the authority of the Security Council. Membership of the Council is not based on a pre-determined number, since the Charter intended to provide for a balance between members administering trust territories and members that did not. At present, the Council, whose size has progressively decreased, consists of the five permanent members of the Security Council, that is China, France, Russia, the UK and the US. China, however, did not take part in the work of the Council until May 1989. The Trusteeship Council, having fully accomplished its task, no longer holds regular meetings; special sessions may be convened whenever necessary. Decisions of the Trusteeship Council are made by a majority of the members present and

voting, each member having one vote. A proposal has been put forward by the Secretary-General to reconstitute the Council as the forum through which member countries ‘exercise their collective trusteeship for the integrity of the global environment and common areas such as the oceans, atmosphere and outer space’.

The International Court of Justice

The Court is the principal judicial organ of the UN; only states may be parties in cases before it. The Court’s governing instrument is the Statute which forms an integral part of the UN Charter and is based on the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice of the League of Nations. All members of the UN are *ipso facto* parties to the Statute. A country which is not a member of the UN may become a party to the Statute on conditions determined in each case by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council. All countries parties to the Statute of the Court can be parties to cases before it; other countries can refer cases to it under conditions laid down by the Security Council. The Security Council may recommend that a legal dispute be referred to the Court. The General Assembly and the Security Council can ask the Court for an advisory opinion on any legal question; other organs of the UN and the specialized agencies, when authorized by the General Assembly, can ask for advisory opinions on legal questions falling within the scope of their activities.

The Court – which has its seat at The Hague, Netherlands, but may sit elsewhere whenever it considers this desirable – consists of 15 judges elected with an absolute majority for a renewable nine-year term by the General Assembly and the Security Council voting independently. To safeguard continuity, the terms of office of the judges are so staggered that one-third of the seats become vacant every three years. The judges are elected, regardless of their nationality, among persons ‘who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices’ or are ‘jurisconsults of recognized competence in international law’. Care is taken, however, to see that the principal legal systems of the world are represented in the Court and it is expressly provided that no two judges can be nationals of the same country. Candidates are chosen from a list of persons nominated by the various national groups on the panel of arbitrators of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (established by

the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907) or by equivalent groups. The Court is permanently in session, except during the judicial vacations. It elects its own President and Vice-Presidents for three years. The full Court of 15 judges normally sits, but a quorum of nine members is sufficient. The Court may form chambers of three or more judges for dealing with particular categories of cases, and forms annually a chamber of five judges to hear and determine, at the request of the parties, cases by summary procedures. Judgments given by any of these chambers are considered as rendered by the Court.

An important feature of the Court is the inclusion of 'national' judges. In fact, judges of the nationality of the parties continue to sit in cases in which their own countries are involved; if there is no judge on the bench of the nationality of the parties to the dispute, each of the parties may designate an *ad hoc* judge. Such judge, who need not possess the nationality of the party which appoints him, participates on terms of complete equality with the other judges. All questions are decided by a majority of the judges present; in case of a tie, the President of the Court casts the deciding vote. The judgment is final and without appeal, but a revision may be applied for within ten years from the date of the judgment on the ground of a new decisive factor.

The jurisdiction of the Court is twofold, contentious and advisory, and covers all questions which the parties refer to it, and all matters provided for in the UN Charter or in treaties and conventions in force. Disputes concerning the jurisdiction of the Court are settled by the Court itself. States may bind themselves in advance to accept the jurisdiction of the Court in special cases, either by signing a treaty or convention which provides for reference to the Court or by making a special declaration to this effect. In early 1984, the US stated that it would not accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction in cases involving Central America for the next two years.

According to the Statute, the Court may apply in its decisions: (a) international conventions establishing rules recognized by the contesting countries; (b) international custom as evidence of a general practice accepted as law; (c) the general principles of law recognized by nations; and (d) judicial decisions and the teachings of the most highly qualified publicists of the various nations, as a subsidiary means for determining the rules of law. If the parties

concerned so agree, the Court may decide *ex aequo et bono*, that is according to practical fairness rather than strict law. The Court may give an advisory opinion on any legal question to any organ of the UN or its agencies. The Security Council can be called upon by one of the parties in a case to determine measures to be taken to give effect to a judgment of the Court if the other party fails to perform its obligations under that judgment.

The Secretariat

The Secretariat services the other organs of the UN and administers the programmes and policies laid down by them. At the head of the Secretariat is the Secretary-General who is the chief administrative officer of the UN appointed by the General Assembly deciding by a simple majority on the recommendation of the Security Council adopted by an affirmative vote of at least nine members, including the concurring votes of the permanent members. The Secretary-General appoints the necessary staff in conformity with the regulations established by the Assembly in order to guarantee the international character, integrity and efficiency of the civil service of the UN. Under the Charter, each member country undertakes to respect the exclusively international character of the responsibilities of the Secretary-General and the staff and not to seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties. Each staff member takes an oath not to seek or receive instructions from any government or outside authority. The Secretary-General performs a number of important political, representative and administrative functions and is required to submit an annual report to the General Assembly. He is empowered to bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which, in his opinion, threatens international peace and security and to address the Assembly on any question it has under consideration. In his capacity of chief administrative officer, the Secretary-General acts, in person or through deputies, at all meetings of the Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, and the Trusteeship Council and may be entrusted by these organs with additional functions.

The personal contribution of those who have served successively at the head of the Secretariat has been of paramount importance in several cases. The first Secretary-General was Trygve Lie (of Norway) who was appointed in 1946 and resigned in 1953. Dag Hammarskjöld (of Sweden) succeeded Lie and held office until his death in September 1961 in a

plane crash during his Congo mission. After Hammarskjöld's death, U Thant (of Burma, now Myanmar) was elected acting Secretary-General and a year later elected to office for a full five-year term, retroactive to 1961. Thant served a second five-year term until December 1971 when Kurt Waldheim (of Austria) was appointed. Waldheim served two full terms from January 1972 to December 1981 when the Assembly appointed Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (of Peru) whose second term of office expired in December 1991. Boutros Boutros-Ghali (of Egypt) served a single term from January 1992 to December 1996 when he was succeeded by Kofi Annan (of Ghana), reappointed in 2001 for a second five-year term. Ban Ki-moon (of South Korea) was elected to succeed Annan at the end of 2006. The Secretary-General is assisted by several Under-Secretaries-General and Assistant Secretaries-General.

The whole structure of the Secretariat has been reorganized to make it a more efficient tool in the pursuit of the traditional and new tasks of the UN. There are separate staffs serving subsidiary organs established by the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council, including: UNICEF, UNDP, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), and UNCTAD.

The budget

The biennial budget of the UN is initially submitted by the Secretary-General and reviewed by the ACABQ which is empowered to recommend modifications to the General Assembly. The programmatic aspects are reviewed by the 34-member Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC). The regular budget covers the administrative and other expenses of the central Secretariat and the other principal organs of the UN, both at Headquarters and throughout the world. Many activities of the UN are financed mainly by voluntary contributions outside the regular budget; such activities include UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, UNHCR, UNRWA, and UNFPA. Additional activities are financed by voluntary contributions to trust funds or special accounts established for each purpose.

Contributions of member countries are the main source of funds for the regular budget, in accordance with a scale of assessments specified by the General Assembly on the advice of the Committee

on Contributions. The amount of the contribution of a member country is determined primarily by the total national income of that country in relation to that of other member countries. In the year 2000, the Assembly fixed a maximum of 22 per cent and a minimum of 0.001 per cent of the budget for any one contributor. As a result of arrears in payments by some members, a serious financial crisis developed in 1986 and 1987. The US withheld its contributions and demanded financial reforms and the introduction of 'weighted voting' on budgetary matters. A panel of 18 experts was set up in December 1985 to review UN administration and finance; the resulting report was submitted to the Secretary-General in August 1986 and the recommendations were subsequently approved by the General Assembly. The most significant innovation involved greater control over spending and the adoption of the budget by consensus, giving major contributors a substantial power, although the budget itself remained eventually subject to approval by the General Assembly. In the 1990s, the financial crisis of the UN continued because of unpaid contributions both for the regular budget and for peace-keeping operations.

In the scale of assessments for 2007, more than 100 countries, or nearly 60 per cent of the membership of the UN, were each contributing between 0.001 and 0.03 per cent of the budget. In 2007, the largest contributors included the US (22 per cent), followed by Japan (16.6), Germany (8.57), the UK (6.64), France (6.30), and Italy (4.89). A few other countries (Canada, Spain, China, South Korea, the Netherlands, Australia, Brazil, Switzerland and Russia) paid between 1 and 3 per cent.

The 'specialized agencies'

Several intergovernmental bodies are linked to the UN by special agreements which entitle them to work in partnership with the Organization and each other in economic, social, scientific and technical fields. The organizations which are known as 'specialized agencies', according to the definition used in the Charter of the UN, are: the International Labour Organization (ILO); the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); the World Health Organization (WHO); the World Bank Group consisting of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

(MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID); the International Monetary Fund (IMF); the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); the Universal Postal Union (UPU); the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); the World Meteorological Organization (WMO); the International Maritime Organization (IMO); the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). They report annually to the Economic and Social Council. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), an intergovernmental organization set up 'under the aegis of the UN', reports annually to the General Assembly and, as appropriate, to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Co-operative links between the UN and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the successor body to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), are being established. Important international organizations, such as the European Union (EU), have been granted observer status by the General Assembly.

Activities

Over the last six decades, the UN has undergone major changes, one such change being the enormous increase in membership. The goal of a peaceful world remains first and foremost in UN theory and practice. Activities related to the maintenance of international peace and security, however, account for only part of the current work. Economic and social co-operation has become increasingly important while new fields of interest and activity have emerged. As regards human rights, several international instruments have been adopted while interstate and civil violence and crimes against humanity are being pursued through specially created international courts. The UN has assisted countries under colonial rule to exercise their rights of self-determination and gain independence. At present, arms control, conflict prevention and resolution, the reduction of economic and social disparities in the world, the achievement of sustainable development, climate change, the fight against international terrorism, organized crime, drug abuse, AIDS and trafficking in human beings represent issues of grave concern for UN member countries. The intrinsic limitation of the powers of the UN on matters concerning functional international co-operation and human rights and the condition of continuing confrontation which characterized, from

the very beginning of the UN experience until the late 1980s, the relationship between the two super-powers and their respective allies account for the varying record of achievements of the world Organization in several important spheres. After the attacks of 11 September 2001, the UN action against terrorism has intensified but the reconciliation of US unilateralism with the multilateralism intrinsic in the UN approach remains a major challenge for the foreseeable future. As in all intergovernmental bodies, the authority and effectiveness of the UN ultimately depend on the political resolve and collective will of the member countries.

International peace and security

In the furtherance of the basic objectives of international peace and security, the UN has taken many actions for the settlement of international disputes and the restoration of peaceful conditions. In its early years, the General Assembly condemned warlike propaganda (1947); called on nations to refrain from the threat or use of force contrary to the Charter and from any threat or act aimed at impairing the independence of any country or at fomenting civil strife (1949); condemned intervention by a country in the internal affairs of another country in order to change its legally established government by the threat or use of force (1950); and called upon all countries to develop friendly and co-operative relations and to settle disputes by peaceful means (1957). Following the 1965 Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention in the Domestic Affairs of States and the Protection of their Independence and Sovereignty, the Assembly adopted in December 1981 another document on the inadmissibility of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of states. Two important declarations were adopted in 1970 on the strengthening of international security and the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and co-operation among states. A difficult task, initiated in 1950, was completed in 1974 with the adoption of a definition of aggression as 'the use of armed force by a state against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of another state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Charter of the UN'.

Among the many documents, mention should be made of the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear Catastrophe, adopted in 1981; the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes (1982); the Declaration on the

Right of Peoples to Peace (1984); the Declaration on the Enhancement of the Effectiveness of the Principle of Refraining from the Threat or Use of Force in International Relations (1987); the Declaration on the Prevention and the Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and on the Role of the United Nations in the Field (1988). In 1980, the General Assembly approved the establishment of the University for Peace, based at San José, Costa Rica, and devoted to research on disarmament, mediation, the resolution of conflicts and the relationship between peace and economic development. The year 1986 was proclaimed the International Year of Peace.

On many occasions the UN, through the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, has been directly involved in efforts to resolve a number of international crises and has developed its capacity as a peacekeeping and peace-making body. In some disputes, the UN has acted through peacekeeping forces, observer or fact-finding missions, plebiscite supervision, good offices missions, conciliation panels, mediators and special representatives; in other cases, the UN has provided the forum for negotiation and a channel for quiet diplomacy. The Security Council has adopted measures of a military nature, of economic embargo, of arms embargo, as well as economic sanctions and use of force. Military observer missions are composed of unarmed officers made available by member countries that are considered impartial by the parties concerned. Peacekeeping forces consist of contingents of lightly armed troops made available by member countries in order to assist in preventing the recurrence of fighting, restoring and maintaining law and order and promoting a return to normal conditions; the use of force is allowed only for self-defence as a last resort.

The end of the Cold War contributed to a significant renewal of interest for UN peacemaking and brought about an increasing demand for peacekeeping forces throughout the 1990s. With an escalation of regional conflicts worldwide and their transformation from mainly interstate wars to intrastate struggles, the UN has evolved into an instrument for building peace within states and has increasingly used peacekeeping operations as tools to meet a variety of challenges. Although several recent conflicts, like those in Africa and the former Yugoslavia, are essentially internal, they have far-reaching implications for the security of the subre-

gions concerned. Large-scale military and civilian contingents have been deployed to several countries throughout the world to promote peaceful transition to democracy and to promote humanitarian relief efforts. Between 1948 and 2007, 63 peacekeeping operations have been deployed under Security Council resolutions at an estimated total cost of over \$47 billion. The total number of fatalities in peace operations since 1948 has amounted to over 2400. The cost of peacekeeping has enormously increased in recent years and has aggravated the financial problems of the UN. Most operations are financed from their own separate accounts on the basis of legally binding assessments on all countries; in principle, the costs of peacekeeping are the collective responsibility of all members.

In 1959, the General Assembly declared the question of general and complete disarmament to be 'the most important one facing the world today' and called on governments to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution; however, it soon became clear that such a goal was not attainable within a specific period of time. Since 1962 a multilateral disarmament negotiating forum – now known as the Conference on Disarmament – has been active in Geneva within the context of a close relationship with the UN. As a result of UN efforts, several important multilateral and bilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements have been concluded; among these agreements, the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons deserves special attention. In the wake of the inadequate results of the First Disarmament Decade – in the 1970s – the General Assembly decided to declare the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade and held two special sessions (in 1978 and 1982) devoted entirely to disarmament. A third special session on disarmament was held in 1988 but, despite the remarkable improvement in the relations between the two superpowers, no substantive final document could be adopted.

The fundamental changes in Europe and in the major-power relationship have contributed to a considerable extent to efforts for achieving reductions in both nuclear and conventional armaments and the UN is likely to play a more active role either as a negotiating forum or as a catalyst. With regard to nuclear powers, the two major nuclear countries signed two treaties on the reduction of their strategic offensive arms (START I in 1991 and START II in 1993). In 1995, the Conference of parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear

Weapons reviewed the operation of the Treaty and decided on its indefinite extension. Multilateral negotiations began in 1994 and continued in 1995 and 1996 in order to conclude a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, and a committee was set up to negotiate an end to the production of fissionable material for weapons purposes. The Chemical Weapons Convention, providing for the destruction of stockpiles and the cessation of the production, use and spread of chemical weapons, was concluded in 1993. The question of anti-personnel land-mines is being discussed within the framework of the Convention on Inhumane Weapons. The General Assembly established, in 1992, a Register of Conventional Arms to which member countries may report transfers of certain categories of weapons. The UN also supports efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the various forms of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons which are used in the vast majority of conflicts worldwide.

The UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) – based in Geneva – has been issuing, since the last half of the 1980s, a number of studies on various aspects of arms control and disarmament. It had been set up by the General Assembly in 1980 on a provisional basis and in 1982 was established as an autonomous institute of the UN to undertake independent research on disarmament and related questions, particularly international security issues; its statute became effective in January 1985. The Institute, besides organizing conferences, publishing papers and conducting research projects, has a fellowship programme for scholars from developing countries.

The question of the peaceful uses of outer space has been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1958. The UN is concerned not only with the orderly uses of outer space but also seeks to ensure that the benefits yielded by space research and technology are shared by all countries. Several legal instruments have resulted from the activities of the Assembly in this area. Two major conferences on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space have been held, in 1968 and 1982, under the auspices of the UN. In 1986, the General Assembly adopted Principles relating to remote sensing of the earth from outer space with a view to ensuring that such activities were conducted for the benefit of all countries and to protect mankind from natural disasters.

The establishment of a law governing the use of the sea in all aspects represents another major

concern of the UN. So far, three conferences have been organized: the First Conference (1958) adopted five conventions but left many basic issues unresolved; the Second Conference (1960) brought no progress; the Third Conference (1973–82) adopted an important Convention which entered into force in November 1994. The Convention covers, in 320 articles and nine annexes, the behaviour of states in the world's oceans, establishing rules for drawing sea boundaries, defining maritime zones, attributing legal rights, duties and responsibilities to states and providing machinery for the settlement of disputes.

The questions of apartheid, as enforced in the Republic of South Africa, and racial discrimination were before the UN since the very beginning of its activities in 1946. The General Assembly condemned apartheid as a 'crime against humanity' and kept the situation in South Africa under continuous review, adopting a variety of measures to exert pressure on South African authorities. Taking into account the significant changes occurring in that country, the General Assembly adopted in December 1989, at a special session on apartheid, a Declaration setting out the preconditions for negotiations among all the parties concerned in view of the creation of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa. In December 1991, the General Assembly unanimously approved a resolution recommending that member countries phase out economic sanctions and drop other sanctions against South Africa. In June 1994 South Africa was readmitted to the General Assembly with voting rights.

Economic and social development

The UN aim of 'social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom' has received growing attention over the past decades. The UN system currently devotes most of its personnel and financial resources to the economic and social development of the poorer member countries in which two-thirds of the world's people live. A wide-ranging international action was initiated by the UN with the proclamation of the Development Decades, beginning with the 1960s. The need for a world plan or 'strategy' on the necessary measures became evident before the first Decade ended. Intensive work, over several years, led to the agreement on the International Development Strategy for the Second Decade (the 1970s), intended to cover virtually every area of economic and social development;

among other goals, the Strategy stressed the need for fairer economic and commercial policies and greater financial resources for developing countries. However, no substantial progress was deemed to be possible without a far-reaching modification of the structures and rules governing international economic and financial relations.

In 1974 the General Assembly held its first special session on economic problems and adopted a Declaration and a Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order so as 'to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and the developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development in peace and justice'. In December 1974, a few months after the call for a new international economic order, the Assembly adopted a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States with a view to establishing 'generally accepted norms to govern international economic relations systematically and to promote a new international economic order'.

The International Development Strategy for the Third Development Decade was proclaimed by the Assembly in December 1980. Despite modest progress in some areas, the key targets were not met and the overall situation in developing countries actually worsened while the proposed global negotiations between North and South failed to materialize. The especially critical situation in Africa prompted the General Assembly to convene in May 1986 a special session devoted to that region; the session adopted the UN Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD), 1986–90, seeking to mobilize political and financial support for economic reforms. Also in 1986, the Assembly sought to promote international co-operation for resolving the external debt problems of developing countries. In subsequent sessions the Assembly broadened the area of agreement on measures to cope with major problems arising from the persistent external indebtedness of developing countries. The International Development Strategy for the Fourth UN Development Decade (1991–2000) was adopted in 1990 by the General Assembly. The relationship between economic growth and human welfare became the crucial theme of development efforts in the 1990s. The General Assembly proclaimed 1997–2006 the International Decade for the Eradication of Poverty with a view to eradicating absolute poverty and reducing to a substantial

extent overall global poverty through national action and international co-operation. At the Millennium Summit, held in September 2000, world leaders committed themselves to halve, by 2015, the number of people living on less than \$1 dollar a day, and set a number of other targets in the fight against poverty and disease going under the name of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

To promote a global consensus on development priorities, the UN has begun a series of international conferences dealing with children (New York, 1990), environment and development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), population and development (Cairo, 1994), social development (Copenhagen, 1995), the advancement of women (Beijing, 1995), human settlements (Istanbul, 1996), world food problems (Rome, 1996), least developed countries (Brussels, 2001), and sustainable development (Johannesburg, 2002). Progress for each of the major conferences is reviewed by special sessions of the General Assembly at five-year intervals.

An autonomous research institute created in 1963, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) based at Geneva, conducts multi-disciplinary research into problems and policies of social development during different stages of economic growth. Programmes are carried out in collaboration with national research teams drawn from local universities and research institutes, mainly in developing countries.

In its efforts to achieve social development involving very large sectors of the population, the UN has stressed the importance of popular participation in the rural areas and has urged agrarian reform. The General Assembly has endorsed the Declaration and Programme of Action approved by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development held in Rome in 1979 under the sponsorship of the FAO. The co-operative efforts of the UN and its related agencies in economic and social fields are currently being expanded and streamlined with priority given to problems having a more direct impact on the development process. Direct field activities are carried out by UNDP in co-operation with UN-related agencies and institutions. UNCTAD was established as a permanent organ of the General Assembly in 1964. The UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), created in 1965, carries out training and research programmes and organizes some 120 training courses per year, benefiting about 4,000 participants worldwide.

The UN University (UNU), which opened the doors of its world headquarters in Tokyo in 1975, operates through global networks of associated institutions and research units. A new kind of academic institution, UNU – which is sponsored jointly by the UN and UNESCO and is not a university in the proper sense since it does not have students or award degrees – undertakes multi-disciplinary research, provides postgraduate fellowships for scholars from developing countries and conducts several training activities. Research and training centres and programmes (RTC/Ps) have been established by UNU in Finland (for development economics), in the Netherlands (for new technologies), in Macao (for software technology) and in Ghana (for natural resources in Africa).

On the recommendation of the 1975 World Conference on the International Women's Year, the General Assembly decided to establish the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) whose Statute was endorsed in 1985. INSTRAW is an autonomous body of the UN funded by voluntary contributions, with headquarters in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Its objectives are to stimulate and assist, through research, training and the collection and exchange of information, the efforts of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations aimed at the advancement of women and their integration in the development process both as participants and beneficiaries.

With a view to providing a forum for the presentation and discussion of the relevant policies, the General Assembly authorized in 1950 the convening, at five-year intervals, of a UN Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders; such congresses have been regularly held since 1955. The Ninth Congress (Cairo, 1995) focused on four major topics: co-operation and technical assistance for strengthening the role of law; action against national and transnational economic and organized crime; improvement of police and criminal justice systems; and crime prevention strategies. These and other issues, including the fight against corruption and money laundering, were dealt with at the Tenth Congress, convened on 10–17 April 2000 in Vienna, which adopted the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice. The Eleventh Congress was held in Bangkok on 18–25 April 2005 to discuss the theme: 'Synergies and responses: strategic alliances in crime prevention and criminal justice'. In order to strengthen activi-

ties in the relevant fields, the Economic and Social Council established in 1992 the 40-member Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as a new functional body, meeting annually in Vienna. A World Ministerial Conference on Transnational Organized Crime was held at Naples, Italy, in 1994.

As regards food problems, in 1974 the General Assembly decided to set up the World Food Council (WFC) and to sponsor, jointly with the FAO, the WFP, in operation since 1963 to stimulate economic and social development through aid in the form of food. The World Food Council's basic aim was to provide overall, integrated and continuing attention to achieve the successful co-ordination and follow-up of policies concerning food production, nutrition, food security, food trade, food aid and other related matters, by all organizations and bodies of the UN system. The headquarters of the Council were located in Rome between 1975 and 1992. Following adoption by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 of the resolution 'strengthening the UN response to world food and hunger problems', the posts of the WFC Secretariat were transferred to New York to the new Department for Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development.

In order to seek solutions to the widespread problems of pollution, the Assembly convened a Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 and subsequently created UNEP to monitor changes in the environment and to encourage and co-ordinate appropriate practices. The urgent need to agree on strategies for sustainable and environmentally sound development in all countries prompted the General Assembly to convene in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), called in popular usage the 'Earth Summit'. More than 150 countries signed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. A non-binding Statement of Principles on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests was also signed together with the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (proclaiming 27 Principles) and the Agenda 21 action plan. The Commission on Sustainable Development was established in 1993 as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council to monitor progress in the implementation of Agenda 21. A special session of the General Assembly was convened in June 1997

to review progress achieved in the implementation of UNCED's objectives.

The control of narcotic drugs represented a widespread concern since the beginning of the twentieth century. A series of treaties have been adopted under the auspices of the UN requiring signatory countries to exercise control over the production and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and to combat drug abuse and illicit traffic, duly reporting to international organs.

The CND was established by the Economic and Social Council in 1946 to advise the Council and prepare draft international agreements on all matters relating to the control of narcotic drugs. The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), which started operations in 1968, is composed of members elected by the Economic and Social Council with a view to supervising governmental implementation of drug control treaties.

In 1984 the General Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Control of Drug Trafficking and Drug Abuse, calling for renewed efforts and strategies aimed at the eradication of the increasingly complex drug problems. The first International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking was held in June 1987 in Vienna and adopted, *inter alia*, a Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control. The UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (adopted in 1988 and entered into force in November 1990) addresses areas not envisaged in pre-existing international drug treaties.

The UN anti-drug-trafficking activities were reviewed in February 1990 by the General Assembly which concluded a special four-day session with the adoption of a Global Programme of Action. In December 1990, the General Assembly adopted a 40-power resolution giving new impetus to UN efforts in the field of drug abuse control through the establishment of a single programme – the UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) – with a view to integrating and co-ordinating the activities of pre-existing bodies and providing Secretariat services to the CND and the INCB. The Fund of the UN International Drug Control Programme was set up in 1991 as the main source for financial and technical assistance, entirely supported from voluntary contributions. On 1 November 1997, the Office on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) was established

comprising two principal components, the UNDCP and the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP). Therefore the UN approach to issues relating to drug control, crime prevention and international terrorism was integrated into the ODCCP, now renamed the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

Humanitarian assistance and human rights

A number of bodies have been set up by the UN in order to assist groups needing 'special help' in emergency conditions. The General Assembly created UNICEF in 1946 and extended its mandate indefinitely in 1953. UNHCR was established by the Assembly with effect from January 1951; UNRWA began work in 1950 as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. The UN has provided assistance for emergency relief and longer-term rehabilitation on several occasions. It has assisted in medium- and long-term rehabilitation and development programmes especially in the Sudano-Sahelian region through the establishment of the UN Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) in 1973. Activities are funded through the UN Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian activities, managed by UNSO. In order to strengthen the co-ordination of humanitarian assistance, an Emergency Relief Co-ordinator was appointed in 1992 to provide leadership for rapid and coherent response to natural disasters and other emergencies. The Co-ordinator heads the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) which is in charge of the organization and management of UN assistance in humanitarian crises going beyond the capacity and mandate of any single agency.

In furtherance of the UN purpose of achieving international co-operation in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, regardless of race, sex, language or religion, the General Assembly adopted on 10 December 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, under which, for the first time in history, responsibility for the protection and pursuit of human rights was assumed by the international community and was accepted as a permanent obligation. The Universal Declaration covers not only civil and political rights but also economic, social and cultural rights. Another important accomplishment was the coming into force in 1976 of legally binding international agreements for the protection and promotion of human rights. These are the International Covenant on

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the latter including an Optional Protocol, all adopted by the General Assembly in 1966. An additional protocol (Second Optional Protocol) to ban capital punishment, under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, was adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. The General Assembly established in December 1993 the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as the official with principal responsibility for the Organization's human rights activities.

The principle that the individual is to be held responsible for serious violations of human rights – recognized in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal for the trial of the major World War II criminals – has led the Security Council to establish international tribunals (the already-mentioned ICTY and ICTR) dealing with serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Besides torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, attention is being given by the UN to other human rights questions such as slavery and slave trade, genocide, statelessness, religious intolerance, and the treatment of migrant workers. The rights of children have been brought by the UN within an all-encompassing document, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in 1989. The rights of the disabled, the elderly and the young as well as human rights in armed conflicts have also been considered. Another basic commitment of the UN concerns the achievement of equality of rights for men and women, both in law and in fact.

Decolonization

The UN has played a crucial role in the transition of peoples belonging to more than 80 nations from colonial domination to freedom. Decolonization made early significant gains under the International Trusteeship System; the progress was greatly accelerated by the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, proclaimed by the General Assembly in 1960, and by the work of the Special Committee established by the Assembly in 1961 to examine on a regular basis the application of the Declaration and to make recommendations to help speed its implementation. To observe the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration in 1990, the Assembly

designated the final decade of the century (1990–2000) as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The independence of Namibia and its subsequent entry into the UN in 1990 represented a further demonstration of the UN's longstanding commitment to the principle of self-determination.

International law

In 1947 the Assembly established the International Law Commission which held its first session in 1949 with a view to promoting the progressive development of international law and its codification. The Commission – composed of 34 members serving in their individual capacity and meeting annually – has prepared drafts on a number of topics. International conferences of plenipotentiaries – convened by the General Assembly on the basis of such drafts – have adopted conventions opened for states to become parties. Two conferences, held in Vienna in 1961 and 1963, approved the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. A conference which met in Vienna in 1968 and again in 1969 approved a Convention on the Law of Treaties. Another conference, which met in Vienna in April 1977 and again in August 1978, completed and adopted the Vienna Convention on Succession of States in Respect of Treaties. Following a 1984 decision of the General Assembly, a UN Conference met in Vienna in March 1986 and adopted the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organizations or between International Organizations.

In response to the need for the UN to play a more active role in reducing legal obstacles to the flow of international trade, the Assembly established in 1966 the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) for the progressive harmonization and unification of the law of international trade; the 36-member Commission also offers training and assistance in international trade law, taking into account the needs of the developing countries. The Commission's activities have chiefly focused on the preparation of uniform rules concerning the international sale of goods, international payments, international commercial arbitration, and international legislation on shipping.

Future prospects

The major changes in the international situation which took place at the end of the 1980s and the

beginning of the 1990s and the general shift towards a new world order had a significant impact on the UN, its functioning and its prospects both in the short and in the long term. The dissolution of the USSR and of its network of alliances in Europe and elsewhere brought to an end the traditional East-West confrontation and seemed to open up new avenues for co-operation unhindered by ideological conflicts. The North-South polarization itself was substantially affected and to a certain extent softened. The almost abrupt return to the realities of a multipolar world altered deep-rooted balances of power which had inspired UN theory and practice for several decades.

The long-overdue reform of the Organization, both in the sense of a return to the 'original' spirit and in the sense of an adaptation to the challenges and threats of the present times, became even more urgent. The new spirit of co-operation among the 'great powers' and the growing awareness of the interdependence among all countries, large and small, should induce the international community to avail itself of the UN in the most appropriate and effective way. The reorganization and streamlining of the Secretariat began in 1992 and many viewed it as the first and encouraging sign of a new period in the life of the world Organization. The reform of the Secretariat is obviously part of a much larger restructuring effort affecting the intergovernmental mechanism and requiring the full commitment of all member countries. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council need further adjustments and improvements. In particular, questions relating to the size and composition as well as to the working methods and procedures of the Security Council to make it more efficient and democratic have become especially relevant.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, new challenges and opportunities have unfolded for the UN which must address an ever-expanding political, economic, social and security agenda including the growing threat of international terrorism. The UN is not a world government and is not authorized, in principle, to intervene in the internal affairs of any country; however, the UN appears to be called to take on an unprecedented degree of responsibility for facing global pressures that defy control by individual countries. A number of landmark reports, as requested by world leaders at the 2005 World Summit, have been delivered in 2006 suggesting several fundamental changes to improve the effec-

tiveness and responsiveness of the Organization. However, given the far-reaching organizational and financial implications of the proposed reforms, several years are likely to be necessary before accomplishing full implementation.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN UN ORGANS, OTHER THAN THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE: Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Arabic added as an official language of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE: English, French

WORKING LANGUAGES: English and French, with the addition of Russian, Chinese and Spanish in the General Assembly and the Security Council, and Spanish in the Economic and Social Council

WORKING LANGUAGES OF THE SECRETARIAT: English, French

HEADQUARTERS: United Nations, New York, NY 10017, USA (telephone: +1 212 963 1234; fax: +1 212 963 4879)

WEBSITE (UNITED NATIONS):
<http://www.un.org>

WEBSITE (UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM):
<http://www.unsystem.org>

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA (UNOG):
Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
(telephone: +41 22 917 1234; fax: +41 22 917 0123)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unog.ch>

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT VIENNA (UNOV):
Vienna International Centre, PO Box 500, 1400
Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 260 600; fax: +43
1 263 3389)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unvienna.org>

MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL:
Permanent members: China, France, Russia, UK,
US; Elected members: Belgium, Indonesia, Italy,
Panama, South Africa (until December 2008);
Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, Libya, Vietnam
(until December 2009)

MEMBERS OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL: Angola, Austria, Benin, Cuba, Czech
Republic, France, Germany, Guinea Bissau,
Guyana, Haiti, Japan, Madagascar, Mauritania,

Paraguay, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey (until 31 December 2008); Algeria, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia, Canada, Cape Verde, El Salvador, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg, Malawi, Netherlands, Philippines, Romania, Somalia, Sudan, US (until 31 December 2009); Brazil, Cameroon, China, Congo, Iceland, Korea, Malaysia, Moldova, Mozambique, New Zealand, Niger, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Saint Lucia, Sweden, UK, Uruguay (until 31 December 2010)

MEMBERS OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL:
China, France, Russia, UK, US

MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE (terms end on 5 February of the year indicated in parentheses): Ronny Abraham of France (2009); Awn Shawkat Al-Khasawneh of Jordan (2009); Mohamed Bennouna of Morocco (2015); Thomas Buergenthal of the US (2015); Rosalyn Higgins of the UK (2009); Shi Jiuyong of China (2012); Kenneth Keith of New Zealand (2015); Abdul G. Koroma of Sierra Leone (2012); Hisashi Owada of Japan (2012); Gonzalo Parra-Aranguren of Venezuela (2009); Raymond Ranjeva of Madagascar (2009); Bernardo Sepúlveda Amor of Mexico (2015); Bruno Simma of Germany (2012); Leonid Skotnikov of Russia (2015); and Peter Tomka of Slovakia (2012)

REGISTRAR: Philippe Couvreur of Belgium

SECRETARY GENERAL: Ban Ki-moon

PUBLICATIONS: *UN Chronicle* (quarterly); *Yearbook of the UN* (comprehensive account, organized by subject, of UN activities); *Basic Facts about the UN*; *Everyone's United Nations*; *The UN Disarmament Yearbook*; *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*; *Statistical Yearbook*; *Yearbook of International Statistics*; *World Economic Survey* (annual); *Humanitarian Report*

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United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

The Fund, originally intended to carry out relief in Europe after World War II, is mainly concerned with meeting the essential needs of children living in the developing countries and lacking even the most rudimentary medical, nutritional and educational services.

Origin and development

The Fund was created by the UN General Assembly on 11 December 1946, under the name of United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, in order to extend massive relief to the young victims of World War II in Europe and China. In the early 1950s, the emphasis was gradually shifted to programmes intended to combat the widespread malnutrition, disease and illiteracy afflicting millions of children throughout the developing world. On 6 October 1953 the General Assembly decided to extend the Fund's mandate indefinitely and to drop the words 'International' and 'Emergency' from the official name, but the well-known acronym was retained.

Objectives

The Fund is intended to provide to the underserved areas of developing countries effective assistance in the interrelated fields of primary health care, formal and non-formal education, applied nutrition, clean water and sanitation, responsible parenthood and family planning, child mental health, and improvement in the lives of women and girls. Assistance is extended by the Fund according to mutually agreed priorities for children, in close co-operation with the governments concerned, with special regard to planning, development and extension of low-cost community-based services. Besides its basic long-term involvement in child health, nutrition and welfare programmes, the Fund may also be called upon to provide emergency relief and supplementary aid for mothers and children whenever necessary because of major natural disasters, civil strife or epidemics. Emergency assistance is generally followed by long-range rehabilitation operations.

Structure

The basic policy directives of the Fund are laid down by its governing body, the Executive Board, which is composed of representatives of 36 countries elected

for a three-year term by the UN Economic and Social Council from among members of the UN, or its specialized agencies, or the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Eight seats are reserved for Africa; seven for Asia; four for Eastern Europe; five for Latin America and the Caribbean; twelve for Western Europe and other countries including Japan. The Executive Board meets in one annual session in June plus two regular sessions in January and September of each year, holding intersessional meetings whenever necessary, to review the programmes and make commitments for aid.

The Executive Director is nominated by the UN Secretary-General in consultation with the Executive Board and is responsible for current administrative tasks and the appointment and direction of staff. The headquarters of the Fund are located in New York; several regional offices and field offices complete the organizational structure. Direct links with the public are maintained by the Fund through 36 National Committees, mostly in the developed countries.

The activities of the Fund are financed in their entirety through voluntary contributions from governments, private organizations and individuals. Around 60 per cent of the Fund's income derives directly from governments, over 30 per cent from non-governmental and private sector sources, through various fund-raising campaigns, greetings card sales and individual donations, and the rest from other miscellaneous sources.

Activities

The Fund is currently engaged in programmes in about 190 countries and territories in all continents to help protect children from disease, malnutrition and other perils of the growing years and to prepare them for healthy, productive adult lives. A large proportion of the financial and human resources of the Fund are devoted to sub-Saharan Africa. Over the past few years, a substantial share of emergency assistance has gone to alleviate drought and famine in Africa.

The Fund's efforts in the 1980s concentrated on the drastic reduction of infant mortality rates through an attack on the principal causes of preventable death and disease, drawing on a wide variety of national and community organizations for support in mobilizing the necessary human and financial resources. The success of these efforts was linked to a very large extent to the community-based services strategy which had been advocated

since the mid-1970s. The General Assembly designated the Fund as the 'lead agency' of the UN system responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the International Year of the Child observed in 1979.

The Fund participated in drafting the Convention on the Rights of the Child which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and entered into force in September of the following year. Two Optional Protocols to the Convention were adopted by the General Assembly on 25 May 2000: the first, dealing with the involvement of children in armed conflict, entered into force on 12 February 2002; the second, regarding the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, entered into force on 18 January 2002.

In September 1990 the Fund organized the World Summit for Children with the participation of the Heads of State and Government of more than 70 countries. By setting the protection and development of children as the focal point of international commitment, the meeting emphasized the importance of education, nutrition, health, family planning, and empowerment of women and girls in building the foundations for the future. A declaration was issued aimed at committing countries to reduce infant mortality and the dangers of child-birth worldwide, and to guarantee that all children would have access to clean water and education by the year 2000. The Fund contributed to the preparation of the UN General Assembly Special Session on Children called to assess the results of the 1990 Summit.

The World Summit for Social Development, held in March 1995 in Copenhagen, Denmark, provided new impetus to the activities of the Fund setting them within the context of an international effort towards poverty eradication and social development. In co-operation with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the Fund has actively supported the '20/20' formula, an initiative adopted by the Copenhagen World Summit. The formula calls on governments of developing countries to allocate at least 20 per cent of their budget to basic social services, and donor countries to earmark a similar proportion of their official development aid for such services. The Fund actively participated in the two international congresses, held in 1996 and 2001 respectively, against commercial sexual exploitation of children. In 1997 the Fund co-sponsored an International Conference on Child Labour to

address the needs of around 220 million children engaged in hazardous or exploitative labour, mostly in developing countries. The Fund is also actively engaged in HIV/AIDS education and prevention programmes, especially among young people.

The Fund was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965.

External relations

In emergency relief the Fund co-operates very closely with UNDP and other UN agencies such as UNFPA and the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as with numerous non-governmental organizations.

LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Ann M. Veneman

HEADQUARTERS: UNICEF House, Three United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA (telephone: +1 212 326 7000; fax: +1 212 887 7465)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unicef.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *UNICEF Annual Report; The State of the World's Children* (annual); *UNICEF at a Glance* (annual); *1946–2006 Sixty Years for Children, 2006*

REFERENCES: M. Black, *The Children and the Nations: The Story of UNICEF* (New York, 1986); Y. Beigbeder, *New Challenges for UNICEF: Children, Women, and Human Rights* (Basingstoke, UK, 2001); P.W. Jones with D. Coleman, *The United Nations and Education: Multilateralism, Development, and Globalization* (London, 2005)

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

The Conference aims to act as the focal point within the UN for the integrated treatment of development and interrelated issues in the areas of trade, finance, technology, investment and sustainable development through greater partnership between developed, developing and least developed countries, and countries in transition.

Origin and development

The establishment of the Conference as a permanent organ of the UN General Assembly dates back to 30 December 1964. The original session of the Conference had been convened earlier that year

within the framework of the UN Development Decade of the 1960s, launched by a General Assembly resolution in December 1961. The General Assembly had also approved a resolution on international trade as the primary instrument for promoting economic progress in the less developed countries; the resolution envisaged an international conference on trade problems, which was eventually held in Geneva between March and June 1964. Proposals for continuing the work of the Conference through some kind of institutional arrangement led to its establishment as an autonomous body responsible to the General Assembly. The Conference generally meets every four years in the capital or important city of a member country.

Membership

All 192 member countries of the UN plus the Holy See.

Objectives

The concern of the Conference covers the entire spectrum of policies, in both industrialized and developing areas, which influence the external trade and payments and related development aspects of developing countries, in particular the least developed among them.

According to the provisions set forth in the General Assembly resolution adopted in December 1964, the principal functions of the Conference were the following: (a) to promote international trade, especially with a view to accelerating economic development and taking into account the tasks performed by existing international organizations; (b) to formulate principles and policies on international trade and related problems of economic development; (c) to make proposals for putting the said principles and policies into effect and to take other relevant steps, having regard to differences in economic systems and stages of development; (d) to review and facilitate the co-ordination of activities of other institutions within the UN system; (e) to initiate action, where appropriate, in co-operation with the competent organs of the UN for the negotiation and adoption of multilateral legal instruments; and (f) to be available as a centre for harmonizing the trade and related development policies of governments and regional economic groupings.

A trend has emerged for the Conference to concentrate on a few trade and development objectives of central importance with a view to making a

substantial impact on people's lives in developing countries. Topics on the current international trade agenda, the adoption of a possible multilateral framework on investment, competition laws of particular relevance to development, environmental policies and measures, and the development of small and medium-sized domestic enterprises are part of the Conference's new mandate resulting from the 1996 session. The last sessions focused on the national and multilateral measures needed to ensure the integration of developing countries into the world economy, with a view to maximizing the trade and development opportunities offered by the process of globalization.

Structure

The 1996 session undertook a restructuring and streamlining of the Conference's machinery. The Trade and Development Board, which all Conference members may join, is the permanent body responsible for ensuring overall consistency in the activities of the Conference.

According to the 1996 reform, the Board meets once a year in regular session, in the autumn, to deal with global economic issues from a trade and development viewpoint. It also reviews progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa, in order to draw policy lessons from successful development experiences. The Board can meet, in one-day executive sessions, three times a year to deal with policy as well as management and institutional matters.

Three subsidiary bodies of the Board, meeting once a year unless otherwise decided by the Board itself, have been established: (a) the Commission on Trade in Goods and Services and Commodities; (b) the Commission on Investment, Technology and Related Financial Issues; and (c) the Commission on Enterprise, Business Facilitation and Development.

The Conference has a permanent Secretariat headed by a Secretary-General and located in Geneva. A Liaison Office is maintained at UN Headquarters in New York.

Activities

After its original meeting in 1964, the Conference held the second session in New Delhi (1968), the third in Santiago, Chile (1972), the fourth in Nairobi (1976), the fifth in Manila (1979), the sixth in Belgrade (1983), the seventh in Geneva (9 July–3 August 1987), the eighth in Cartagena de Indias,

Colombia (8–25 February 1992), the ninth in Midrand, South Africa (27 April–11 May 1996), the tenth in Bangkok (12–19 February 2000), and the eleventh in São Paulo, Brazil (13–18 June 2004). The sessions held in Cartagena and in Midrand took far-reaching decisions with a view to revitalizing the Conference, streamlining its institutional structure and reinforcing and clarifying its mandate. The 2000 session adopted the Bangkok Plan of Action containing a comprehensive blueprint for the future work of the Conference. The session in 2004 adopted the ‘São Paulo Consensus’ emphasizing the need to enhance coherence between national development strategies and global economic processes towards economic growth and development. The twelfth session of the Conference will be held in Accra in April 2008.

Despite serious problems of co-ordination, the Conference has made sustained efforts towards the realization of the goals of the UN Development Decades, the redefinition of the international economic agenda and the negotiation of a number of agreements which have represented a significant evolution of governmental policies. The Conference has become more and more involved in the analysis of broad economic issues and financial problems in an effort to move beyond the stage of merely enunciating general principles. In particular, it has recommended measures with a view to: expanding and diversifying the exports of goods and services of developing countries; stabilizing and strengthening the international commodity markets on which most developing countries depend for export earnings; enhancing the export capacity of developing countries through mobilization of domestic and external resources, including development assistance and foreign investment; promoting appropriate national trade and transport policies; alleviating the impact of debt on the economies of the developing countries and reducing the debt burden; providing special support to the least developed countries, a category currently comprising about 50 of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable countries; fostering the expansion of trade and economic co-operation among developing countries.

One of the major endeavours of the Conference in the 1980s was to secure remunerative, equitable and stable prices for the primary commodities on which developing countries depend heavily for export earnings. Negotiations leading to the conclusion of individual commodity agreements were carried out within this framework, including

rubber, jute and jute products, tropical timber, cocoa and olive oil. Many agreements were subsequently renewed and amended shifting the focus from market regulation schemes to technical co-operation and marketing. A key role has been played by a specially created fund, designed primarily to finance buffer stocks of certain commodities in order to reduce or eliminate wide fluctuations in commodity prices. Articles of agreement for establishing the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) were adopted in June 1980; the Fund started operations in Amsterdam in late 1989.

Another major effort of the Conference is directed towards the expansion and diversification of the exports of manufactured and semi-manufactured products of developing countries. An important agreement was reached in 1970 on the introduction, for a ten-year period, of a Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) designed to provide developing countries with wider export opportunities beyond the traditional reciprocity and most-favoured-nation rules. The GSP has been subsequently reviewed and amended to adapt to changes in international trade. The Conference launched in 1996 the ‘Biotrade Initiative’ to encourage and support trade and investment in biological resources and implement biodiversity programmes. A capacity-building and technical assistance programme to help developing countries in the post-Doha trade negotiations taking place within the framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO) was launched in early 2002.

A Set of Multilaterally Agreed Equitable Principles and Rules for the Control of Restrictive Business Practices, including those of transnational corporations, which adversely affect international trade, especially that of developing countries, was adopted in April 1980. The Conference has also adopted an action programme on policies and measures for structural adjustment related to trade that involves both inter-industry and intra-industry specialization so as to enable developing countries to increase their share in world trade of manufactured goods.

With regard to international financial issues, the Conference has sought to improve terms and conditions of aid, as well as to increase its flow, to reduce the rising burden of debt service and to establish a reformed international monetary system consistent with the pressing needs of development. A resolution was adopted in 1978 for the retroactive adjustment of terms for the official development

assistance debt of low-income countries. Guidelines for international action in the area of debt rescheduling were drafted in 1980. At its 1987 session the Conference recognized the need for greater flexibility in the rescheduling of debts, though it proved impossible to reach a consensus on the increase of debt relief or the reduction of interest rates.

Increasing emphasis is being placed on the promotion of trade expansion, economic co-operation and integration among developing countries, especially with regard to export credits, transportation, insurance and multinational production enterprises.

A substantial work programme has been undertaken in the field of shipping and ports and international shipping legislation and several Conventions have been concluded under the auspices of the Conference. The Convention on a Code of Conduct for Liner Conferences, adopted in 1974 and entered into force in 1983, provides for the national shipping lines of developing countries to participate on an equal footing with the shipping lines of developed countries; the Convention on the Carriage of Goods by Sea (Hamburg Rules) was adopted in 1978; the Convention on International Multimodal Transport of Goods, adopted in 1980, establishes a single liability regime for the carrying of goods entailing more than one mode of transport. The Conference investigates the implications of open-registry fleets for the merchant marines of developing countries; its efforts in this area led to the conclusion in 1986 of the Convention on Conditions for Registration of Ships which deals with the safety and working conditions aboard ships flying 'flags of convenience'. A new Convention on Maritime Liens and Mortgages was adopted in May 1993 with a view to improving conditions for ship financing and the development of national merchant fleets and to promoting international uniformity in the field of maritime liens and mortgages.

Recommendations have been put forward by the Conference to meet the special needs of the least-developed, developing island and landlocked countries. The Statute of a Special Fund for Landlocked Developing Countries was approved by the General Assembly in December 1976 but total sums pledged were not deemed sufficient to enable the Fund to start operations. In 1981 the Conference serviced the special UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries which led to the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA) for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries. The

targets contained in the SNPA were not met and the Second Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held on 3–14 September 1990 in Paris, adopted a new Programme of Action embodying commitments by both the developed and the developing nations. The Conference was in charge of the preparation of the Third Conference on Least Developed Countries that took place on 14–20 May 2001 in Brussels.

The restructuring of the Conference machinery, the adoption of more flexible rules and procedures, and the increasing focus on the identification of appropriate domestic policies and measures for promoting growth rather than on the adoption of international agreements or resolutions should lead to the elaboration of a system progressively more effective in dealing with major development-related issues. On the whole, the Conference remains one of the major global forums in which governments and, increasingly, other interested parties, especially the private sector but also representatives of civil society, are able to negotiate on trade and development issues.

External relations

The International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) in Geneva is operated jointly by the Conference and by WTO. As an executing agency of the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Conference is engaged in several technical assistance projects in developing countries. Close relations have been established with several international organizations.

LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Supachai Panichpakdi

HEADQUARTERS: Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 917 5828; fax: +41 22 917 0051)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unctad.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Trade and Development Report* (annual); *World Investment Report* (annual); *The Least Developed Countries Report* (annual); *Trade and Environment Review* (annual); *Handbook of Statistics* (annual); *UNCTAD E-News* (newsletter on latest events)

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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The Programme is the main body in charge of the co-ordination of UN development work and the world's largest source of grant-funded technical assistance to developing countries.

Origin and development

The establishment of the Programme dates back to 22 November 1965 when the UN General Assembly decided to merge two bodies which were then responsible for providing multilateral technical assistance – the UN Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA), created in 1949, and the UN Special Fund set up in 1958. The new Programme entered into force in January 1966 as the central agency of the UN system for funding economic and social development projects around the world. A General Assembly resolution adopted in 1970 defined the organizational structure and activities of the Programme.

Membership

All member countries of the UN.

Objectives

The Programme is intended to help developing countries increase the wealth-producing capabilities of their natural and human resources. Special attention is paid to the needs of the least developed countries, promoting development that is people-centred and respects the environment.

As a pragmatic field-oriented agency, the Programme is basically responsive only to clearly identified specific needs. Principal project activities include: (a) locating, assessing and activating latent natural resources and other development assets; (b) support for professional and vocational training; (c) expansion of development-related scientific

research and applied technologies; and (d) strengthening of national and regional development planning. The scope of technical assistance has been broadened in order to cover all phases of project lifetime from earliest preparatory studies to long-range follow-up.

Structure

The Programme's policy-making body is the Executive Board, consisting of the representatives of 36 countries (eight from Africa, seven from Asia, four from Eastern Europe, five from Latin America and the Caribbean, and twelve from Western Europe and other countries), which meets at yearly intervals; elections are for a three-year term. The Administrator is responsible for carrying out the activities of the Programme. A Resident Representative of the Programme is stationed in almost every country receiving technical assistance and is responsible for supervising and co-ordinating field operations. Through a worldwide network of offices the Programme actually functions as the primary presence of the UN in most developing countries.

The Programme is responsible to the General Assembly to which it reports through the Economic and Social Council.

Activities

Assistance is rendered by the Programme only at the request of governments and in response to their priority needs, integrated into overall national and regional plans.

The Programme, financed by voluntary contributions from UN member countries and participating agencies, has been gradually entrusted with resources for tasks well beyond its original mandate. Despite some serious cash flow crises, it has assumed increasing responsibility for meeting global as well as regional and national priorities in around 165 developing countries and territories, offering a variety of services not provided by other bodies, and for co-ordinating the UN development system. The Programme also participates in emergency relief operations. In September 1998, the Executive Board established an annual target of \$1.1 billion in regular resources for the Programme and introduced a multi-year results-based funding framework to increase predictability. However, due to a number of difficulties, the annual target has been subsequently revised down. In 2006, the gross regular income received by the Programme

amounted to \$922 million with a modest increase over 2005.

A results-based orientation and large-scale decentralization of operations have considerably increased the Programme's speed and efficiency. Responsibility for project execution is being assigned increasingly to governments and institutions in the developing countries receiving assistance.

The Programme administers a number of special purpose funds and programmes such as the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the UN Volunteers (UNV) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The UNCDF, established in 1966 and fully operational since 1974, assists least developed countries by supplementing existing sources of capital assistance through grants and loans on concessionary terms; all projects are designed to minimize external dependence and ensure sustainability. The execution of projects is usually entrusted to local institutions with a view to promoting grassroots self-help activities.

The UNV programme was established by the General Assembly in 1971 and remains the only volunteer-sending programme in the UN system, supplying at modest cost middle-level skills, particularly in the least developed countries. The volunteers, recruited from 160 different countries, represent 115 professional categories and operate in both UNDP and UN-assisted projects, as well as development programmes carried out directly by host countries. Some 6000 volunteers from both developed and developing countries are currently serving in 140 nations; nearly 50 per cent of volunteers work in Africa.

UNIFEM has continued since 1985, on a regular basis, the activities of the Voluntary Fund for the UN Decade for Women, established by the General Assembly in 1975 on the occasion of the proclamation of the period 1976–85 as the UN Decade for Women. In close association with UNDP, UNIFEM supports innovative and experimental activities benefiting women, such as credit funds, small-scale group enterprises and training in work-saving and fuel-conserving technologies.

Poverty elimination is the overriding priority in UNDP programmes; the traditional programming system, in effect since the 1970s, has been replaced by a new system with a view to providing higher flexibility in the assignment of resources as well as greater incentives for the formulation of high-impact programmes fostering sustainable human

development. UNDP acts as a catalyst and coordinator of UN system-wide efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the UN Millennium Summit in September 2000. MDGs set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015. According to the UNDP's Strategic Plan 2008–2011, the Programme is a key partner in building capacity for human development focused around four areas: (a) poverty reduction; (b) democratic governance; (c) crisis prevention and recovery; and (d) environment and energy. In these areas the Programme will provide knowledge, policy advice, advocacy and technical support. While fulfilling these tasks, the Programme has to withdraw gradually from sectoral and subsectoral activities that should be left to bodies with a specific mandate.

External relations

Almost all UNDP projects are carried out by UN-related bodies, including all of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as well as the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and other bodies. With the World Bank and UNEP, UNDP is one of the managing partners of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

ADMINISTRATOR: Kemal Dervis

HEADQUARTERS: One UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA (telephone: +1 212 906 5300; fax: +1 212 906 5364)

WEBSITE: <http://www.undp.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Administrator*; *Human Development Report* (annual); *Poverty Report* (annual)

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

The Organization promotes collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further respect for justice, for the rule of law and for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Origin and development

The Constitution of the Organization, adopted on 16 November 1945 at a Conference convened in London by the government of the UK in association with the government of France, came into force on 4 November 1946, after 20 signatories had deposited their instruments of acceptance; it has been amended on several occasions. The Organization became a UN specialized agency on 14 December 1946.

Membership of the UN automatically carries with it the right to membership of the Organization. Countries that do not belong to the UN may be admitted to the Organization, upon recommendation of the Executive Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference. Territories not responsible for the conduct of international relations are eligible for associate membership, provided an application is made on their behalf by the authority in charge of international relations. Any member, either full or associate, may withdraw from the Organization by notice addressed to that effect to the Director-General; such notice takes effect on 31 December of the year following that during which the notice was given.

Membership

The present membership includes 193 countries plus six associate members.

Objectives

In order to realize its purposes the Organization: (a) collaborates in the work of advancing the mutual knowledge and understanding of peoples through all means of mass communication and to that end recommends such international agreements as may be necessary; (b) gives fresh impulse to popular education and the spread of culture by collaborating with member countries, at their request, in the development of educational activities and by suggesting educational methods; and (c) maintains, increases and diffuses knowledge by conserving the

world's inheritance of books, works of art and monuments of history and science, by encouraging co-operation among nations in all branches of intellectual activity and by initiating methods calculated to give the people of all countries access to the printed and published materials produced by any of them. All action is to be carried out according to the principle of preserving the independence, integrity and fruitful diversity of the cultures and educational systems of the member countries.

Structure

The institutional machinery comprises a General Conference, an Executive Board and a Secretariat. It is for the General Conference, as the supreme governing body, to determine the policies and the main lines of work of the Organization and to decide on programmes submitted to it by the Executive Board. Ordinary sessions of the General Conference are held every two years with the participation of representatives from each member country. Intergovernmental conferences on education, the sciences and humanities or the dissemination of knowledge may be convened by the General Conference. The Executive Board consists of 58 members elected for a single four-year term by the General Conference and acting under its authority; members of the Executive Board represent their respective governments. The Board meets at least twice a year and is responsible for supervising the execution of the programme of work adopted by the Conference. The chief administrative officer and head of the Secretariat is the Director-General who is nominated by the Executive Board and appointed by the General Conference for a renewable six-year term; he is empowered to formulate proposals for appropriate action by the Conference and the Board. Liaison Offices and Regional Offices for Education, Science and Technology, Culture and Communication exist in most areas served by the Organization. National Commissions or National Co-operating Bodies have been set up in most member countries to act as agencies of liaison between the Organization and the principal bodies interested in educational, scientific and cultural matters in each country. The Bureau of Field Co-ordination (BFC) is in charge of the administrative supervision and general support for the whole network of national, cluster and regional offices and represents the focal point for the continued implementation of the Organization's decentralization strategy.

The Organization adopts recommendations, by a simple majority, and international conventions by a two-thirds majority, each member country being under the obligation to submit these to its competent authorities within one year. Moreover, each member country is bound to report periodically to the Organization on its laws, regulations and statistics in the educational, scientific and cultural field as well as on the action taken with regard to recommendations and conventions.

The Organization's activities are funded through a regular budget provided by member countries and also through other sources, particularly the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

Among the bodies operating within the Organization's framework, mention should be made of the following: the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), set up in 1963 to serve as a world centre for advanced training and research, which is legally and administratively part of UNESCO and is located in Paris (7-9 rue Eugène Delacroix; telephone: +33 1 4503 7700; fax: +33 1 4072 8366); the International Bureau of Education (IBE), founded in 1925 and a part of UNESCO since 1969, providing information on developments and innovations in education and based in Geneva (15 route des Morillons, PO Box 199; telephone: +41 22 917 7800; fax: +41 22 917 7801).

Activities

The activities of the Organization fall into three main categories: international intellectual co-operation; operational assistance; and promotion of peace. This implies *inter alia*: expanding and guiding education in order to enable the people of every country to take their own development in hand more effectively; help in establishing the scientific and technological foundations through which every country can make better use of its own resources; encouragement of national cultural values and the preservation of cultural heritage so as to derive maximum advantage from modernization without the loss of cultural identity and diversity; development of communication for the balanced flow of information and of information systems for the universal pooling of knowledge; prevention of discrimination in education and improvement of access for women to education; and promotion of studies and research on conflicts and peace, violence and obstacles to disarmament, and the role of international law and organizations in building peace.

The education programme is based on an overall policy regarding education as a lifelong process and seeking to promote the progressive application of the right to education for all and to improve the quality of education. Priority is increasingly being given to the rural areas of developing countries. The Organization was given responsibility for organizing the International Literacy Year (1990), proclaimed by the UN as a means of initiating a plan of action for the spread of literacy (based on regional literacy programmes that had already been established in the 1980s). In March 1990, the Organization sponsored with other UN agencies the World Conference on Education for All.

In the field of natural sciences and technology, the Organization is active in fostering international co-operation and has set up over the years a number of programmes, such as the Programme on Man and the Biosphere (MAB) for the solution of practical problems related to environmental resource management; the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) dealing with the scientific aspects of water resources assessment and management; the International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), run jointly with the International Union of Geological Sciences; the Intergovernmental Informatics Programme (PII) for the promotion of co-operation between developed and developing countries in the field of computer sciences; and the International Programme for the Social Sciences (MOST). The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) encourages scientific investigation into the nature and resources of the oceans. At the regional and subregional level, ministerial conferences are periodically organized to consider science and technology policy as well as the application of science and technology to development. Assistance is also provided at the national level in order to enable individual member countries to carry out training and research programmes and projects, such as those concerning the use of small-scale energy sources for rural and dispersed populations. The social and human sciences programme intends to encourage the development of the social sciences throughout the world by strengthening national and regional institutions; other programmes concern activities dealing with human rights and peace.

The World Heritage Programme, launched in 1978, is aimed at protecting landmarks of outstanding universal value, in accordance with the 1972 Convention Concerning the Protection of the World

Cultural and Natural Heritage, by providing financial aid for restoration, technical assistance, training and management planning. The 'World Heritage List' currently includes over 850 sites, both cultural and natural, in 141 countries throughout the world. The International Fund for the Promotion of Culture, set up in 1974, has provided assistance for a great number of projects including translations, recordings and exhibitions.

In the field of communication, the Organization aims to promote a free flow and a wider and better balanced exchange of information among individuals, communities and countries, and lays increasing stress upon the role of the mass media in advancing international understanding and peace. Programmes are being implemented at national, subregional and regional level in order to expand and strengthen the information and communication systems of developing countries. At the General Conference in October 1980 a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), including plans for an international code of journalist ethics and for the 'licensing' of journalists, was approved, despite strong objections from the US and the UK. In late 1983, the US (which provided around 25 per cent of the Organization's budget) announced its intention to withdraw, alleging: political bias against the West; endemic hostility towards the institutions of a free society and decreasing attention to individual human rights; widespread mismanagement; and excessive budget growth. The Organization's Executive Board then appointed a 13-member committee to investigate allegations and recommend reforms. After the withdrawal became effective at the end of 1984, the US established in January 1985 an Observer Mission at UNESCO and eventually rejoined the Organization in 2003. The UK and Singapore gave notice in 1984 and withdrew at the end of 1985. Both countries subsequently rejoined the Organization, the UK in 1997 and Singapore in 2007. In the area of communication and information, a major new programme, 'Information for All' (IFAP), was adopted in 2001 to provide the basic policy-guiding framework. The Organization was in charge of the co-ordination of activities relating to the International Year for the Culture of Peace proclaimed by the UN General Assembly for the year 2000. A medium-term strategy for the period 2002–07 was approved in late 2001 defining the Organization's role in 'contributing to peace and human development in an era of globalization through education, the sciences,

culture and communication'. A Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, sponsored by Canada and France, was adopted in 2005 and entered into force in early 2007.

External relations

Effective working relationships have been established with other specialized intergovernmental organizations and agencies whose interests and activities are related to the Organization's purposes; any formal arrangements with such organizations or agencies are subject to the approval of the Executive Board. Around 600 non-governmental organizations maintain 'official' relations with the Organization while some of them take part in the execution of projects; about 1200 non-governmental organizations co-operate with the Organization on an occasional basis.

OFFICIAL AND WORKING LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Koichiro Matsuura

HEADQUARTERS: 7 Place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07-SP, France (telephone: +33 1 4568 1000; fax: +33 1 4567 1690)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unesco.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *The UNESCO Courier* (monthly); *UNESCO Sources* (monthly); *Copyright Bulletin* (quarterly); *Prospects* (quarterly); *International Social Science Journal* (quarterly); *International Review of Education* (quarterly); *Museum International* (quarterly); *UNESCO Statistical Yearbook*; *World Education Report* (every two years); *World Science Report* (every two years)

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United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The Programme fosters international co-operation and encourages partnership in all matters relating to the human environment.

Origin and development

The Programme was established on 15 December 1972 by the UN General Assembly, following recommendations of the UN Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm on 5–16 June of that year. The Conference adopted the Declaration on the Human Environment proclaiming the right of human beings to a quality environment and their responsibility to protect and improve the environment for future generations. It also adopted an Action Plan, containing over 100 recommendations for measures to be taken by governments and international organizations to protect life, control contamination from man-made pollutants and improve cities and other human settlements.

Membership

All countries of the UN.

Objectives

The Programme monitors significant changes in the environment and encourages and co-ordinates sound environmental practices, enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

According to the Stockholm Conference Action Plan, the Programme was intended to cover the major environmental issues facing both the developed and the developing areas of the world such as the ecology of rural and urban settlements, the relationship between environment and development, natural disasters, and the preservation of terrestrial ecosystems. A number of specific tasks have been assigned to the Programme by the relevant UN bodies and by UN-sponsored meetings and conferences. The various plans and projects drawn up within the framework of the Programme are usually

put into practice by governments and other UN agencies.

According to the Nairobi Declaration on the Role and Mandate of UNEP, approved by the Programme's Governing Council in February 1997 and confirmed by the special session of the UN General Assembly the following June, the Programme itself should be the leading global authority setting the global environmental agenda and promoting a coherent legal and political approach to the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the UN system.

Structure

The basic policy guidelines concerning the development and co-ordination of environment activities within the UN system are adopted by the Programme's Governing Council, composed of representatives from 58 countries (16 African; 13 Asian; 10 Latin American and Caribbean; 6 Eastern European; 13 Western European and other countries) elected by the General Assembly for four-year terms; half the membership is elected every two years. Regular sessions of the Council are held in odd-numbered years. In 1999 the General Assembly decided to set up an annual global environmental forum, at ministerial level, with the Governing Council representing the forum in the years that it meets in regular session. In alternate years, the global ministerial environment forum (GMEF) takes the form of a special session of the Governing Council. The Committee of Permanent Representatives is a subsidiary organ of the Governing Council that, in April 1997, decided to strengthen the Committee and to create another subsidiary organ, the High-Level Committee of Ministers and Officials.

An important role in the co-ordination of environmental action is played by the Secretariat whose headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya, with liaison and regional offices across the globe. The Secretariat is headed by an Executive Director elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General for a four-year term. The Secretariat is also charged with the administration of the Environment Fund, established in 1973 to encourage voluntary additional financing for new initiatives relating to the environment. The Executive Director of the Programme acts as ex officio chairman of the Environment Co-ordination Board, which consists of the heads of all bodies responsible for the implementation of environmental programmes within the UN system.

Activities

The Programme has substantially contributed towards focusing world concern on the growing dangers to the human environment. At a special session, in 1982, the Governing Council reviewed the achievements and shortcomings that had occurred in the human environment since the Stockholm Conference and discussed the Programme's guidelines for the 1980s. The Programme played a significant role in the preparation of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992 with a view to adopting long-term integrated environmental strategies leading to sustainable development.

Under the Stockholm Conference Action Plan, the Programme co-ordinates the Environment Assessment Programme (formerly 'Earthwatch'), an international surveillance network. The Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS), which began in 1975, is based on a network of stations providing information on the ecological state of the world and on changes in climate, water pollution and tropical forests; to convert the data collected into usable information, a Global Resource Information Database (GRID) was established in 1985.

The INFOTERRA programme is a computerized referral service to sources in about 180 countries for environmental information and expertise; it is responsible for the annual compilation of a Directory of Sources. The International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals (IRPTC) works through a network of national correspondents in about 120 countries to provide scientific and regulatory information on chemicals that may be dangerous to health and the environment. In April 1994, the Code of Ethics on the International Trade in Chemicals was concluded at Geneva after two years of negotiations conducted within the framework of the Programme.

Research is being carried out on the 'outer limits' of tolerance of the biosphere and its subsystems to the demands made on it by human activities; studies have been undertaken to assess the effect of carbon dioxide emission on climate, the 'greenhouse effect'. In 1985 the Programme completed a study on the effects of chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) production on the layer of ozone in the earth's atmosphere and stressed the need to limit such production. The international Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer was adopted at a Conference held in Vienna in 1985 and represented

an important stage in the Programme's efforts. A protocol to the Convention – adopted in September 1987 and known as the 'Montreal Protocol' – committed participating countries to reduce production of CFCs by 50 per cent by the year 2000. The London (1990) and Copenhagen (1992) Amendments to the Montreal Protocol sought to reduce further damage to the Earth's ozone layer. In order to prevent the 'dumping' of wastes from industrialized countries in developing countries, the Programme promoted the adoption in 1989 of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (entered into force in 1992). A protocol to the Basel Convention was adopted in December 1999 concerning liability and compensation for damages from waste exports. The Programme has been entrusted by the 1977 UN Conference on Desertification with the responsibility for carrying out the Plan of Action drawn up to combat the spread of deserts, particularly in the Sudano-Sahelian region; assistance has been provided for the formation of regional networks of non-governmental agencies engaged in anti-desertification activities in Africa, Latin America, and Asia and the Pacific. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Especially in Africa, was adopted, under the sponsorship of the Programme, in June 1994 and entered into force in December 1996. The Programme is also actively co-operating with the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) to combat deteriorating environmental standards in towns.

The World Conservation Strategy was officially launched in March 1980. The Programme actively supports wildlife conservation in collaboration with the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The Programme administers the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), adopted in March 1973 and entered into force in July 1975. A ban on international trade in ivory was adopted by a CITES-sponsored conference in October 1989.

Substantial efforts are being made under the auspices of the Programme in the struggle against marine pollution, particularly in the Mediterranean; a convention and two protocols were signed to that effect in Barcelona in 1976. A number of priority programmes as well as a long-term study of the development plans of the Mediterranean governments are under way. A

treaty for the control of pollution of inland origin was concluded in May 1980 in Athens under the sponsorship of the Programme by most of the countries bordering the Mediterranean. Another important treaty for the protection of natural resources and the marine environment was signed in April 1982 in Geneva. Several other countries outside the Mediterranean are developing various forms of close co-operation against marine pollution within the framework of the Programme. Action plans have been adopted for: the seas around Kuwait; the Caribbean; the West and Central African region; the East African region; the East Asian region; the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden; the South Pacific; and the South-East Pacific. As regards the oceans, the Programme collects data on pollution and completed in 1984, jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), a global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Management and Utilization of Marine Mammals. In 1988 the Programme established, jointly with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Other major initiatives of the Programme have been the preparation of two international instruments opened for signature at UNCED: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), entered into effect in 1993, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), entered into effect in 1994. The UNFCCC was the result of the joint work of the Programme and the WMO.

With the World Bank and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Programme is one of the managing partners of the restructured Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The international environmental agenda emerged from UNCED has brought about a need to change the Programme's focus and priorities. A special session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997, known as the 'Earth Summit+5', was convened to assess the progress achieved five years after UNCED. A Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21 was adopted with a view to intensifying efforts in a number of areas, including energy, freshwater resources and technology transfer. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted in 2000 to address issues relating to genetically modified organisms.

The first GMEF/sixth special session of the Governing Council took place on 29–31 May 2000 and adopted the Malmö Declaration. The seventh

special session of the Governing Council/GMEF, held on 13–15 February 2002, adopted the report of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or their Representatives on International Environmental Governance. The report stressed the need for an enlarged role of UNEP in country-level capacity-building and training and co-ordination at the national level of the environmental component of sustainable development. The central role of the Programme in international efforts to achieve sustainable development has been repeatedly stressed over the past few years. The 2005 World Summit agreed to explore a more coherent institutional framework system for international environmental governance.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Achim Steiner

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 30552, Nairobi, Kenya
(telephone: +254 20 762 1234; fax: +254 20 762 3927)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unep.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Executive Director*; *Environment Forum* (quarterly); *Our Planet* (quarterly); *Environmental Law Bulletin* (two a year); studies, reports and technical guidelines

REFERENCES: N.N. Miller, *The United Nations Environment Programme* (Hanover, NH, 1979); E.E. Hinnawi and M.H. Hashmi, *The State of the Environment* (London, 1987); E. Brown Weiss, *In Fairness to Future Generations* (New York, 1990); N. Choucri (ed.), *Global Accord: Environmental Challenges and International Responses* (Cambridge, MA, 1993); M. Imber, *Environment, Security and UN Reform* (New York, 1994)

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The Convention aims to attain stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous interference, created by human beings, with the climate system.

Origin and development

The Convention was adopted on 9 May 1992 and was opened for signature at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in June 1992. It entered into force on 21 March 1994. Parties

to the Convention are called, for the benefit of present and future generations, to protect the climate system, taking into account 'their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities'. The Convention is based on the principle that industrialized countries and economies in transition should limit their emissions of greenhouse gases and take the lead in modifying longer-term trends. Developed countries are called to provide to developing countries – through bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels – the financial resources related to the implementation of the Convention.

Objectives

The aim of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere should be achieved 'within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner'.

Membership

Nearly all member countries of the UN plus the European Union (EU) have ratified the Convention. The Convention divides countries into three main groups according to specific commitments. Annex I Parties are the industrialized countries that were members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1992 plus countries with economies in transition (EIT Parties). Annex II Parties consist of the OECD members of Annex I excluding the EIT Parties. Non-Annex I Parties are mostly developing countries.

Structure

The Conference of the Parties, including all the countries that have ratified the Convention, is the highest decision-making institution, responsible for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and the implementation of its provisions. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) assist the Conference of the Parties. The two subsidiary bodies are open to participation by all Parties and traditionally meet in parallel, at least twice a year. The Secretariat of the Convention, based in Bonn, is institutionally linked to the UN but is not integrated fully in any specific department or programme.

Activities

The provisions of the Convention have given rise to substantial criticism. The first session of the Conference of the Parties, held in March–April 1995, recognized that the commitments envisaged in the Convention were not adequate for attaining the objectives and decided to start a process for further negotiations. These eventually materialized in the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC adopted by consensus by the third session of the Conference of the Parties on 11 December 1997. Provisions of the Kyoto Protocol include legally binding emission targets for developed countries for six greenhouse gases; targets should be reached by the period 2008–2012. Opposition to the Protocol by major producers of greenhouse gases delayed its entry into force which eventually took place on 16 February 2005.

External relations

The representatives of various UN bodies and units as well as specialized agencies and related organizations such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) participate to different degrees in the activities and sessions of the Conference of the Parties. Observer organizations include the OECD and the International Energy Agency (IEA).

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY: Yvo de Boer

SECRETARIAT: Haus Carstanjen, Martin-Luther-King-Strasse 8, 53175 Bonn, Germany; PO Box 260124, 53153 Bonn, Germany (telephone: +49 228 815 1000; fax: +49 228 815 1999)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unfccc.int>

PUBLICATION: *UNFCCC E-Newsletter* (bimonthly)

REFERENCES: S. Barrett, *The Strategy of Joint Implementation in the Framework Convention on Climate Change* (New York, 1995); J. Gupta, *The Climate Change Convention and Developing Countries: From Conflict to Consensus?* (Boston, 1997)

United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights, Office of the
(OHCHR)

The High Commissioner for Human Rights is the UN official with principal responsibility for the

Organization's activities with a view to protecting and promoting all human rights for all.

Origin and development

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights adopted by consensus on 25 June the Vienna Declaration which, besides reaffirming the crucial principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, peace, democracy, justice and the rule of law and stressing the need to fight all forms of discrimination and intolerance, called for the General Assembly to consider, as a matter of priority, the creation of the post of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Following these recommendations, the post was established by a General Assembly resolution of 20 December 1993 and the first High Commissioner was appointed in February 1994.

Objectives

The High Commissioner promotes and protects the effective enjoyment by all of all civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The High Commissioner's mandate spans the whole range of human rights. In particular, the High Commissioner is charged with: (a) promoting the realization of the right to development and enhancing support from the UN system for that purpose; (b) providing, through the Centre for Human Rights and other institutions, advisory services and technical and financial assistance to support human rights programmes; (c) co-ordinating UN education and public information programmes; and (d) preventing the continuation of human rights violations throughout the world. The mandate also includes engaging in dialogue with governments to secure respect for human rights, carrying out the tasks assigned to the High Commissioner by the competent bodies of the UN system and making the relevant recommendations, and providing overall supervision of the Centre for Human Rights.

Membership

All countries of the UN.

Structure

The High Commissioner acts under the direction and authority of the Secretary-General and within the framework of the overall competence, authority and decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

The High Commissioner is appointed by the Secretary-General and approved by the General Assembly for a four-year term, renewable only once. The Office of the High Commissioner is divided into organizational units. Over the past few years a substantial structure has developed in the field. The Office serves as the Secretariat of the newly-created Human Rights Council, composed of country representatives, which is the key UN inter-governmental body responsible for human rights that replaced in 2006 the former Commission on Human Rights.

Activities

The method of work focuses on three major dimensions: standard setting, monitoring, and implementation on the ground. The High Commissioner has undertaken a wide-ranging programme of activities, including personal visits to countries (such as Rwanda, Burundi, Malawi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Uganda) to strengthen understanding of and respect for human rights, and the development of close links with UN programmes, the specialized agencies and other international organizations, national institutions and non-governmental organizations engaged in the protection of human rights. The 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement invited the High Commissioner and the Commission on Human Rights to take part in human rights activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The network of field offices and 'presences' has steadily grown to carry out a wide variety of activities from training and technical assistance to monitoring and fact-finding missions. Discussions have been held by the High Commissioner on priority human rights issues with the representatives of major intergovernmental bodies such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe. The Office of the High Commissioner played a major role in preparing the UN World Conference on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance which took place on 31 August–9 September 2001 in Durban, South Africa. The Conference adopted the 'Durban Declaration' and a Programme of Action after a highly divisive debate which induced a number of countries, including the US and Israel, to abandon the negotiation. According to the five-year Plan of Action for the period 2006–2011, key priorities include greater country engagement working closely with partners at the regional, country and local levels, a stronger leadership role for the High

Commissioner, and closer partnerships with civil society and UN agencies.

HIGH COMMISSIONER: Louise Arbour

HEADQUARTERS: Palais des Nations, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 917 9000; fax: +41 22 917 9008)

WEBSITE: <http://www.ohchr.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Annual Appeal*; Fact sheet series; Human rights study series

REFERENCES: J.P. Humphrey, *Human Rights and the United Nations: A Great Adventure* (Dobbs Ferry, NY, 1983); P. Alston (ed.), *The United Nations and Human Rights: A Critical Reappraisal* (Oxford, 2nd rev. edn, 2005); B.G. Ramcharan, *A UN High Commissioner in Defence of Human Rights: 'no licence to kill or torture'* (Leiden, 2005)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Office of the (UNHCR)

The Office of the High Commissioner provides international legal protection for refugees, seeks permanent solutions to their problems through voluntary repatriation, resettlement in other countries or integration into the country of present residence, and extends material assistance.

Origin and development

The appointment of a High Commissioner for Refugees was decided by the UN General Assembly on 3 December 1949; the Statute of the Office was approved by the General Assembly on 14 December 1950 and the structure started operations on 1 January 1951. The Office was originally established for three years; since 1954 the mandate has been renewed for consecutive five-year terms.

According to the Statute of the Office, refugees are persons outside their country of nationality because they have a well-founded fear of persecution by reason of race, religion, nationality or political opinion and, because of such fear, are unable or unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of the government of their nationality. Since 1971 the Office has been empowered to carry out a number of special operations for the benefit of displaced persons who are not refugees according to the above definition but find themselves in similar circumstances and are in need of international aid.

Under the terms of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council over the past few years, the importance of the 'essential humanitarian task' performed by the Office 'in the context of man-made disasters, in addition to its original functions' has been expressly recognized.

Membership

Membership is on the widest possible geographical basis comprising the member countries of the UN (plus the Holy See) with a demonstrated interest in the solution of the refugee problem.

Objectives

The primary function of the Office lies in the provision of legal protection on the basis of the main international instrument in the field, that is the UN Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951. The Convention defines the rights of refugees and lays down a minimum standard of treatment to which they are entitled with regard to employment, education, residence, freedom of movement and security against 'refoulement', that is forcible return to a country where their life or liberty might be in danger. A Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, extending the scope of the Convention to new groups of refugees, was signed on 31 January 1967. A total of 146 countries have acceded to the 1951 Convention and/or the 1967 Protocol. International conventions have been adopted at the regional level to define specific rights and duties of refugees.

Structure

The basic policy guidelines concerning the work of the Office are given by the General Assembly or the Economic and Social Council to the High Commissioner, elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General and charged with current operations. The High Commissioner is responsible to the General Assembly to which he reports through the Economic and Social Council. Guidance and advice with respect to material assistance programmes are provided by the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme, based in Geneva and currently including the representatives of 64 countries. Sessions are held at yearly intervals and informal consultations between sessions are customarily held by the High Commissioner with representatives of UN member countries. The High

Commissioner has Representatives and Chargés de Mission in the field, covering over 170 countries.

The basic administrative costs of the Office as well as legal protection activities are covered by the regular budget of the UN while material assistance activities and related programme support costs are financed in their entirety by voluntary contributions from both governmental and non-governmental sources; special operations account for a large percentage of these contributions. Recurrent financial constraints severely curtail the ability of the Office to provide adequate protection and assistance for refugees.

Activities

In over five decades, the Office has helped an estimated 50 million people to start their lives again. As of January 2007, a staff of around 6300 people in 111 countries continued to help nearly 33 million persons (asylum seekers, refugees and others of concern to the Office). Severe refugee emergencies in recent history occurred in the Great Lakes region of Africa and in Sudan. The Office is also heavily involved in assistance and protection for refugees in the Caucasus and Central Asian republics and co-operates with governments and voluntary groups and organizations in housing and maintaining these persons. Major efforts in Latin America are aimed at finding resettlement opportunities for refugees or organizing the reinstallation and rehabilitation of the returnees, especially in Central America. Refugee and asylum issues became again a major concern in Europe in the early 1990s as a result of the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia and of rising tensions in several Eastern European countries.

The Office was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1954 and 1981.

External relations

The Programme has built partnerships with other UN agencies and national and international bodies to facilitate assistance and reintegration of refugees and related groups within a context which takes into account the links existing between peace, stability, security, sustainable development and respect for human rights. Therefore the Programme has become increasingly involved with peacekeeping and peacemaking initiatives carried out by the UN and with human rights mechanisms, especially the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, at the level of field operations.

HIGH COMMISSIONER: António Guterres

HEADQUARTERS: 94 rue Montbrillant, Case Postale 2500, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 739 8111; fax: +41 22 731 9546)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unhcr.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *The State of the World's Refugees* (every two years); *Refugees* (quarterly); *Refugee Survey Quarterly*

REFERENCES: L.W. Holborn, *Refugees, a Problem of our Time: The Work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1951–1972* (Metuchen, NJ, 1975); M. Zieck, *The UNHCR and Voluntary Repatriation of Refugees: A Legal Analysis* (The Hague, 1997); J. Hyndman, *Managing Displacement: Refugees and the Politics of Humanitarianism* (Minneapolis, MN, 2000); N. Steiner, M. Gibney and G. Loescher (eds), *Problems of Protection: The UNHCR, Refugees and Human Rights* (New York, 2003); E.K. Baines, *Vulnerable Bodies: Gender, the UN and the Global Refugee Crisis* (Burlington, VT, 2004)

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

The Programme is intended to serve as the lead agency within the UN system for the promotion of socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements development activities and the achievement of adequate shelter for all.

Origin and development

On 21 December 2001, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution transforming the UN Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) – in operation since 1978 – into the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), a new structure better equipped to meet the challenges posed by urbanization and directly in the mainstream of the UN's development agenda for poverty reduction. The Assembly also decided to transform the Commission on Human Settlements into the Governing Council of the Programme.

The establishment of the previous Centre had been the result of the UN longstanding concern with the problems of human settlements, particularly the deteriorating quality of living conditions and the need to link urban and regional development programmes with national plans. The first

international meeting on the subject was convened by the UN in Vancouver, Canada, in May–June 1976 under the title: ‘Habitat: UN Conference on Human Settlements’.

The adoption by the Conference of the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements and the Vancouver Plan of Action represented an important commitment on the part of governments and the international community to improve the quality of life for all people through human settlements development. The Plan of Action contained recommendations for national action regarding settlements policies, settlement planning, provision of shelter, infrastructure and services, land use and land tenure, the role of popular participation, and effective institutions and management.

The Vancouver Conference also recommended the strengthening and consolidation of UN activities in a single body concerned exclusively with human settlements. Acting on this recommendation, in December 1977 the UN General Assembly transformed the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning into the Commission on Human Settlements, and in October 1978 established the Centre to service the Commission. In 1982, the General Assembly proclaimed 1987 the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH) and decided that the objectives of the Year would be to improve the shelter situation of the poor and disadvantaged at both individual and community levels, particularly in developing countries, before and during 1987, and to demonstrate means of continuing those efforts as ongoing national programmes beyond 1987. The General Assembly designated the Commission on Human Settlements as the UN intergovernmental body responsible for organizing the Year and the Centre as the Secretariat for the Year and as the lead agency for co-ordinating the relevant programmes and activities. In 1988 the Commission on Human Settlements approved a Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 that was subsequently adopted by unanimous vote of the General Assembly.

Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, on 3–14 June 1996, the Second UN Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), also known as the ‘City Summit’, evaluated accomplishments since 1976 when Habitat I was held in Vancouver, and reaffirmed the importance of human settlements in both national and international development policies and strategies. According to the Global Plan of Action (‘Habitat Agenda’) adopted in Istanbul by the representatives

of 171 countries, detailed programmes of action were undertaken with a view to realizing economic and social development as well as environmental sustainability. An overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of Habitat II were undertaken by a special session of the General Assembly (Istanbul + 5) held in New York on 6–8 June 2001. The special session adopted the ‘Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium’. A Water and Sanitation Trust Fund was launched in October 2002 to support the goal of reducing to half by 2015 the proportion of the world’s population lacking access to basic sanitation and clean water.

Objectives

The Programme’s major areas of concern include the provision of technical assistance to government programmes, the organization of expert meetings, workshops and training seminars, the publication of technical documents and the dissemination of information through the establishment of a global information network. Technical co-operation projects cover, *inter alia*, national settlement policies and programmes, urban and regional planning, rural and urban housing and infrastructure development, slum upgrading and sites-and-services schemes, low-cost building technology, technologies for urban and rural water supply and sanitation systems, and the establishment or strengthening of government institutions responsible for human settlements.

Structure

The Governing Council, which is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly meeting every two years, provides overall guidance, direction and supervision to the Programme. The 58 members of the Governing Council, elected for staggered four-year terms, are distributed as follows: 16 from Africa, 13 from Asia, six from Eastern Europe, 10 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 13 from Western Europe and other countries. The Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) comprises all countries accredited to the Programme and serves as the intersessional subsidiary body of the Governing Council meeting at least four times a year. The Bureau of the CPR consists of five members representing the five regional groups of the UN elected on a rotational basis for two-year terms. The World Urban Forum is a technical body composed of experts meeting

biannually during the years when the Governing Council is not in session. The Executive Director is the highest official overseeing the work of the Programme.

Besides the headquarters based in Nairobi, the Programme has regional offices for Africa and the Arab States (Nairobi), Latin America and the Caribbean (Rio de Janeiro), and Asia and the Pacific (Fukuoka, Japan).

The financial sources of the Programme are represented by allocations from the UN regular budget and voluntary contributions by governments. Operational activities are financed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and several multi-lateral and bilateral donor agencies.

Activities

The Programme is currently responsible for hundreds of programmes in many developing countries and has increased the size and scope of its operational activities focusing on the reduction of urban poverty. The four core functions assigned to the Programme concern: (a) monitoring and research; (b) policy development; (c) capacity building; and (d) financing for housing and urban development. The Programme has become more and more involved in UN relief, rehabilitation and development activities in several areas throughout the world that are affected by regional and civil conflicts. Most of the Programme's resources are spent at city level to strengthen the capacities of municipal bodies and their public, private and community-sector partners in the field of environmental planning and management.

External relations

The Programme maintains relations with UN bodies, the specialized agencies and other intergovernmental, as well as non-governmental, organizations.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya (telephone: +254 20 7621234; fax: +254 20 7624266)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unhabitat.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Global Report on Human Settlements* (annual); *Habitat Debate* (quarterly); studies and technical reports

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

The Organization promotes the sustainable industrialization of the developing countries and of countries with economies in transition through direct assistance and mobilization of national and international resources, with particular emphasis on the manufacturing sector.

Origin and development

Established as an organ of the UN General Assembly on 17 November 1966, the Organization became operational on 1 January 1967 as an action-oriented body, replacing the Centre for Industrial Development which had been operating within the UN Secretariat since July 1961. The conflict of views between the developing and the developed countries over the most suitable institutional arrangements for intensifying and concentrating UN efforts for the industrialization of the developing world delayed the establishment of the new Organization for a number of years. A consensus was only reached by the mid-1960s for the creation of an autonomous body within the UN. In 1975, the Second General Conference of the member countries stressed the urgent need to increase and expand the autonomy and functions of the Organization and recommended its conversion to the status of a UN specialized agency. The recommendation was subsequently endorsed by the UN General Assembly and several sessions were held to draft a Constitution, which was eventually adopted by consensus on 8 April 1979 in Vienna. The Constitution entered into force on 21 June 1985 and on 1 January 1986 the Organization became the 16th specialized agency related to the UN.

Membership

Member countries currently number 172. Loss of support from a number of major industrial countries and the withdrawal of the US at the end of 1996 have weakened the Organization.

Objectives

The Organization is entrusted with the task of coordinating all activities undertaken by the UN family of agencies in the field of sustainable industrial development. It also provides a forum for consultation and negotiations among developing countries and between developing and industrialized countries.

Structure

The work of the Organization is carried out by the following principal organs: the General Conference, the Industrial Development Board, the Programme and Budget Committee and the Secretariat.

The General Conference, composed of one representative from each member country, normally meets once every two years to formulate overall policies, determine the programme of work and approve the budget. The Industrial Development Board, meeting once a year in the Conference years and twice in the non-Conference years, serves as the governing body of the Organization. It is composed of 53 members (of which 33 come from developing countries, 15 from the developed market economy countries and five from Eastern Europe) elected by the General Conference for a four-year term. The Programme and Budget Committee is made up of 27 members (of which 15 come from developing countries, nine from the developed market economy countries and three from Eastern Europe) elected by the General Conference for a two-year term. The Committee meets, as a rule, once a year. The Secretariat performs administrative functions under a Director-General appointed by the General Conference, upon the Board's recommendation, for a period of four years. The Director-General has overall responsibility for administrative and research tasks as well as for all operational activities, including the activities executed by the Organization as a participating agency of the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Co-operative arrangements link the Organization with several specialized agencies, the UN regional economic commissions, and a number of intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies outside the UN system.

The Organization's finance originally derived from the UNDP, the UN regular budget, the UN Regular Programme of Technical Assistance, and trust funds and contributions from various sources. In January 1986 the Organization, in keeping with its new status of specialized agency, assumed full responsibility for its programme and budget based on assessed contributions of its member countries.

To establish and increase links between potential investors and businessmen in developed countries and enterprises in developing nations, the Organization has set up Investment and Technology Promotion Offices (ITPOs) in Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, China, France, Greece, Italy,

Japan, Korea, Mexico and the UK. Investment Promotion Units (IPUs) are located in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Uganda. A UNIDO Centre for International Industrial Co-operation has been established in Russia. Investment Promotion Agencies (IPAs) operate in Africa and Asia.

Activities

Activities cover macroeconomic and microeconomic aspects of industrial development. At the macroeconomic level, questions are considered concerning: (a) formulation of industrial development policies; (b) application of modern methods of production, programming and planning; (c) building and strengthening of institutions and administration in the field of industrial technology; (d) co-operation with UN regional economic commissions in assisting regional planning of industrial development within the framework of regional and subregional economic groupings; and (e) recommendation of special measures to accelerate the growth of the less advanced among the developing countries. At the microeconomic level, assistance is provided with regard to problems of technical and economic feasibility, external financing for specific industrial projects, product development and design, management, marketing, quality and research.

The Organization is also responsible for proposing measures for the improvement of the international system of industrial property, with a view to accelerating the transfer of technical knowledge to developing countries and strengthening the role of patents consistent with national interests as an incentive to industrial innovations. Technical assistance usually consists of expert services, but sometimes involves the supply of equipment or fellowships for training, such as in management or production. Studies and research programmes, designed to facilitate and support operational activities, include in particular the compilation, analysis, publication and dissemination of information concerning various aspects of the process of industrialization, such as industrial technology, investment, financing, production, management techniques, programming and planning. Seminars and other specialist meetings are organized on a wide range of subjects related to industrial and technological development.

Growing criticism and dissatisfaction with the Organization's practices, especially voiced by

developed member countries, prompted attempts at reshaping and restructuring activities. At the Fifth General Conference, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in December 1993, five fundamental objectives were identified as a framework for future programmes: (a) industrial and technical growth and competitiveness; (b) human resource development; (c) equitable development through industrialization; (d) environmentally sustainable industrial development; and (e) international co-operation in industrial investment and technology. Between 1993 and 1998, major reforms were implemented by the Organization that shifted its programming approach from a project-based to a country-based framework. The role of small and medium-sized enterprises as the principal means for achieving sustainable industrial development has been recognized. Special support is being given to least-developed countries, particularly in Africa. The Organization has become increasingly involved in the implementation of provisions contained in international instruments regarding the environment with special reference to the use of ozone-depleting substances and greenhouse gas emissions. At present, the Organization focuses on three areas: poverty reduction through productive activities; trade capacity building; and energy and the environment.

LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Kandeh K. Yumkella

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5, PO Box 300, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 260 260; fax: +43 1 269 2669)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unido.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *World Industrial Development Report*; *International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics* (annual)

REFERENCES: Y. Lambert, *The United Nations Industrial Development Organization: UNIDO and Problems of International Economic Cooperation* (Westport, CT, 1993); C.A. Magariños *et al.*, *Reforming the UN System: UNIDO's Need-Driven Model* (The Hague, 2001); R. Bredel, *Long-term Conflict Prevention and Industrial Development: The United Nations and its Specialized Agency, UNIDO* (Leiden, 2003)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The Office, formerly called the Office on Drug Control and Crime Prevention, was established to enable the UN to focus and strengthen its capacity to address on a worldwide basis the interrelated issues of drug control, crime prevention and international terrorism in all its forms. The Office is the umbrella organization that makes up the UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP). It also includes the Terrorism Prevention Branch and the Global Programmes against Money Laundering, Corruption, Organized Crime and Trafficking in Human Beings. The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was adopted in 2000 and the UN Convention against Corruption in 2003. Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, the Office has been playing a significant role in the implementation of 12 international terrorism conventions. In this connection, the Office gives member countries a new form of assistance with a view to bringing national legislation in line with international conventions against terrorism. As regards international drug control, the Office supports HIV/AIDS prevention programmes and includes such components in its own programmes to reduce the demand for illicit drugs.

UN International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP)

The Programme has become the single UN body responsible for concerted international actions for drug abuse control.

Origin and development

The Programme – established by the UN General Assembly in December 1990 – integrated fully the structures and functions of the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the UN Secretariat, the Secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the UN Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN structure for drug abuse control. In the light of the structural changes involved with the creation of the Programme, the functioning of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) as a policy-making body has been improved. The UNDCP has become, together with the CICP, an integral part of the UNODC.

Objectives

The Programme deals with: (a) treaty implementation, which integrates, with due regard to treaty arrangements, the functions of the Secretariat of the INCB and the treaty implementation functions of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, taking into account the independent role of INCB; (b) policy implementation and research, with responsibility for implementing policy decisions of the relevant legislative bodies and conducting analytical work; and (c) operational activities, with responsibility for coordinating and carrying out the technical co-operation projects currently executed mainly by the Fund, the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the Secretariat of INCB. Actions to counter narcotics are based on three international drug control treaties: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971; and the Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

Structure

The Programme is headed by an Executive Director, appointed by the Secretary-General. The Executive Director enjoys exclusive responsibility for co-ordinating and providing effective leadership for all UN drug control activities with a view to ensuring coherence of actions within the Programme as well as co-ordination, complementarity and non-duplication of such activities across the UN system. The Programme is supported to a very large extent from voluntary contributions of member countries and private agencies; the remainder comes from the UN regular budget.

Activities

The Executive Director also has direct responsibility for the financial resources of the Fund of the UN International Drug Control Programme – established by the UN General Assembly in 1991 as a successor to UNFDAC – as the major source for financing operational activities of the Programme, especially in developing countries. Activities are carried out on the basis of a three-tiered strategy articulated at the country, regional, and global levels. The Programme served as the focal point for promoting the observance of the UN Decade against Drug Abuse (1991–2000). A network of regional and country field offices has been gradually established throughout the world, especially in countries with multiple drug-related problems.

Centre for International Crime Prevention (CICP)

The Centre is the central entity, established in 1997, responsible for crime prevention, criminal justice and criminal law reform. It carries out the mandates of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) established by the UN Economic and Social Council in 1992. Besides assisting members in the implementation of international standards and norms in these areas, the Centre provides technical assistance to developing countries. Special attention is being paid to combating transnational organized crime, corruption, financial crimes, terrorism and trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation or forced labour. The Centre supported member countries in the preparation of the recently signed UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Over one-third of the Centre's resources comes from voluntary contributions; the remainder comes from the UN regular budget.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNODC: Antonio Maria Costa

HEADQUARTERS: Vienna International Centre, Wagramerstrasse 5, PO Box 500, 1400 Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 260 600; fax: +43 1 26060 5866)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unodc.org>

PUBLICATION: *The World Drug Report*

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The Fund – a subsidiary organ of the UN General Assembly – is the largest internationally funded provider of population assistance to over 150 developing and transition countries and territories.

Origin and development

The UN has been concerned with population problems since 1946, when the Population Commission of the Economic and Social Council was established with a view to improving demographic statistics. Subsequently, the efforts of the General Assembly to shift the emphasis to action-oriented programmes led to the creation in 1967 of the UN Trust Fund for Population Activities. The Trust Fund was charged with the promotion of population programmes and the extension of systematic

and sustained assistance to developing countries, according to their requests. In 1969 the Fund's management was assigned to the Administrator of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Fund itself was renamed the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). Subsequently it officially became a Fund of the General Assembly in 1972 and was made a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly in 1979. In 1987 the name was changed to UN Population Fund but the existing acronym was retained.

A World Population Conference was held in Bucharest, Romania, in 1974 (designated as World Population Year) and adopted the World Population Plan of Action by consensus of 136 countries. An International Conference on Population was held in Mexico City in August 1984 to review and appraise the 1974 Plan of Action and to provide new directions for the coming decades on the integration of population with development. In connection with another periodic review of the 1974 Plan of Action, the UN approved in 1989 the convening of an international meeting on population in 1994. The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, Egypt, from 5 to 13 September 1994, dealt with six high-priority issues: population growth and demographic structure; population policies and programmes; population, the environment and development; population distribution and migration; population and women; and family planning, health and family well-being. The 20-year Programme of Action adopted by the Conference, albeit with reservations expressed by some 20 countries, emphasized the inseparability of population and development and focused on meeting the needs of individuals rather than demographic targets. Empowering women and providing them with more choices through expanded access to education and health services and promoting skill development and employment are the basis of the new approach.

Objectives

The Fund aims to provide additional resources to the UN system for technical co-operation activities in the population field. It is empowered to provide financial support, for periods ranging from three to five years, for national, regional and interregional projects concerning basic population data, population dynamics and policy, family planning, and information and education activities. The major areas covered by the financial assistance granted by

the Fund include: (a) collection and analysis of data on population trends and structure; (b) study of the interrelationship between population and food demand, and other aspects of economic and social development; (c) formulation of appropriate population policies within the context of national development objectives; (d) direct support to national family planning programmes and establishment of demonstration and pilot projects; (e) training of personnel for research and operational activities and improvement of communication techniques; and (f) application of existing methods of fertility regulation and promotion of research in human reproduction.

Structure

The basic guidelines concerning the activities of the Fund are adopted by its governing body, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, providing inter-governmental support to and supervision of the Fund in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. An important role is played by the Fund's Executive Director, based in New York, who is in charge of the general operation and maintains close links with recipient governments, relevant UN agencies and bodies, regional and subregional groups and non-governmental organizations to ensure effective co-ordination in population activities. The Executive Director has the rank of Under-Secretary-General of the UN. Representatives of the Fund and Senior Advisers on Population in the developing countries provide assistance to governments in the formulation of requests for aid in the population field and are responsible for co-ordinating the work of the executing agencies operating in the geographical area within their competence.

Activities

Assistance is generally extended through the UN Regional Economic Commissions and member organizations of the UN system, although in some cases the Fund avails itself of the services of non-governmental organizations or acts as its own executing agency. About two-thirds of the projects financed by the Fund are implemented by agencies within the UN system, and the remainder by recipient governments or by non-governmental organizations. Among executing agencies are the UNDP, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Fund has made a significant contribution towards focusing international attention on the different aspects of population problems and encouraging co-operative efforts to that effect in developing countries and territories. Comprehensive country agreements have been negotiated in order to implement national population programmes while hundreds of projects are being carried out at the regional level. A large number of projects are aimed at supporting national family planning activities; many other important projects are in the areas of collection of basic population data and communication and education.

The Fund aims to enhance the status of women and ensure that their needs are taken into account when development and population programmes are prepared. It also has special programmes on youth, on ageing, and on HIV/AIDS, involving national as well as regional seminars and training programmes. The Fund brings together potential donors and developing countries in need of support for population activities through a system of 'multi-bilateral' funding by: aiding a government in developing a project and seeking assistance from a donor to implement it; enlisting donors' help in the provision of expertise, supplies or funds; creating a trust fund to manage donors' contributions; or jointly financing a project with a donor. The Fund supports programmes in four regions: Arab States, Europe and Central Asia; Asia and the Pacific; Latin America and the Caribbean; and sub-Saharan Africa. The Fund operates through nine Country Technical Services Teams and 112 country offices.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Thoraya Ahmed Obaid

HEADQUARTERS: 220 East 42nd Street, 23rd Fl., New York, NY 10017, USA (telephone: +1 212 297 5000; fax: +1 212 370 0201)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unfpa.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *Dispatches – News from UNFPA* (ten times a year); *State of World Population* (annual); *Inventory of Population Projects in Developing Countries around the World* (annual)

REFERENCES: R.M. Salas, *International Population Assistance: The First Decade. A Look at the Concepts and Policies which Have Guided the UNFPA in its First Ten Years* (Oxford, 1979); N. Sadik (ed.), *Population Policies and Programmes: Lessons Learned*

from Two Decades of Experience (New York, 1991); R.M. Salas, *Population: Conflict to Consensus* (New York, 2000)

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)

The Agency carries out relief and works programmes for Palestinian refugees, providing education, healthcare, social services and emergency aid.

Origin and development

Established as a subsidiary organ by a resolution of the UN General Assembly on 8 December 1949, the Agency began operations on 1 May 1950. Assistance was to be provided to those needy persons, residing in one of the 'host' countries of the Near East, whose normal residence had been in Palestine for a minimum of two years, before the 1948 conflict and who, as a result of the Arab-Israeli hostilities, had lost both their homes and their means of livelihood. The children and grandchildren of registered refugees were also, under certain conditions, eligible for assistance. After the renewal of hostilities in the Middle East in June 1967, the Agency was additionally empowered by the General Assembly to provide humanitarian aid, as far as practicable, on an emergency basis and as a temporary measure, for persons other than Palestine refugees who were newly displaced and in serious need of continued assistance. Assistance is also extended, at the request and on behalf of the government of Jordan, to displaced persons in eastern Jordan who are not registered refugees of 1948. Following the signing of the Declaration of Principles by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel in September 1993, the Agency launched in October of the same year a Peace Implementation Programme (PIP) aimed at supporting the peace process through the creation of jobs and the improvement of services and the socio-economic infrastructure. The first phase of PIP received \$83 million in funding for projects in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Jericho area and \$10 million for Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. The total funding of projects (including those of the second phase – PIP II) has amounted to over \$250 million for around 500 projects.

Objectives

The Agency aims to provide direct relief, health, education and welfare services as well as long-term rehabilitation and vocational training for Palestine refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The mandate of the Agency has been repeatedly renewed by the UN General Assembly, most recently extending it until 30 June 2008.

Structure

A Commissioner-General is responsible for the Agency's operations (supervision, planning and budgeting), with the assistance of an Advisory Commission consisting of the representatives of 10 countries (Belgium, Egypt, France, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, the UK, and the US). The Vienna headquarters have been relocated to the area of operations, in Gaza and Amman, in July 1996. Close co-operative links are maintained by the Agency with several UN bodies and specialized institutions such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Activities

The Agency depends to a very great extent on voluntary contributions, almost entirely on the part of governments and the European Commission, the remainder being provided by other sources such as voluntary groups and organizations, and business corporations. Services included in the Agency's regular programmes are provided by a staff of more than 24,000, most of whom are themselves Palestine refugees working as teachers, doctors, nurses or social workers. An estimated one-third of the total refugee population, about 1.3 million, is living in 58 different refugee camps, while the remaining refugees have settled in towns and villages already existing. Relief services concentrate on providing food and other welfare assistance to destitute refugees; this programme replaces the general distribution of basic food rations discontinued in 1982.

The Agency's humanitarian role has been steadily growing because of the recurrent conflicts in the Middle East, such as the civil war in Lebanon, the Palestinian uprisings and the Gulf crisis. Essential services are provided by the Agency to over 4.4 million Palestine refugees living in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. Since the most recent escalation of violence

with further deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation, the Agency has been conducting emergency operations in the West Bank and Gaza.

COMMISSIONER-GENERAL: Karen Koning AbuZayd

HEADQUARTERS GAZA: Gamal Abdul Nasser Street, Gaza City; Postal address: HQ Gaza, PO Box 140157, Amman 11814, Jordan (telephone: +972 8 677 7333; fax: +972 8 677 7555)

HEADQUARTERS AMMAN: Bayader Wadi Seer, Amman; Postal address: PO Box 140157, Amman 11814, Jordan (telephone: +962 6 582 6171-6; fax: +962 6 582 6177)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unrwa.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report of the Commissioner-General*; *Palestine Refugees Today* (quarterly newsletter); *UNRWA Report* (quarterly); *A Survey of United Nations Assistance to Palestine* (every two years)

REFERENCES: B.N. Schiff, *Refugees unto the Third Generation: UN Aid to Palestinians* (Syracuse, NY, 1955); E.H. Buehrig, *The UN and the Palestinian Refugees: A Study in Nonterritorial Administration* (Bloomington, IN, 1971); M. Viorst, *Reaching for the Olive Branch: UNRWA and Peace in the Middle East* (Washington, DC, 1989)

Universal Postal Union (UPU)

The Union is among the oldest intergovernmental organizations still in existence and has played a leading role in the field of international postal co-operation for over 130 years.

Origin and development

A Treaty concerning the Establishment of a General Postal Union (Berne Treaty) was signed on 9 October 1874 in Berne, Switzerland, by the representatives of 20 European countries, joined by Egypt and the US; the Treaty came into force in July 1875. The original name of General Postal Union was replaced by Universal Postal Union in 1878. The Union became a specialized agency in relationship with the UN under the terms of an agreement concluded in July 1947 and entered into effect on 1 July 1948; a supplementary agreement was signed in July 1949.

The Postal Congress held in Vienna in 1964 brought about a major structural change by drawing up for the Union a separate and permanent basic Act (Constitution). The Constitution containing the organic rules of the Union was adopted in July 1964 and came into force in January 1966. It was amended by the Congresses held in 1969 (Tokyo), 1974 (Lausanne), 1984 (Hamburg), 1989 (Washington DC), 1994 (Seoul) and 1999 (Beijing). The General Regulations embody the provisions ensuring the application of the Constitution and the working of the Union. For their part, the Universal Postal Convention and its Detailed Regulations establish the rules applicable throughout the international postal service and the provisions concerning the letter post services. All these Acts are binding on all member countries; since 191 countries participate in the Union, the provisions embodied in the Acts affect virtually the entire population of the world. Optional agreements, supplemented by the relevant regulations, govern the operation of postal services as regards the handling of insured values, parcels, postal money orders and cheques, account transfers, cash on delivery items, collection of bills, savings and subscriptions to newspapers and periodicals. The provisions of the Constitution authorize member countries to establish Restricted Unions and to conclude special agreements on the postal service. However, conditions for the public must not be less favourable than those laid down in the Acts of the Union.

Members of the UN may accede to the Union, in conformity with current provisions; any sovereign country not belonging to the UN may be admitted to the Union if the request is approved by at least two-thirds of the member countries. Each member country may withdraw from the Union by notice of denunciation of the Constitution given through diplomatic channels to the Swiss Government; withdrawal becomes effective one year thereafter.

Membership

There are 191 member countries, including the Holy See.

Objectives

The aim of the Union is to secure the organization and improvement of the postal services and to promote the development of technical assistance and international collaboration. To this end, member countries are considered to form a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of letter

post items; freedom of transit is guaranteed throughout the entire territory of the Union.

The concept of letter post applies to the following categories of items: letters (including aerogrammes), postcards, printed matter, literature in raised relief for the blind, and small packets. Rates, maximum and minimum weight and size limits, as well as conditions of acceptance, are fixed according to the Universal Postal Convention. The Convention prescribes the methods for calculating and collecting transit charges (for letter post items passing through the territories of one or more countries) and terminal dues (that is the compensation payments which an administration that receives more letter post items than it sends has the right to collect from the dispatching administration). Regulations are also established with regard to the registered items service and the air conveyance of mail and of the objects such as infectious and radioactive substances whose transport requires special precautions.

Structure

The main organs of the Union are the Universal Postal Congress, the Council of Administration, the Postal Operations Council, the Consultative Committee and the International Bureau. The Congress, composed of representatives of all member countries, is the supreme authority of the Union, used to meet every five years to review the Universal Postal Convention and its subsidiary agreements. The Congress held in Bucharest in 2004 amended the Constitution and decided to hold future meetings every four years. An Extraordinary Congress may be convened at the request or with the consent of at least two-thirds of member countries. The Council of Administration consists of 40 members elected by Congress with due regard for equitable geographical representation plus one member to represent the host country of the previous Congress. Meeting each year at the Union's headquarters in Berne, the Council of Administration ensures the continuity of the work of the Union between Congresses, maintains close contact with postal administrations, supervises to some extent the activities of the International Bureau, undertakes studies of administrative, legislative and legal problems of interest to the postal service, draws up proposals and makes recommendations to the Congress. It is also responsible for encouraging, supervising and co-ordinating international co-operation in the form of postal technical assistance and vocational training. The

Postal Operations Council, composed of 40 members elected by the Congress on a geographical basis, deals with operational, commercial, technical and economic questions concerning the postal service. The Consultative Committee, created on 16 September 2004 by the Bucharest Congress, is the youngest institution of the Union aimed to give postal stakeholders other than public postal operators and regulators a voice in the Union's deliberations. The Consultative Committee groups non-governmental organizations representing customers, delivery service providers, workers' organizations, suppliers of goods and services to the postal sector and other organizations having an interest in international postal services.

Since the establishment of the Union, a central office known as the International Bureau has functioned in Berne. Besides serving as the permanent Secretariat of the Union, it provides liaison, information, consultation and certain financial services for postal administrations and acts as a focal point for the co-ordination and execution of technical co-operation of all types in the postal sphere. The International Bureau is headed by a Director-General and placed under the general supervision of the Swiss government.

Each Congress fixes the maximum amount which the ordinary expenditure of the Union may reach for the period between one meeting and the other; the annual budget of the Union is approved by the Council of Administration.

Activities

The establishment of the Union has made it possible to conduct international postal exchanges under principles and practices which are largely standardized. Over the past decades the Union has managed to adjust to the new requirements of technology and development in the postal field fostering technical co-operation activities in sectors such as planning, organization, management, operations, training and financial services. To this end, the Union has recruited and sent experts, consultants or volunteers, granted vocational training or further training fellowships for individual or group courses and supplied equipment and training and demonstration aids. A major future role for the Union will

consist in the development and monitoring of standards for the provision of universal postal service – including access to service, efficiency, customer satisfaction, security and reasonable pricing – with a view to ensuring that the changing needs of postal customers are addressed effectively.

External relations

The Union co-operates closely with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and executes country and inter-country projects covering practically all aspects of the postal services; priority is given to the needs of the administrations of the postally least developed countries. The Union is in close contact with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for the preparation and implementation of joint technical assistance projects, especially in the vocational training field. Co-operative relations are also maintained with other UN specialized agencies such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for the development of air mail traffic, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the postal conveyance of radioactive substances, and the World Health Organization (WHO) for the transport of perishable biological substances. In addition, contact committees have been set up with several other intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: French

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Edouard Dayan

HEADQUARTERS: Weltpoststrasse 4, 3000 Bern 15, Switzerland (telephone: +41 31 350 3111; fax: +41 31 350 3110)

WEBSITE: <http://www.upu.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Union Postale* (quarterly); *Postal Statistics*

REFERENCES: J.F. Sly, *The Genesis of the Universal Postal Union: A Study in the Beginnings of International Organization* (New York, 1927); G.A. Codding Jr, *The Universal Postal Union: Coordinator of the International Mails* (New York, 1964)

Wassenaar Arrangement (WA)

The Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies is the first global multilateral framework designed to promote transparency, exchange of views and information and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional armaments and dual-use items.

Origin and development

The Arrangement represents a successor regime to the Co-ordinating Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (Cocom), established in 1949 by major Western countries to prevent arms transfers to the USSR and its allies throughout the world. In the light of the end of the Cold War, members of Cocom decided to establish a new arrangement to deal with emerging risks to regional and international security and stability. At the meeting held in Wassenaar, the Netherlands, on 29–30 March 1994, the decision was taken to terminate Cocom on 31 March 1994. Broad agreement on a new arrangement, named after Wassenaar, was reached on 19 December 1995. The inaugural plenary meeting of the participating countries began on 2–3 April 1996 in Vienna, where the Secretariat of the newly-created organization was to be located. Differences on a number of questions led to a suspension of the meeting which resumed on 11–12 July 1996 when final consensus on the 'Initial Elements', the basic document of the Arrangement, was eventually reached by the 33 founding members. Amendments to the 'Initial Elements' were introduced in 2001. The new organization, focused on non-proliferation export controls as opposed to the previous East–West control of advanced technology, began operations in September 1996. All measures with respect to the Arrangement are taken in accordance with national legislation and policies and are implemented on the basis of the discretion of each country that remains ultimately responsible for decisions concerning its own arms sales.

Membership

The 40 members include the European Union (EU) countries (except Cyprus), plus Croatia, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and, outside the European continent, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, South Africa and the US. Participation in the Arrangement is

open, on a global and non-discriminatory basis, to prospective adherents willing to commit themselves to the application of effective export policies and controls on arms and arms-related technologies, and to regular consultation and exchange of information and intelligence.

Objectives

The Arrangement has been established to contribute to regional and international security and stability by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies. Participating countries commit themselves, through their national policies, to ensure that transfers of sensitive items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities that undermine the Arrangement's basic goals. The decision to transfer or deny transfer of any item remains the sole responsibility of each participating country. The Arrangement complements, without duplication, the existing regimes for non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems by focusing on threats to international and regional peace and security that may arise from transfers of armaments and sensitive dual-use items.

Structure

The Wassenaar Plenary consists of representatives of participating countries and normally meets once a year in Vienna where the Arrangement's Secretariat is located. Decisions are made by consensus. The Plenary establishes subsidiary bodies and calls *ad hoc* meetings whenever necessary.

Activities

Information exchange requirements covered by the Arrangement regard at present seven categories derived from the UN Register of Conventional Arms. Member countries are also under the obligation to report transfers or denials of transfers of a number of controlled dual-use items. Control lists are periodically amended on the basis of the experience gained and taking into consideration advances in technology and market availability. An effort is being made to achieve greater transparency by identifying more clearly the most sensitive items on the control lists. Participating countries have agreed to support, by all appropriate means, multilateral efforts to prevent illegal arms transfers to terrorist

groups and to all governments and groups subject to embargoes applied under UN Security Council resolutions.

External relations

The participating countries are taking the necessary steps to broaden the Arrangement's outreach to non-members as well as to the relevant international institutions concerning other export control regimes.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE: English

SECRETARIAT: Vienna, Austria (telephone: +43 1 960 03; fax: +43 1 960 031/032)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wassenaar.org>

West African Economic and Monetary Union

[*Union économique et monétaire ouest-africaine*] (UEMOA)

The Union is aimed at promoting monetary and economic convergence between member countries and at furthering regional integration.

Origin and development

The creation of the new organization practically coincided with the dissolution of the West African Economic Community [Communauté économique de l'Afrique de l'Ouest] (CEAO) that had been operating in the region since 1974. The Union was established by a treaty signed on 10 January 1994 by the Heads of State and Government of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo; the treaty entered into effect on 1 August 1994. Guinea-Bissau joined as a full member on 2 May 1997. An Additional Act concerning the Pact of convergence, stability, growth and solidarity among member countries was adopted on 29 January 2003 to relaunch co-operation efforts in the region.

Membership

Eight countries in the subregion.

Objectives

The Union fosters economic and monetary co-operation by facilitating the movement of goods, services, labour and capital between members. The attainment of regional peace and security is now considered to be among the Union's goals.

Structure

The Conference of Heads of State is the supreme organ meeting at least once a year and deciding by unanimity on all outstanding issues. The Council of Ministers, meeting at least twice a year and consisting of two ministers from each member country, is in charge of the monetary and credit policies of the Union. The Commission of the Union performs under its President the administrative and other functions delegated by the Council of Ministers.

Activities

All member countries of the Union use a common currency, that is the franc of the Communauté financière africaine (CFA franc) whose central issuing bank is the Banque centrale des états de l'Afrique de l'ouest, established in 1955 and based in Dakar. In response to repeated calls from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the French government, the countries using the CFA franc, which include all members of the Union plus six other French-speaking countries in Central Africa, devalued the currency by 50 per cent in January 1994. The new exchange rate was intended to alleviate balance-of-payments difficulties and restore the competitiveness of the countries involved in the devaluation. The CFA franc has been pegged to the euro, via the French franc, since 1999.

Import duties among member countries have been gradually reduced but a full customs union is not yet in operation.

External relations

The future of the organization will depend to some extent on the relationship which will develop with other regional institutions, in particular the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

LANGUAGE: French

PRESIDENT OF THE COMMISSION: Soumaïla Cissé

HEADQUARTERS: 380 rue Agostino Neto, 01 BP 543, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (telephone: +226 50 318873; fax: +226 50 318872)

PUBLICATION: *La Semaine de l'UEMOA* (weekly)

WEBSITE: <http://www.uemoa.int>

REFERENCE: E. Hernández-Cata *et al.*, *The West African Economic and Monetary Union: Recent Developments and Policy Issues* (Washington, DC, 1998)

Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC)

FOUNDED: November 1973 and restructured December 1978. Revised Statutes approved in November 2006

OBJECTIVES: To promote international co-operation for the conservation, development and utilization of all living marine resources that are of interest for two or more countries

MEMBERS: The Commission covers all marine waters of the Western Central Atlantic Ocean and groups 32 countries and the European Community (EC)

STRUCTURE: The meetings of the Commission are held at least once every two years. Subsidiary bodies may be established on an *ad hoc* basis. The Director-General appoints the Secretary of the Commission

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

HEADQUARTERS: PO Box 631 C, Barbados (telephone: +246 426 7110; fax: +246 426 7111)

WEBSITE: <http://www.fao.org/fi/body/rfb/wecafc>

Western European Union (WEU)

The Union played a significant role in promoting the unity and encouraging the progressive integration of Europe through the co-ordination of the defence policy and equipment of member countries as well as through consultation and co-operation with regard to political and economic matters. Over the past few years the Union had been drawn closer to the European Union (EU) to which the crisis management functions were transferred by mid-2001. At present, the residual functions of the Union essentially relate to two articles of the modified Brussels Treaty: Article V (mutual defence clause) and Article IX (institutional dialogue with the Assembly).

Origin and development

The Union was the successor of the five-power Brussels Treaty Organization established in 1948. Growing concern over the security of Western Europe had prompted the governments of Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and the UK

to sign a 50-year Treaty of Economic, Social and Cultural Collaboration and Collective Self-Defence, with a view, *inter alia*, to taking 'such steps as may be held necessary in the event of renewal by Germany of a policy of aggression'. The Treaty was signed in Brussels on 17 March 1948 and entered into force the following August.

The realization of the inadequacy of the Brussels Treaty Organization to ensure regional security, and the need to involve the US in any serious effort to build up an effective machinery for collective self-defence, led to the creation in 1949 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In December 1950, the Brussels Treaty Organization transferred its defence functions to the NATO command but retained its competence concerning the economic, social and cultural aspects, in spite of the creation of the Council of Europe in 1949. After the collapse of plans for a European Defence Community (EDC), and the decision of the NATO Council to incorporate the Federal Republic of Germany into the Western system of collective security, a conference was held in London between September and October 1954, with the participation of the signatories to the 1948 Brussels Treaty plus Canada, Germany, Italy and the US. The decisions of the conference were embodied in a series of protocols amending and completing the Brussels Treaty which were signed in Paris on 23 October 1954. The Protocols provided, *inter alia*, for the transformation of the Brussels Treaty Organization into the Western European Union, with the inclusion of Germany and Italy as full members; the ending of the occupation regime in the Federal Republic of Germany and the invitation to the latter to join NATO; and the setting up of an Agency for the Control of Armaments. The Protocols entered into force on 6 May 1955, thus bringing the then seven-member Union formally into existence. According to Article V of the modified Brussels Treaty, if any member country 'should be the object of an armed attack in Europe', the other countries will afford the member so attacked 'all military and other aid and assistance in their power'.

One of the first important tasks of the newly created Union concerned the establishment of an international regime for the Saar territory. Under a Franco-German agreement of October 1954, the Saar was to be granted a statute, within the framework of the Union, subject to approval by the population. In October 1955, the statute was rejected by

referendum in favour of return to Germany. The full political and economic reintegration of the Saar territory with Germany was achieved between January 1957 and July 1959. Another important sphere of competence of the Union disappeared in June 1960 when its social and cultural activities were handed over to the Council of Europe.

After a long period of uncertainty about its basic tasks, a new *raison d'être* for the Union was found at a meeting of the Foreign and Defence Ministers of the member countries, held in Rome in October 1984, when the decision was taken to 'reactivate' the Union through a restructuring of the organizational mechanism and the holding of more frequent ministerial meetings to harmonize views on defence and security issues. According to the Rome Declaration, the task of the Union was 'not only to contribute to the security of Western Europe but also to improve the common defence of all the countries of the Atlantic Alliance'.

A 'Platform on European Security Interests' was adopted in October 1987 by the Union's Ministerial Council at The Hague. The Platform recalled, *inter alia*, the member countries' commitment 'to build a European Union in accordance with the Single European Act', adopted within the European Community's framework and entered into force in July 1987.

The early 1990s saw a remarkable expansion in the Union's membership. Portugal and Spain were admitted in November 1990; Greece became the tenth member in November 1995. Iceland, Norway and Turkey (all three belonging to NATO but not to the EU) have acceded as associate members but fully participate in most activities. Austria, Denmark, Finland, Ireland and Sweden – all of them EU members – enjoy observer status. In May 1994 nine Central and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia) were granted the newly created status of associate partners of the Union, followed by Slovenia in June 1996; the associate partnership was linked to the conclusion of 'Europe Agreements' with the EU. In March 1999, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland saw their status upgraded to associate membership, following their admission to NATO. In total 28 countries have been involved, in different degrees and with different responsibilities, in the process of shaping new security conditions in Europe.

Membership

There are 10 full members plus 18 countries with various forms of association (6 associate members, 5 observers and 7 associate partners).

Structure

In order to ensure the achievement of the aims of the Union, and closer co-operation between themselves and with other European organizations, the member countries had established a Council to consider matters concerning the execution of the Treaty, its Protocols and their Annexes. The Council, consisting of the Foreign and Defence Ministers of member countries, met twice a year in the capital or other town of the presiding country. The presidency, hitherto rotating annually, was reduced to a six-month period from July 1994 to coincide with the periods of the EU presidency. The Permanent Council met regularly at ambassadorial level, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, at the seat of the Secretariat in Brussels. As a rule, decisions were taken unanimously only on questions for which no other voting procedure had been agreed. In the cases provided for in the relevant Protocols, the Council was to follow the prescribed voting procedures, varying from unanimity to two-thirds or simple majority.

The Council was responsible for: formulating basic policies and issuing directives to the Secretary-General and the various bodies of the Union; ensuring the closest co-operation with NATO; making an annual report on its activities to the Assembly. No ministerial Councils have been convened since November 2000; since July 2001 decisions have been taken by written procedure for management and administrative purposes and approval of the budgets.

The Assembly, composed of the same representatives of the Union's member countries to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, met twice a year, usually in Paris. The Secretariat of the Union, under a Secretary-General assisted by a Deputy Secretary-General, had been originally established in London. In January 1993, the Secretariat was transferred to Brussels to ensure close co-operation with the EU and NATO. In November 1999, the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy of the EU, Javier Solana, also took up the post of Secretary-General of the Union.

The WEU Institute for Security Studies was set up in July 1990 in Paris with the task of assisting in

the development of a European security identity. The WEU Satellite Centre was inaugurated in April 1993 in Torrejón, Spain, to analyse satellite data in support of operations involving the Union.

Activities

The dramatic changes in Eastern Europe and the USSR in 1989 and in 1990 deeply affected the European security architecture and resulted, *inter alia*, in the expansion of the role and operational capabilities of the Union. The Union also took part in the co-ordination of the military response of Western European countries to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in August 1990. Thus the concept began to emerge of a stronger Union, eventually equipped to take immediate action in periods of crisis. The Union's Declarations adopted at Maastricht in December 1991 and at Petersberg (near Bonn) in June 1992 laid the foundations for a truly operational role of the organization in crisis management, peacekeeping, peace enforcement and humanitarian as well as search and rescue missions ('Petersberg tasks'). Member countries of the Union began operations in the Adriatic and the Danube in July 1992, in co-ordination with NATO, to monitor compliance with the UN embargo against the 'Federal Republic of Yugoslavia' (Serbia and Montenegro); a single command and control system was subsequently agreed upon with NATO. The Union also sent police officers to Mostar to support the establishment of the EU Administration.

The 1992 Maastricht Treaty described the Union as 'an integral part' of the development of the EU and invited it 'to elaborate and implement decisions and actions' of the EU itself, having defence implications. A Declaration on Western European Union by its member countries was annexed to the Maastricht Treaty.

The Lisbon Ministerial Council of May 1995 adopted important decisions to enhance the Union's operational mechanism, including the creation of a new Politico-Military Group assisting the Council, a Situation Centre, and an Intelligence Section, and strengthening the Secretariat. The Union welcomed in 1995 the creation decided by France, Italy, Portugal and Spain of a land force (Eurofor) to ensure rapid reaction in the Southern region and of a maritime force (Euomarfor); both forces, like other European multinational forces, were to be available to the Union as well as to NATO.

The Union was drawn closer to the EU following the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997. It

was stressed that the Union was to provide the EU with access to an operational capability, the 'Petersberg tasks' were incorporated into the Treaty on European Union, and the possibility of integrating the Union into the EU was expressly envisaged. At the Cologne European Council in June 1999, a declaration was adopted to strengthen the common European policy on security and defence and to give the EU the military and decision-making capacity necessary to fulfil the 'Petersberg tasks'. The European Council also provided for the transfer from the Union to the EU of the relevant functions. The Union's Ministerial Council held at Marseille on 13 November 2000 approved for its part the absorption of tasks and structures into the EU and decided that the Union's residual functions and structures would be in place by 1 July 2001 at the latest. The Union's military staff has ceased its activities. The Institute for Security Studies and the Satellite Centre left the Union's framework on 1 January 2002 to become EU agencies. The modified Brussels Treaty, however, retains its political potential for as long as it remains in force.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Javier Solana

HEADQUARTERS: 15 rue de l'Association, 1000 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 500 4412; fax: +32 2 500 4470)

WEBSITE: <http://www.weu.int>

REFERENCES: A. Cahen, *The Western European Union and NATO: Building a European Defence Identity within the Context of Atlantic Solidarity* (London, 1989); A. Podraza, *The Western European Union and Central Europe: A New Relationship* (London, 1992); A. Bloed and R.A. Wessel (eds), *The Changing Functions of the Western European Union: Introduction and Basic Documents* (Dordrecht, 1994); A. Deighton (ed.), *Western European Union 1954–1997: Defence, Security, Integration* (Oxford, 1997); G.W. Rees, *The Western European Union at the Crossroads: between Trans-Atlantic Solidarity and European Integration* (Boulder, CO, 1998)

World Bank Group

The World Bank Group consists of five agencies specialized in different aspects of development but

using their comparative advantages to pursue the same basic goals of poverty reduction and improvement of living standards. The World Bank Group incorporates the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA). The term World Bank refers to IBRD and IDA only.

World Conservation Union (IUCN)

FOUNDED: October 1948 as International Union for the Protection of Nature (IUPN). Name changed in 1956 to International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

OBJECTIVES: To secure the conservation of nature, especially of biological diversity, to ensure the use of natural resources in an equitable and sustainable way, and to develop programmes to protect and sustain threatened species and eco-systems. The Union maintains a library and documentation centre as well as units to monitor traffic in wildlife

MEMBERS: 84 countries, 108 government agencies and over 800 non-governmental organizations, both international and national. About 10,000 internationally-recognized scientists and experts from 181 countries volunteer their services to the Union's commissions

STRUCTURE: The World Conservation Congress is the General Assembly of the Union, meeting every four years to direct activities and approve the programme

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR GENERAL: Julia Marton-Lefèvre

HEADQUARTERS: 28 rue Mauverney, 1196 Gland, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 999 0000; fax: +41 22 999 0002)

WEBSITE: <http://www.iucn.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *IUCN Today* (bi-monthly newsletter); *World Conservation Strategy*; *Red List of Threatened Species*

REFERENCES: J.A. McNeely, *Conservation and the Future: Trends and Options Toward the Year 2025* (Gland, Switzerland, 1997); J. Olivier, *L'Union Mondiale pour la Nature. Une organisation singulière*

au service du droit de l'environnement (Brussels, 2005)

World Customs Organization (WCO)

[*Organisation mondiale des douanes (OMD)*]

The Organization carries out worldwide co-operation in customs matters in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of customs administrations.

Origin and development

The Convention establishing the Customs Co-operation Council (CCC), the predecessor of WCO, was signed on 15 December 1950 by the representatives of the 13 countries participating in the Committee for European Economic Co-operation and entered into force on 4 November 1952; the Council started operations on 16 January 1953. The original goal had been the study of the feasibility of a customs union in Europe but subsequent difficulties led to a more modest attempt at standardizing customs definitions and procedures. The signatory countries of the Convention for the creation of the Council also adopted the Brussels Definition of Value and the Brussels Nomenclature. In June 1994 the Council adopted the new name of World Customs Organization to better reflect the 'nature and worldwide status' of the body.

Membership

Membership currently includes 171 countries or territories.

Objectives

The Organization's aims are to study questions relating to co-operation in customs matters with a view to attaining harmony and uniformity, to prepare draft conventions and recommendations, to ensure uniform interpretation and application of customs conventions and to circulate information on customs regulations and procedures.

Structure

The Council is the top decision-making organ meeting annually with the participation of all members. It is assisted by the Policy Commission – in operation since 1979 and including a representative group of the Council's members – which acts as a steering committee. Financial advice is provided by the Finance Committee. A number of subsidiary committees deal with the more technical aspects,

overseeing implementation of the relevant agreements. The Secretariat performs administrative tasks. The Customs Co-operation Fund was created in 1984 to help train national customs officers.

Activities

The radical modification of economic and trade structures in Central and Eastern Europe and the former republics of the USSR has opened up new opportunities for the Organization from simplification and standardization of customs declarations and procedures to technical assistance in the field of training. The fight against widespread commercial fraud, smuggling and drug trafficking as well as protection of intellectual property rights are among the major challenges presently facing the Organization.

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Michel Danet

HEADQUARTERS: 30 rue du Marché, 1210 Brussels, Belgium (telephone: +32 2 209 9211; fax: +32 2 209 9292)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wcoomd.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Bulletin* (annual); *WCO News* (periodical); technical handbooks and brochures.

World Food Programme (WFP)

The Programme, sponsored jointly by the UN and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), is the largest international food aid organization in the world, called to stimulate socio-economic development through aid in the form of food and to provide emergency relief.

Origin and development

The Programme became operational in January 1963 after parallel resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly and the FAO Conference in late 1961.

The Programme is among the most important UN assistance sources in terms of actual transfer of resources and is now the largest source of grant assistance within the UN system, the largest provider of grant assistance to environmental protection and improvement, and the largest purchaser of food and services in developing countries. It has also become the main channel for and

co-ordinator of food aid for refugees. More than one-third of the world's food aid is handled by the Programme. Member countries of the UN and the FAO make voluntary contributions to the Programme of commodities, cash and services (particularly shipping).

Membership

Member countries of the UN and/or FAO.

Objectives

The food is used for economic and social development projects in the developing countries and for emergency relief for victims of natural and man-made disasters. The Programme aims to eradicate chronic malnourishment in developing countries, addressing its causes, essentially poverty and lack of opportunity.

Structure

The Executive Board has been in charge of the supervision of the Programme since 1996 when it replaced the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA). The Board meets four times a year and consists of 36 members elected for staggered three-year terms; half the members are elected by the UN Economic and Social Council and half by the FAO Council. It provides the framework for intergovernmental consultations on food aid programmes and policies at both national and international level, reviews general trends in food aid requirements and availabilities, prepares proposals for the co-ordination of the various programmes, and approves projects and programmes submitted by the Executive Director. The Board reports every year to the UN Economic and Social Council and to the FAO Council on its activities.

The Executive Director is appointed jointly by the UN Secretary-General and the Director-General of the FAO. Besides six regional bureaux, the Programme administers some 90 country offices in order to provide, at the local level, operational, financial and management support.

Activities

The projects to which the Programme commits food aid fall into two broad categories: human resource development for improving the people's nutritional, physical, and educational well-being; agricultural and rural development projects for creating jobs and increasing food production. Priority is given to low-income, food-deficit countries and to

groups such as pregnant women, young mothers and children. Some projects are especially intended to alleviate the consequences of structural adjustment programmes, undertaken by many developing countries, which frequently involve substantial reductions in public expenditure and subsidies for basic foods.

Food may also be used in low-income countries as a partial substitute for cash wages paid to workers in labour-intensive projects of many kinds (particularly in the rural economy), or may be provided to families resettled for development purposes until first crops are harvested on the new land. The Programme supports institutional feeding schemes where the main emphasis is on enabling the beneficiaries to have an adequate and balanced diet through operations such as school feeding programmes and supplementary feeding of most vulnerable groups. Help is also extended to meet emergency food needs created by earthquakes, typhoons, floods and other natural disasters.

Because of the escalation in the number, scale and duration of emergencies throughout the world, particularly those caused by armed conflict, the Programme allocates about two-thirds of its resources to emergency relief assistance, the remainder going to development projects intended to free people from the need for food aid itself. The Programme is concentrating more and more on the link between relief and development activities, trying to ensure that short-term recovery and longer-term rehabilitation and development are mutually integrated.

The Programme enjoys a wide base of support. Substantial amounts of food are supplied by the world's biggest exporters and cash resources are provided by other high-income countries. These donors include, among others, the US, the European Union (EU) as well as its member countries, Canada, the Scandinavian countries, Australia and Japan. Although the most frequently donated commodities are grains, the Programme also handles substantial quantities of milk powder and high-protein food blends, and smaller quantities of other products such as cooking oil, salt and sugar. It is thus possible to provide beneficiaries with balanced diets and to cater for differing food habits. Usually, food aid is combined with non-food contributions to the recipient country.

The Programme also administers the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) – established by the UN General Assembly with a

minimum target of 500,000 tonnes of cereals – to face emergency needs around the world.

Since its foundation, the Programme has fed more than 1.4 billion of the world's poorest people and invested more than \$30 billion in development and emergency relief. In 2006 beneficiaries of the Programme were nearly 88 million hungry people in 78 countries worldwide.

External relations

The Programme co-operates closely with other UN bodies, such as the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and with private agencies and donor countries. Nearly 2000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play an increasingly larger role in the delivery and monitoring of food aid and the provision of non-food items. In several large-scale relief operations, from Africa and Asia to the former Yugoslavia, the Programme has taken a leading role in co-ordinating food aid deliveries and/or distribution to recipients.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Spanish

WORKING LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Josette Sheeran

HEADQUARTERS: Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68–70, Parco dei Medici, 00148 Rome, Italy (telephone: +39 06 65131; fax: +39 06 6513 2840)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wfp.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; Food and Nutrition Handbook; WFP in Action*

REFERENCE: R.B. Talbot, *The Four World Food Agencies in Rome: FAO, WFP, WFC, IFAD* (Ames, IA, 1990)

World Health Organization (WHO)

The basic aim of the Organization is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health; health is defined as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity'.

Origin and development

The International Office of Public Health – Office international de l'hygiène publique (OIHP) – was established in Paris in 1903 and can be regarded as

a predecessor of the present Organization. Another specialized health body was subsequently set up within the framework of the League of Nations and based in Geneva. In the western hemisphere, an International Sanitary Bureau had been established in Washington DC, in 1902; the original name was changed to Pan American Sanitary Bureau in 1923, to Pan American Sanitary Organization in 1947, and eventually to Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) in 1958.

The need for the early establishment of a single international body dealing with health issues had been stressed in a declaration adopted at the UN San Francisco Conference in 1945. An International Health Conference was convened by the UN in 1946 in New York to consider the creation of a global institution co-ordinating and directing health activities; it resulted in the adoption, on 22 July 1946, of the Constitution of the present Organization, which entered into force on 7 April 1948 when the prescribed number of ratifications had been reached. Amendments to the Constitution have been introduced on a number of occasions. The Organization concluded a relationship agreement with the UN and became a specialized agency on 10 July 1948. Another agreement was concluded with the then Pan American Sanitary Organization, which began to serve as a regional office for the American continent.

Members of the UN may accede to the Organization, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Any sovereign country, not a member of the UN, may be admitted to the Organization if the relevant request is approved by a simple majority vote of the World Health Assembly. Territories or groups of territories not responsible for the conduct of their international relations may be granted associate membership by the World Health Assembly upon application made on their behalf by the full member having responsibility for their international relations. The World Health Assembly may suspend from the rights and privileges of membership any country if it fails to meet its financial obligations to the Organization or in any other exceptional circumstances.

Membership

The present membership of the Organization includes 193 countries.

Objectives

The Organization acts as the central authority on international health work and establishes and main-

tains effective collaboration with international agencies and bodies, national health administrations and professional groups. It assists governments in: strengthening health services; stimulating and advancing work to eradicate epidemic, endemic and other diseases; promoting maternal and child health, mental health, medical research and the prevention of accidental injuries; improving standards of teaching and training in the health, medical and related professions; and promoting the improvement of nutrition, housing, sanitation, recreation, economic or working conditions and other aspects of environmental hygiene. The Organization is also empowered: to propose conventions, agreements and regulations and to make recommendations about international health matters; to revise the international nomenclatures of diseases, causes of death and public health practices; to establish and promote international standards concerning food, biological, pharmaceutical and similar products.

Structure

The work of the Organization is carried out by three principal organs: the World Health Assembly, the Executive Board and the Secretariat. The Assembly is composed of delegates of all member countries, chosen from among persons most qualified by their technical competence and preferably representing national health administrations. It meets in regular annual sessions, usually in May, and in such special sessions as may be necessary. Its main functions are: to determine basic policies and guidelines; to elect the members entitled to designate a person to serve on the Executive Board; to appoint the Director-General; to review and approve reports and activities of the Executive Board and the Director-General and to issue instructions to them; to supervise financial policies and to approve the budget; and to promote and conduct research in the field of health. The Assembly may adopt, with respect to any matter within the competence of the Organization and by a two-thirds majority, conventions or agreements which shall come into force for each member accepting them in accordance with its constitutional processes. Members that do not accept a convention or an agreement within the established time limit must state the reasons for non-acceptance. The Assembly has authority to adopt regulations concerning: sanitary and quarantine requirements and other procedures designed to prevent the international spread of disease; nomenclatures of

diseases, causes of death and public health practices; standards covering diagnostic procedures for international use; standards with respect to the safety, purity and potency of biological, pharmaceutical and similar products moving in international commerce; and advertising and labelling of these same products. Decisions of the Assembly on important questions such as the adoption of conventions or agreements, the approval of co-operation agreements with other intergovernmental organizations and amendments to the Constitution are made by a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting; simple majority suffices with respect to other questions.

The Executive Board meets at least twice a year and is composed of 34 health experts designated for a three-year period by, but not representing, as many member countries elected by the World Health Assembly. The Executive Board is empowered to give effect to the decisions and policies of the Assembly and to submit to it advice or proposals and a general programme of work for a specific period. It is also empowered to take emergency measures in case of epidemics or disasters.

The Secretariat consists of technical and administrative staff, headed by a Director-General. Health activities are carried out through six regional organizations which have been established for: Africa (Brazzaville); Americas (Washington DC); Eastern Mediterranean (Cairo); Europe (Copenhagen); Southeast Asia (New Delhi); Western Pacific (Manila). Each regional organization consists of a regional committee composed of the full and associate members in the area concerned, and a regional office staffed by experts in various fields of health.

The Director-General is responsible for preparing and submitting to the Executive Board the annual budget estimates of the Organization. The Executive Board considers and submits these estimates to the Assembly, together with its recommendations. Expenses are apportioned among members in accordance with a scale fixed by the Assembly. An additional fund for specific projects is provided by voluntary contributions from members and other sources. Other funds are received from UN bodies for particular projects and programmes.

Activities

The Organization, generally considered one of the more effective specialized agencies of the UN, has

directed its work towards a variety of fields such as disease control, environmental health, family health, mental health, training of health workers, strengthening of national health systems, formulation of health regulations for international travel, establishment of drug policies, promotion of biomedical research, and collection and dissemination of statistical data and analyses.

A turning point in the Organization's activities was represented by the global strategy launched by the World Health Assembly in May 1981 – 'Health for all by the year 2000' – that is the attainment by all citizens of the world of a level of health enabling them to lead a socially and economically productive life. The initiative was renewed in May 1998 through the adoption of the global strategy 'Health for all in the 21st century' emphasizing quality of life, equity in health and access to health services. Water supply and sanitation needs of around 100 countries were assessed in connection with the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981–90) launched by the UN. A Priority Programme for the Control of Diarrhoeal Diseases was launched in 1979. The Global Programme on AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) started in 1987; the aims of the Global Programme are to prevent transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), to care for HIV-infected people, and to unify national and international efforts against AIDS. The Global Commission on AIDS, made up of biomedical and social scientists and other experts, began its activities in 1989. The Organization is among the co-sponsors of the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) established in 1996 to meet the global challenge of the disease. The Tobacco or Health Programme aims to reduce the use of tobacco, educating tobacco-users and preventing young people, especially in the developing countries, from adopting the habit. A Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) has been prepared in 2003.

The Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), launched in 1974, has provided developing countries with assistance against six childhood diseases – diphtheria, measles, pertussis, poliomyelitis, tetanus, and tuberculosis. These diseases constitute a major cause of death and disability in the developing countries. To complement the EPI a new vaccine development programme was launched in 1984. Six widespread diseases of the tropics – filariasis, leishmaniasis,

leprosy, malaria, schistosomiasis, and trypanosomiasis – are targets of a Special Programme on research and training.

One of the Organization's major achievements has been the eradication of smallpox following a massive international campaign of vaccination and surveillance. In May 1980 the World Health Assembly recommended that vaccination against smallpox be discontinued in every country. In 1988 the Assembly declared its commitment to eradicate poliomyelitis by the year 2000; similar commitments were adopted in 1990 with regard to iodine deficiency disorders and in 1991 with regard to leprosy. Intensive efforts are being undertaken against the recrudescence of malaria in many parts of the world. A Global Tuberculosis Programme was established in 1995, followed by several initiatives aimed at establishing effective national control strategies and increasing access to high-quality drugs for sufferers in developing countries.

With regard to non-communicable diseases, intensified research is being carried out with regard to cardiovascular diseases and cancer. The International Agency for Research on Cancer, based in Lyon, France was set up in 1965 as a self-governing body within the Organization's framework. The Human Genetics Programme focuses on the prevention and control of common hereditary diseases and of those with a genetic predisposition having a major health importance.

Under an Action Programme on Essential Drugs and Vaccines, developing countries receive technical assistance in selection, quality control, and production of effective and safe drugs and vaccines essential to their needs. The Organization maintains and regularly revises a Model List of Essential Drugs. In order to survey and combat the global increase in drug abuse through the reduction of the demand for drugs and the control of the supply of psychoactive substances, the Organization has launched a Programme on Substance Abuse (PSA) in 1990. The Organization is also committed to overcoming the challenges represented by emerging and/or previously unknown diseases such as SARS (Severe acute respiratory syndrome), avian influenza ('bird flu') and by the growing risks linked to an unhealthy diet.

External relations

The Organization has established effective relations and co-operates closely with UN bodies – among

them are the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) – and with other specialized agencies such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The governing bodies of the Organization and of FAO established in 1962 the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade by guiding the preparation and revision of international food standards and by promoting the co-ordination of all the relevant work undertaken by international organizations. At present, about 170 countries participate in the Commission which has adopted hundreds of standards and about 45 codes of practice as well as many other recommendations and guidelines.

Suitable arrangements for consultation and co-operation have also been made by the Organization with non-governmental international institutions and, subject to the consent of the governments concerned, with national bodies, governmental and non-governmental.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Margaret Chan

HEADQUARTERS: 20 Avenue Appia, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 791 2111; fax: +41 22 791 3111)

WEBSITE: <http://www.who.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *The World Health Report* (annual); *Bulletin of WHO* (monthly); *WHO Drug Information* (quarterly); *International Digest of Health Legislation* (quarterly); *World Health Statistics Annual*

REFERENCES: R. Berkov, *The World Health Organization: A Study in Decentralized International Administration* (Geneva, 1957); F.W. Hoole, *Politics and Budgeting in the WHO* (Bloomington, IN, 1976); J. Siddiqi, *World Health and World Politics: The World Health Organization and the United Nations System* (London, 1995); G.L. Burci and C.H. Vignes, *World Health Organization* (New York, 2004)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

The Organization promotes the protection of intellectual property throughout the world through co-operation among member countries and in collaboration with any other international institution, and seeks to centralize the administration of the various Unions established by multilateral treaties and dealing with legal and technical aspects of intellectual property.

Origin and development

The Organization was established by a Convention signed in Stockholm on 14 July 1967 and entered into force on 26 April 1970. It was intended to succeed the United International Bureau for the Protection of Intellectual Property (Bureau international réuni pour la protection de la propriété intellectuelle (BIRPI)), which had been set up in 1893 and represented the combined Secretariats of the Paris Union (officially the International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property) and the Berne Union (officially the International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works). A relationship agreement was concluded by the Organization with the UN and it became a specialized agency on 17 December 1974.

The expression 'intellectual property' means the legal rights resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields. Intellectual property comprises two main branches: industrial property (inventions in all fields of human endeavour, scientific discoveries, industrial designs, trademarks, service marks and commercial names and designations); and copyright and neighbouring rights (literary, musical and artistic works, performances of artists, films, records and broadcasts).

Accession to the Organization is open to any sovereign country which is a member of at least one of the Unions, and to other countries which participate in the organizations of the UN system, are party to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, or are invited to join by the Organization itself through its General Assembly. Membership of the Unions is open to any sovereign country.

Membership

The Organization's present membership includes 184 countries. At present 172 countries participate in the Paris Union and 163 in the Berne Union.

Objectives

The overall objective of the Organization is to maintain and increase respect for intellectual property throughout the world, in order to favour industrial and cultural development by stimulating creative activity and facilitating the dissemination of literary and artistic works and the transfer of technology, especially to and among developing countries. To promote the protection of intellectual property, the Organization encourages the conclusion of new international treaties and the harmonization of national legislations. It gives legal and technical assistance to developing countries to promote their industrialization through the modernization of their industrial property and copyright systems, prepares model laws, provides traineeships, organizes seminars, finances assistance and encourages the flow of scientific and technical documentation. It also performs the administrative tasks of several international treaties dealing with various subjects of intellectual property, assembles and disseminates information concerning the protection of intellectual property, conducts and promotes studies and publishes their results, and maintains services for international registration or other administrative co-operation among member countries.

Structure

The Organization has a General Assembly, a Conference, a Co-ordination Committee and a Secretariat which is called the International Bureau. The General Assembly is composed of all countries that are party to the Convention establishing the Organization and that are also members of either the Paris Union or the Berne Union. The General Assembly, meeting in ordinary session every two years, agrees on programmes, appoints and gives instructions to the Director-General, reviews and approves his reports, and adopts the biennial budget of expenses common to the Unions. The Conference consists of all countries that are party to the Convention whether or not members of any of the Unions. The Conference, meeting at the same time as the General Assembly, establishes the basic policies and the biennial programme of legal-technical assistance and approves the biennial budget of the Organization. The Paris and Berne Unions elect Executive Committees from among their members and the joint membership of these Committees constitutes the Co-ordination Committee of the Organization that meets in ordinary session once a year.

The International Bureau is headed by a Director-General. It prepares the meetings of the various bodies of the Organization and the Unions, mainly through the provision of reports and working documents, carries out projects for the promotion of international co-operation in the field of intellectual property and acts as the depository of most of the treaties administered by the Organization. The Organization also administers the WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Centre for the Resolution of Intellectual Property Disputes between Private Parties which became operational on 1 October 1994. The Centre is in charge of a Domain Name Dispute Resolution Service that reviews cases of conflict between trademarks and internet domain names.

Activities

The Organization's activities are basically of two sorts: substantive or programme activities, and administrative activities concerned with the international registration of industrial property rights. In both industrial property and copyright, the role of the Organization consists mainly in providing advice and training as well as documents and equipment.

The Permanent Committee on Patent Information fosters co-operation between national and regional industrial property offices in all matters concerning patent information. Administrative or registration activities are those required for the receiving and processing of international applications under the Patent Co-operation Treaty (PCT) of 19 June 1970 or for the international registration of trademarks, appellations of origin or deposit of industrial designs. The Organization performs the administrative functions conferred by the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, signed in 1883, by various special agreements concluded within the framework of the Paris Convention, by the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, signed in 1886, and by other conventions concerning the protection of literary and artistic property. Conventions and agreements are kept under review and submitted to revision with a view, *inter alia*, to meeting the needs of developing countries. Since the early 1990s, the Organization has been active in providing assistance to countries in transition to a market economy and wishing to upgrade their intellectual property systems. Among international agreements adopted within the Organization's

framework are the Copyright Treaty and the Performances and Phonograms Treaty, both adopted on 20 December 1996. Both treaties entered into force in early 2002. In view of the growing importance of the Internet and information technology, the Organization has undertaken over the past few years a number of initiatives concerning the impact of digital technology and electronic commerce on intellectual property.

External relations

Co-operation links have been established with the World Trade Organization (WTO) under an agreement entered into force on 1 January 1996. The Organization advises its members on obligations deriving from the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) expanding and enhancing the rules of the Paris and Berne Conventions.

WORKING LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Dr Kamil Idris

HEADQUARTERS: 34 Chemin des Colombettes, PO Box 18, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 338 9111; fax: +41 22 733 5428)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wipo.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *WIPO Magazine* (bimonthly); *PCT Gazette* (weekly); *PCT Newsletter* (monthly); *Industrial Property and Copyright* (monthly); *International Designs Bulletin* (monthly)

REFERENCE: M. Ficsor, *The Law of Copyright and the Internet: The 1996 WIPO Treaties, their Interpretation and Implementation* (Oxford, 2002)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

The Organization co-ordinates, standardizes and improves world meteorological activities and encourages an efficient and rapid exchange of weather information between members.

Origin and development

An International Meteorological Organization was set up in 1873 at the International Meteorological Meeting held in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and the relevant statutes were subsequently revised several

times. The 12th Conference of Directors of the International Meteorological Organization convened at Washington, DC, in September 1947, drew up a Convention creating the World Meteorological Organization to which activities, resources and obligations of the original Organization had to be transferred. The Convention, opened for signature on 11 October 1947, entered into effect on 23 March 1950. The new Organization was formally established on 4 April 1951 when the first session of the World Meteorological Congress was convened in Paris. A number of amendments to the text of the Convention have been introduced over the years. A relationship agreement with the UN was concluded by the Organization and came into force on 20 December 1951.

Any member of the UN with a meteorological service may accede to the Organization, in conformity with current provisions. Sovereign countries with a meteorological service and not belonging to the UN may be admitted to the Organization if their request for membership is approved by two-thirds of the member countries. Any territory or group of territories maintaining its own meteorological service but not responsible for the conduct of its international relations may also be admitted to the Organization, provided that the relevant request is presented by the member responsible for international relations and secures approval by two-thirds of the member countries. Any member may withdraw from the Organization on 12 months' written notice given to the Secretary-General. Provision is made for the suspension from the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership of any country failing to meet its financial obligations or otherwise violating the Convention.

Membership

The present membership of the Organization includes 182 countries and six territories.

Objectives

The purposes of the Organization are: (a) to facilitate worldwide co-operation in establishing networks of stations to provide meteorological, hydrological or other geophysical observations related to meteorology, and to promote the establishment and maintenance of centres charged with the provision of meteorological and related services; (b) to promote the establishment and maintenance of systems for the rapid exchange of weather infor-

mation; (c) to promote standardization of meteorological observations and to ensure the uniform publication of observations and statistics; (d) to further the application of meteorology to aviation, shipping, water problems, agriculture and other activities; (e) to promote activities in operational hydrology and to foster co-operation between meteorological and hydrological services; and (f) to encourage research and training in meteorology and to assist in co-ordinating the international aspects of such activities.

The Organization arranges for the international exchange of weather reports, and assists in establishing meteorological services and improving or increasing the application of meteorology and hydrology to economic development projects.

Structure

The structure of the Organization comprises the World Meteorological Congress, the Executive Council, Regional Meteorological Associations, Technical Commissions and the Secretariat. The World Meteorological Congress, in which all members are represented by delegations headed by the directors of national meteorological services, is the supreme organ and meets for ordinary sessions at least once every four years. The Congress determines the general policies, makes recommendations to members on any matter within the purposes of the Organization, considers the reports and activities of the Executive Council, establishes Regional Associations and Technical Commissions and co-ordinates their activities, and elects members of the Executive Council. Each member of the Congress has one vote. However, only members that are sovereign countries are entitled to vote or to take a decision on a number of sensitive subjects such as amendments to the Convention, requests for membership, relations with the UN and other inter-governmental institutions, and elections of individuals to serve in the Organization. Decisions are taken by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, with the exception of elections of individuals where simple majority suffices. The 37-member Executive Council consists of 27 directors of national meteorological or hydrological services acting in an individual capacity plus the president and the three vice-presidents of the Organization and the presidents of the six Regional Associations. It meets at least once a year to supervise the implementation of Congress resolutions and regulations, to initiate studies and make recommendations on matters

requiring international action, and to provide members with technical information, advice and assistance. Decisions of the Executive Council are taken by two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

The maximum expenditure which may be incurred by the Organization is determined by the Congress on the basis of estimates submitted by the Secretary-General, after prior examination by, and with the recommendations of, the Executive Council. Annual expenditures, within the limits fixed by the Congress, are approved by the Executive Council upon the delegation of the Congress. Expenditures are apportioned among members on the basis of a scale of assessment determined by the Congress.

Regional Meteorological Associations – responsible for Africa (Region I), Asia (Region II), South America (Region III), North America, Central America and the Caribbean (Region IV), South-West Pacific (Region V) and Europe (Region VI) – meet at least once every four years to promote the execution of the resolutions of Congress and the Executive Council within the region of their competence, to co-ordinate meteorological and associated activities and to consider matters referred to them by the Executive Council.

Technical Commissions are composed of experts meeting at least once every four years to study the applications of meteorology and problems and developments in specialized fields. At present there are eight Commissions responsible for: Aeronautical Meteorology; Agricultural Meteorology; Atmospheric Sciences; Basic Systems; Climatology; Hydrology; Instruments and Methods of Observation; and Oceanography and Marine Meteorology. The Secretariat is headed by the Secretary-General appointed by the Congress and performs administrative functions, organizes meetings of the various bodies, acts as a link between the meteorological and hydrometeorological services of the world, and provides information for the general public.

Activities

The activities of the Organization are carried out through several major programmes. The World Weather Watch Programme deserves special consideration since it is the Organization's basic programme. It has three major components: the Global Data Processing System; the Global Observing System; and the Global Telecommunication System. Based on ten polar-orbiting and geostationary meteorological satellites, about 10,000 land observation

stations, 3000 aircraft, 7000 ships and 300 moored and drifting buoys carrying automatic weather stations, the World Weather Watch Programme provides all members with adequate information to enable them to operate efficient meteorological services and to make local and specialized forecasts. Among special activities of the Programme are: Data Management; System Support, including the Operational Information Service; the Tropical Cyclone Programme; and the WMO Antarctic Activities.

The World Climate Programme addresses the full range of climate and climate change issues, including research into the economic and social consequences of climate and climate change. The Programme also aims to detect and warn governments and the public of possible future variations and changes in climate, either natural or man-made, which may significantly affect critical human activities. The Programme is supported by the Global Climate Observing System which was especially active in 1997–98 in monitoring the impact of the El Niño weather phenomenon on the climate system.

The World Climate Research Programme – undertaken by the Organization jointly with the International Oceanographic Commission and the International Council of Scientific Unions – is aimed at developing a better understanding of climate and predictions of global and regional climate changes.

The Atmospheric Research and Environment Programme co-ordinates and promotes research on the structure and composition of the atmosphere, on the physics and chemistry of clouds, on tropical meteorology and weather forecasting. Disaster mitigation activities are to benefit particularly from advanced research in short-, medium- and long-range predictions and from improved quality of weather forecasts.

The Applications of Meteorology Programme assists members in the application of meteorology and climatology to social and economic development, protection of life and property, and weather-sensitive industries and activities. Applications concern agricultural meteorology, aeronautical meteorology (safety of air transport), marine meteorology and associated oceanographic activities, and public weather services.

The Hydrology and Water Resources Programme concentrates on promoting worldwide co-operation in the evaluation of water resources and the development of hydrological networks and services, including data collection and processing, hydrogeological forecasting and warnings for flood

protection and the supply of meteorological and hydrological data for design purposes.

The Education and Training Programme supports the Organization's scientific and technical programmes and provides assistance for the development of personnel in the national meteorological and hydrological services through special courses, seminars and training materials.

The Technical Co-operation Programme is designed to bridge the gap between developed and developing countries by the systematic transfer of meteorological and hydrological knowledge, technology and methodology. The International Polar Year (IPY) 2007–2008 is a large scientific programme focused on the Arctic and the Antarctic and covering two full annual cycles from March 2007 to March 2009.

External relations

Working arrangements have been concluded by the Organization with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and with many UN specialized agencies such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Technical assistance is extended to developing countries under the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other specific programmes. Environmental prediction research is conducted in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP); the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established jointly by the Organization and UNEP in 1988.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Michel Jarraud

HEADQUARTERS: 7 bis Avenue de la Paix, C.P. 2300, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 730 8111; fax: +41 22 730 8181)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wmo.ch>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report*; *WMO Bulletin* (quarterly); *Statements on the Status of the Global Climate*; technical manuals, guides and reports

REFERENCE: H. Daniel, *One Hundred Years of International Cooperation in Meteorology (1873–1973): A Historical Review* (Geneva, 1973)

World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)

The Organization's basic mission is the improvement of the health and welfare of animals all over the world, regardless of the cultural practices or the economic situations in member countries, and the adoption of appropriate international sanitary rules for international trade in animals and animal products.

Origin and development

The epizootic disease that occurred in Belgium in 1920 causing significant livestock losses prompted a co-ordinated response leading to the conclusion, on 25 January 1924, of an international agreement by the representatives of 28 countries for the establishment of the Office International des Epizooties (OIE). The main objective was to oblige infected countries to inform the others in case of an important sanitary occurrence thereby enabling them to take protective action. The International Committee of the Office held its first General Session on 8 March 1927 in Paris. The first Conference met in Geneva on 30 January 1928 and provided the basis for an international sanitary police. Accordingly, only sanitary documents emanating from countries 'with correctly organized veterinary services' would have been considered as providing importers with sufficient guarantees. In May 2003 the Office changed its name to World Organization for Animal Health but the original acronym was retained.

Membership

The present membership of the Organization includes 169 countries and territories.

Objectives

The purposes of the Organization are: (a) to ensure transparency in the global animal disease situation; (b) to collect, analyse and disseminate scientific information on animal disease control both for diseases solely affecting animals and for those transmissible to humans; (c) to provide expertise and encourage international solidarity in the control of animal diseases; (d) to safeguard world trade by publishing health standards for international trade in animals and animal products; (e) to improve the legal framework and resources of national veterinary services; and (f) to provide a better guarantee of the safety of food of animal origin and promote animal welfare through a science-based approach.

Structure

The International Committee is the highest authority of the Organization consisting of the delegates of all members meeting at least once a year in a General Session. The International Committee establishes international standards in the field of animal health, adopts resolutions on the control of major animal diseases, elects the members of the governing bodies and approves the annual budget of the Organization. The work of the International Committee is prepared by the nine-member Administrative Commission meeting twice a year in Paris under the chairmanship of the President of the Committee, to deal with technical and administrative matters. A Central Bureau based in Paris is in charge of the day-to-day operation of the Organization under a Director General.

Four Specialist Technical Commissions support the work of the Organization along with five Regional Commissions. A network of Collaborating Centres and Reference Laboratories across the world give an important contribution to the Organization's activities.

The Organization's financial resources derive basically from the regular annual contributions of member countries supplemented by voluntary contributions.

Activities

The activities of the Organization have progressively developed covering a wide variety of fields. In particular, the Organization is becoming increasingly involved in the field of food safety through the implementation, *inter alia*, of sanitary controls 'from the stable to the table'. The standards, guidelines and recommendations issued by the Organization have been designated by the World Trade Organization (WTO) – according to the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement (SPS Agreement) – as the international reference concerning the risks posed by trade in animals and animal products.

External relations

The Organization maintains permanent relations with 35 international and regional bodies. Of special importance are the agreements concluded with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Links have been established with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission, in order to cover all potential hazards throughout the food chain, and

with regional organizations in Africa, Europe, the Americas and the Pacific.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR GENERAL: Bernard Vallat

HEADQUARTERS: 12 rue de Prony, 75017 Paris, France (telephone: +33 1 4415 1888; fax: +33 1 4267 0987)

WEBSITE: <http://www.oie.int>

PUBLICATIONS: *Disease Information* (weekly); *Bulletin* (three issues a year); *Scientific and Technical Review* (three issues a year); *World Animal Health* (annual); animal health codes, technical manuals and safety standards

World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

The Organization is vested with a leading role in the promotion of travel and of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism, with particular attention to the interests of developing countries, and deals with all aspects of tourism on a world-wide basis.

Origin and development

The Organization was established in 1975 to facilitate and improve travel between and within member countries and with a view to contributing to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The non-governmental predecessor of the Organization had been set up in 1925 as the International Congress of Official Tourist Traffic Associations, renamed in 1934 the International Union of Official Tourist Propaganda Organizations (IUOTPO), and again renamed in 1947 the International Union of Official Travel Organizations (IUOTO). The Statutes of the new intergovernmental Organization were adopted on 27 September 1970 in Mexico City and entered into force in 1975.

In 1969, the UN General Assembly decided that an agreement should be concluded with the future World Tourism Organization; in 1977 the General Assembly adopted an agreement on co-operation and relationship between the UN and the Organization. Following a resolution of the General

Assembly adopted on 23 December 2003, the Organization became a specialized agency of the UN, the first new agency since 1985.

Membership

The Organization includes 150 countries as full members, seven territories (Aruba, Flemish Community of Belgium, Hong Kong, Macao, Madeira, Netherlands Antilles and Puerto Rico) as associate members. The Holy See and Palestine enjoy permanent and special observer status respectively. The private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities may participate as affiliate members. More than 300 companies and institutions, representing all aspects of the tourism industry, currently enjoy the status of affiliates.

Objectives

The objectives of the Organization, according to the indications of the UN General Assembly, are the following: (a) to emphasize the social and cultural function of tourism in society, its role in international trade and its contribution to bringing peoples closer together and safeguarding world peace; (b) to encourage the adoption of measures to facilitate travel as well as for the protection of tourists; (c) to provide for a technical co-operation machinery to assist all countries, especially the developing ones, in the formulation of tourism policies, plans and programmes; (d) to develop the human resources in the sector through the preparation of teaching and training programmes; and (e) to promote research and exchange of information on all aspects of international and domestic tourism, including statistical data, legislation and regulations.

Structure

The General Assembly, meeting every two years, is the supreme organ, composed of full members and associate members; affiliate members and representatives of other international organizations participate as observers. The Executive Council, meeting at least twice a year and composed of 29 members, has one member elected on the basis of equitable geographical representation for every five full members of the Organization. Spain, being the Organization's host country, sits on the Council as an ex officio member. The six Regional Commissions, established as subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and in charge of Africa, the Americas, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe, the

Middle East and South Asia normally meet once a year. Specialized committees advise on management and programme content. The Secretariat performs technical and administrative functions under the responsibility of the Secretary-General.

Activities

The Organization's work covers several areas: Co-operation for Development; Human Resource Development; Environment, Planning and Finance; Statistics, Economic Analysis and Market Research; Quality of Tourism Development; and Communications and Documentation. Particular attention is being given to the needs and interests of the developing members in the field of tourism and to the interaction between tourism, climate change and its economic consequences. The Organization is actively supporting the implementation of the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (adopted in 1999) aimed at maximizing the economic, social and cultural benefits of tourism while reducing at the same time the negative social and environmental consequences.

External relations

The Organization acts as an executing agency of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and has developed close working relations with other UN programmes, UN regional commissions and UN specialized agencies.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: Arabic, English, French, Russian, Spanish

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Francesco Frangialli

HEADQUARTERS: Calle Capitán Haya 42, 28020 Madrid, Spain (telephone: +34 91 5678100; fax: +34 91 5713733)

WEBSITE: <http://www.unwto.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *UNWTO Magazine* (quarterly); *Tourism Market Trends; Travel and Tourism Barometer; Yearbook of Tourism Statistics*

World Trade Organization (WTO)

The Organization came into being in 1995 as the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established in 1947. It is the legal and institutional entity overseeing the multilateral trading system and fostering non-discrimination,

transparency and predictability in the conduct of trade policy with a view to raising living standards.

Origin and development

The Organization was established on 1 January 1995 to administer, through different councils and committees, some 30 agreements covering a wide variety of matters – from agriculture to textiles, from services to government procurement to intellectual property – contained in the Final Act of the Uruguay Round (UR) negotiations signed in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 15 April 1994; attached to these agreements are a number of additional ministerial decisions and declarations related to further obligations and commitments for member countries. As the embodiment of the UR results, the Organization has succeeded GATT with stronger powers and procedures and extending liberalization to agriculture, textiles, intellectual property rights and services.

For the most part, all members of the Organization subscribe to all multilateral agreements (the Single Undertaking); however, four agreements, originally negotiated in the Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations and known as ‘plurilateral agreements’, have a limited number of signatories and are binding only on those countries that accept them. These agreements, whose operation is also monitored by the Organization, deal with trade in civil aircraft, government procurement, dairy products, and bovine meat respectively.

Since GATT was formally dissolved only at the end of 1995, during that year the two bodies co-existed. The Agreement establishing the WTO envisaged a two-year period – until December 1996 – for the 128 contracting parties to GATT to join the new Organization as original members. Any state or customs territory having full autonomy in the conduct of its trade policies may accede to the Organization.

Any member may withdraw from the WTO Agreement and the multilateral trade agreements by sending a written notice of denunciation to the Director-General; withdrawal from a ‘plurilateral agreement’ takes place according to the rules contained in that agreement.

The GATT had been signed on 30 October 1947 in Geneva by the representatives of 23 countries to record the concessions granted in a tariff conference, pending the formal acceptance of a comprehensive code governing trade policies and the

establishment of the International Trade Organization (ITO) that would have been a specialized agency of the UN. However, the ratification of the final version of the ITO Charter – drawn up at the negotiations conducted at the UN Conference on Trade and Employment held at Havana, Cuba, between 21 November 1947 and 24 March 1948 and generally known as the Havana Charter – proved impossible. The GATT, entered into force in January 1948, thus assumed the commercial policy role originally assigned to the ITO and became the major international agency to deal with trade problems. Although basically unequipped to fulfil the function of an international organization in the proper sense, the GATT remained for nearly half a century – and until the establishment of the WTO – the only multilateral instrument governing international trade, pragmatically adapting its rules and procedures to ever-evolving circumstances. Between 1947 and 1993, eight major multilateral negotiations were completed under the auspices of the GATT, reducing tariffs from an industrial-country average of 40 per cent in 1947 to less than 5 per cent.

It should be noted that the GATT was applied provisionally by all contracting parties which were bound to give effect to most of its rules only to the fullest extent not inconsistent with their existing domestic legislation (‘grandfather clause’). The original text of the General Agreement had been amended and supplemented several times since 1947. Major amendments intended to improve the trading conditions for developing countries included the addition of Part IV – stating, *inter alia*, that developed countries were not to expect reciprocity for concessions made to developing countries in negotiations – and the relaxation of the most-favoured-nation (MFN) clause to accommodate the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) and to allow an exchange of preferential tariff reductions among developing countries.

The amended and updated version of GATT, incorporating the substantive and institutional changes negotiated in the UR, lives on in the WTO and is known as ‘GATT 1994’ to distinguish it from the old ‘GATT 1947’. As an integral part of the WTO Agreement, it continues to provide the fundamental rules governing international trade in goods. Therefore, the new Organization carries on, in a much stronger form, the code of conduct established by GATT, having as its cornerstone the MFN clause, immediately and unconditionally ensuring non-discrimination and equality of treatment with

respect to customs duties, charges of any kind and all rules and formalities in connection with importation and exportation of goods. Equality of treatment is also ensured between imported and domestically-produced goods in internal markets. Tariffs are the only acceptable means for protection, with the exclusion in principle of quotas and import licensing; where tariffs have been bound at levels negotiated among members, no increase is allowed unless compensation is offered by the importing country.

Membership

Current membership of the Organization includes 151 countries accounting for over 90 per cent of world trade. Members are for the most part governments but can also be customs territories. China joined on 11 December 2001, followed by Taiwan under the name of Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu (Chinese Taipei) on 1 January 2002; Hong Kong and Macao are members since 1 January 1995. Saudi Arabia joined on 11 December 2005 and Vietnam on 11 January 2007. Around 30 countries are negotiating membership. The European Community (EC) participates in its own right as is the case for each of its member countries. Algeria, Russia and Ukraine are among the countries preparing to join as full members. Observers, with the obvious exception of the Holy See, must start accession negotiations within five years of being granted observer status.

Objectives

The Final Act of the UR redrafted the rules embodied in the original GATT and in the so-called Tokyo Round codes in the following areas: technical barriers to trade; trade-related aspects of investment measures (TRIMs); implementation of Art. VI of the GATT (antidumping); implementation of Art. VII of the GATT (customs valuation); pre-shipment inspection; rules of origin; import licensing procedures; import subsidies and countervailing measures; and safeguards.

Also included in the Final Act are: the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), representing the first set of multilaterally agreed and legally enforceable provisions ever negotiated to cover international trade in services; and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), including trade in counterfeit goods.

Besides the administration and implementation of the multilateral and 'plurilateral agreements' of

the Final Act, the Organization acts as a forum for multilateral trade negotiations among its member countries, seeks to resolve trade disputes, oversees national trade policies, and co-operates with other international organizations involved in global economic policy-making.

Structure

Since it is an international institution in its own right, the Organization, unlike GATT, has a proper structure. The Ministerial Conference, consisting of representatives of all members meeting at least once every two years, is the highest decision-making body which can take decisions on all matters under any of the multilateral trade agreements. The day-to-day work of the Organization is carried out principally by the General Council, composed of representatives of all members and meeting as required. Besides conducting its regular work on behalf of the Ministerial Conference, the General Council also convenes in two particular forms – as the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB), to oversee the dispute settlement procedures, and as the Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB), to conduct regular reviews of the trade policies of individual members.

Decisions are generally taken not by voting but by consensus; should a consensus prove unreach-able, decisions are taken by a majority of the votes cast, each country having one vote. A majority vote has never been used in the Organization and was extremely rare in the GATT experience. Decisions to admit a new member require a two-thirds majority in the Ministerial Conference; the same majority is required to amend provisions of the multilateral agreements which however bind only the countries accepting them. A majority of three-quarters is necessary to adopt an interpretation of any of the multilateral trade agreements or to grant a waiver on an obligation imposed on a member by a multi-lateral agreement.

The General Council oversees activities of three other major bodies, the Councils for Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, and TRIPS. The Council for Trade in Goods oversees the implementation and functioning of all the agreements covering trade in goods, including agriculture and textiles and clothing, though many such agreements have their own specific monitoring bodies. The Council for Trade in Services oversees the GATS, consisting of a framework of general rules and disciplines together with annexes and the national schedules of market access commitments; annexes concern the movement of

natural persons, financial services, telecommunications, and air transport services. The Council for TRIPS monitors the operation of the relevant agreement which contains a set of basic principles and addresses protection for different kinds of intellectual property rights such as copyright, trademarks or service marks, geographical indications, industrial designs, trade secrets and know-how, and patents. All these Councils are open to the participation of all the Organization's members and meet whenever required.

The Ministerial Conference has established other bodies that report to the General Council. The Committee on Trade and Development deals with issues relating to the developing countries, especially the 'least-developed' among them, and reviews their participation in the multilateral system. The Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions is responsible for consultations between the Organization's members and countries adopting trade-restrictive measures. The Organization's financing and budget issues are dealt with by the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration.

The General Council established, in January 1995, the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) which is concerned, *inter alia*, with issues relating to: the relationship between trade measures of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and provisions of the WTO; the impact of environmental measures on market access, particularly for exports of developing countries; exports of domestically prohibited goods; packaging, eco-labelling and recycling requirements and the transparency of trade-related environmental measures. The Committee on Regional Trade Agreements was set up by the General Council in February 1996.

The first Ministerial Conference, held in Singapore on 9–13 December 1996, added three new working groups dealing with the relationship between trade and investment, the interaction between trade and competition policy and transparency in government procurement. At the second Ministerial Conference, on 18–20 May 1998 in Geneva, the decision was taken to study the area of electronic commerce, a task to be shared among already-existing councils and committees.

A Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) was established by the Doha Declaration at the fourth Ministerial Conference in 2001 to operate under the authority of the General Council.

Each of the four 'plurilateral agreements' has its

own management body which reports to the General Council.

Besides its basic administrative tasks, the Secretariat – headed by a Director-General – performs a significant number of functions providing extensive support to the Organization's bodies with respect to negotiations and the implementation of agreements, and the interpretation of the Organization's rules and precedents, and generally contributing to the adoption of more liberal commercial policies. The Director-General is assisted by four Deputy Directors-General to ensure an equitable geographic representation.

Contributions to the Organization's budget are calculated on the basis of each member's share of the total trade conducted by WTO members. Part of the budget also goes to the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC) set up in 1964 in Geneva under the auspices of the GATT to promote the exports of developing countries and now operated jointly by the WTO and the UN, the latter acting through the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Activities

Of outstanding importance for the proper functioning of the Organization is the new dispute settlement system following the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes annexed to the WTO Agreement. The new system, overseen by the General Council sitting as the DSB, consists of a unified set of rules applying to all WTO disputes; to ensure prompt settlement of disputes, the procedures and the timetable are set out in detail. The DSB has the sole authority to establish panels, adopt panel and appellate reports, supervise implementation of recommendations and rulings, and authorize the adoption of retaliatory measures. The adoption of panel reports cannot be blocked by parties to the dispute; appeals of panels' final reports are heard by a standing seven-person Appellate Body established by the DSB.

The UR agreement has reformed trade in agricultural products, providing the basis for market-oriented policies and encouraging the use of less trade-distorting domestic support policies to maintain the rural economy. The needs of net-food-importing developing countries and least developed economies have been taken into account. A prominent role in the agricultural negotiations of the UR has been played by the Cairns Group of agricultural exporting countries.

Most of the world's trade in textiles and clothing

had been covered for two decades by the Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles, or Multifibre Arrangement (MFA), entered into force under GATT auspices. Restrictions negotiated under the MFA applied to a large part of the exports of developing countries and Eastern Europe to developed countries. The safeguard procedures permitted, subject to a number of strict conditions and to multilateral surveillance, the introduction of restraints on textile imports when such imports caused market disruption. Following the entry into force of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC), included in the Final Act of the UR, the MFA's complex network of quotas has been phased out. Textiles and clothing products have become subject, over a ten-year period implemented in four stages, to the same rules and disciplines as other industrial products.

As more than three-quarters of the Organization's members are developing or least developed countries, special and more favourable provisions are included in all agreements and commitments to safeguard the trade interests of these countries. An integrated framework with a view to helping least developed countries increase their ability to trade and a number of additional preferential market access agreements were adopted in 1997. Around 100 technical co-operation missions to developing countries are arranged every year by the Organization which also holds trade policy courses, training courses and seminars in Geneva and throughout the world for government officials.

A major challenge to the Organization – as it had been the case for GATT – is represented by regional economic groupings. A new Committee on Regional Trading Arrangements has been set up by the General Council. The wide variety of integration treaties submitted for approval and the underlying political implications had made it difficult for GATT to ensure full conformity with the complex provisions on customs unions and free-trade areas. In practice, a tacit waiver had been granted in all cases, including the crucial test of the 1957 Rome Treaty establishing the then European Economic Community (EEC). Nevertheless the GATT rules exercised an effective influence on the drafting of several regional arrangements. A number of specific regional initiatives – whose goals, however, appear to go beyond the purely economic and commercial sphere – are currently under consideration by the WTO which is trying to ensure that

regionalism remains open and compatible with multilateralism.

Since the end of the UR, a number of topics have been identified as possible items for inclusion in the WTO agenda, and discussions, often very lively, are going on. These topics include highly controversial issues such as investment and competition policies, the relationship between the trading system and internationally recognized labour standards, the link between immigration policies and world trade, and the interaction between policies relating to trade and those relating to financial and monetary matters, including debt and commodity markets.

The third Ministerial Conference, that took place in Seattle from 30 November to 3 December 1999, was supposed to launch a new round of trade negotiations but no agreement was reached and the conference itself was suspended by the presidency. The following (fourth) Ministerial Conference, held in Doha (Qatar) on 9–14 November 2001, decided to launch a new three-year round of trade talks; it was also decided to increase support for capacity-building in the developing countries and help them to implement existing agreements. A major breakthrough was an accord on TRIPS ensuring that patent protection does not block the access of developing countries to affordable medicines. The entire package launched in Doha is known under the name of Doha Development Agenda (DDA).

The Doha Declaration set 1 January 2005 as the date for completing negotiations on a broad range of issues, including those regarding agriculture, textiles and services and rules on competition and investment. However, negotiations on the Dispute Settlement Understandings and those on geographical indications for wines and spirits were to end in 2003. Deadlines were established in Doha primarily to address the concerns of developing countries. However, in the post-Doha period, the majority of deadlines were missed, thus increasing, *inter alia*, the risk of regional trade agreements being followed as a preferred course. Progress on negotiations was to be reviewed at the fifth Ministerial Conference held in Cancún, Mexico, on 10–14 September 2003 that ended in failure. Three major topics dominated the agenda and ultimately proved intractable: agriculture, the Singapore issues, and cotton.

The sixth Ministerial Conference took place on 13–18 December 2005 in Hong Kong with modest results. The new unofficial target of the end of 2006 for concluding negotiations has also been missed while the 'fast-track' authorization to negotiate

given by US Congress to the Administration is going to expire. In any case, the costs of further postponement or eventual failure of the Doha round are likely to be high for both developed and developing countries.

External relations

The Organization is not a specialized agency, but has developed co-operative arrangements and practices with the UN. Co-operation between the Secretariats of the two organizations has been gradually improved, including an effective working relationship between the WTO and UNCTAD. Besides co-operating with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, as well as with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the WTO works closely with other institutions, particularly those concerned with the problems of international trade, industrial and agricultural development and technical assistance. As regards sanitary and phytosanitary protection, the Organization maintains close contact with the Codex Alimentarius Commission – established in 1962 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) – and with the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES: English, French, Spanish

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: Pascal Lamy

HEADQUARTERS: Centre William Rappard, 154 rue de Lausanne, 1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 739 5111; fax: +41 22 731 4206)

WEBSITE: <http://www.wto.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Report; International Trade Statistics* (annual); *World Trade Report* (annual); *Focus Newsletter* (monthly, obtainable only electronically); *Appellate Body Annual Report*

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World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

FOUNDED: 1961 as World Wildlife Fund

OBJECTIVES: To conserve nature and ecological processes through the preservation of genetic, species and ecosystem diversity and to reduce pollution and wasteful consumption of resources and energy

MEMBERS: Around 5 million individual supporters throughout five continents. Offices in over 90 countries

ACTIVITIES: Current programmes of conservation relate to climate change, forests, freshwater, marine protected areas, threatened species and sustainability

DIRECTOR-GENERAL: James P. Leape

HEADQUARTERS: Avenue du Mont-Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland (telephone: +41 22 364 9111; fax: +41 22 364 8836)

WEBSITE: <http://www.panda.org>

PUBLICATIONS: *Annual Review; WWF News* (quarterly); *The Living Planet Report*