

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)

Founded in 1889 by William Randal Cremer (UK) and Frédéric Passy (France), the Inter-Parliamentary Union was the first permanent forum for political multilateral negotiations. The Union is a centre for dialogue and parliamentary diplomacy among legislators representing every political system and all the main political leanings in the world. It was instrumental in setting up what is now the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.

Activities: The IPU fosters contacts, co-ordination and the exchange of experience among parliaments and parliamentarians of all countries; considers questions of international interest and concern, and expresses its views on such issues in order to bring about action by parliaments and parliamentarians; contributes to the defence and promotion of human rights—an essential factor of parliamentary democracy and development; contributes to better knowledge of the working of representative institutions and to the strengthening and development of their means of action.

Membership: The IPU had 137 Members and 3 Associate Members in March 1999.

Headquarters: C.P. 438, 1211-Geneva 19, Switzerland

Website: <http://www.ipu.org>

Secretary General: Anders B. Johnsson (Sweden)

ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC)

Founded in 1969, the objectives of the OIC are to promote Islamic solidarity among Member States; to consolidate co-operation among Member States in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and other vital fields of activities, and to carry out consultations among Member States in international organizations; to endeavour to eliminate racial segregation, discrimination and to eradicate colonialism in all its forms; to take the necessary measures to support international peace and security founded on justice; to strengthen the struggle of all Muslim peoples with a view to safeguarding their dignity, independence and national rights; to create a suitable atmosphere for the promotion of co-operation and understanding among Member States and other countries.

Members: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

Secretary General: H.E. Dr Ezzeddine Laraki

Website: irna.com/oic/index.html

WORLD CUSTOMS ORGANIZATION

Established in 1952 as the Customs Co-operation Council, the World Customs Organization is an intergovernmental body with worldwide membership, whose