



An Introduction to Major Multilateral Institutions and International Organizations

Published by the
Office of Intergovernmental Solutions

February 2000





An Introduction to Major Multilateral Institutions and International Organizations

i

Published by the
Office of Intergovernmental Solutions
Office of Governmentwide Policy
U.S. General Services Administration

February 2000

Introduction

The Office of Intergovernmental Solutions is pleased to publish this primer on the major multilateral institutions and international organizations that work across the globe to develop worldwide solutions to common problems. This document is the first in a trilogy that will provide our colleagues with sources on international relations and activities. The next document, which will follow publication of this one, will describe the major U.S. Federal government programs with international roles and responsibilities. The final document will identify, to the extent possible, information technology activities in the multilateral institutions and international organizations described in this document. Together, the three will provide a comprehensive overview of worldwide government relations, and identify potential targets for opportunities for cooperation and participation.

This information is also available on-line at the Office of Intergovernmental Solutions Home Page at:

<http://policyworks.gov/intergov>

Questions or comments regarding this document may be addressed to:

Martha Dorris

Deputy Director

Office of Intergovernmental Solutions
(MG Room 5236)

Office of Governmentwide Policy
U.S. General Services Administration
Washington, DC 20405 USA

Tel: 202-501-0225

Fax: 202-208-1445

E-mail: martha.dorris@gsa.gov

Table of Contents

Overview	1
The United Nations System	2
The General Assembly	
The Security Council	
The Economic and Social Council	
The Trusteeship Council	
The International Court of Justice	
The Secretariat	
The United Nations	3
The European Commission	4
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	6
The World Bank Group	7
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	8
International Development Association	9
International Finance Corporation	9
Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency	10
International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes	11
International Monetary Fund	12
North Atlantic Treaty Organisation	14
World Trade Organization	15
World Health Organization	16
World Intellectual Property Organization	17
Organization of American States	18
Asian Development Bank	19
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development	20
African Development Bank Group	21
Inter-American Development Bank	22

United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization 23

International Centre for Science and High Technology 24

United Nations Industrial Development Organization..... 25

International Trade Center 26

International Telecommunications Union..... 27

United Nations International Computing Centre 28

The Commonwealth Secretariat 29

G8 30

Overview

This document provides a brief overview of the primary multilateral and international institutions across the globe. The term “multilateral” is typically used for organizations with a development mandate or role, whose membership is composed of a large number of different countries, if not by the vast majority of the world’s countries. The United Nations (UN) system serves as an umbrella for these organizations. These six core UN bodies, described below, established by the founding of the Charter of the UN, work with dozens of other related specialized agencies, funds and programmes - the UN system or family of organizations - to provide an increasingly cohesive yet diverse program of action in the fields of peace and security, humanitarian assistance, human rights and economic and social development. In addition, 14 specialized agencies, working in areas as diverse as health, finance, agriculture, civil aviation and telecommunications are linked together through the Economic and Social Council. The UN and its specialized agencies constitute the UN system. Most, but not all, of the institutions and organizations discussed in this document are members of the UN system of organizations.

The United Nations System

2

The UN itself has six main organs, all of which are based at the UN headquarters in New York. They are as follows:

The General Assembly - This is sometimes called the nearest thing to a world parliament, it is the main deliberative body. All 185-member states are represented in it, and each one has a vote.

The Security Council - The UN Charter - an international treaty - obligates States to settle their disputes by peaceful means. They are to refrain from the threat or use of force against other States, and may bring any dispute before the Security Council. The Council is the organ to which the Charter gives primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security, and can be convened whenever peace is threatened. The Council has 15 members; five are permanent members. They are: China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Economic and Social Council - Working under the authority of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council coordinates the economic and social work of the UN and related specialized agencies and institutions. The Council has 54 members and meets for a one-month session each year.

The Trusteeship Council - This Council was established to ensure that Governments responsible for administering Trust Territories take adequate steps to prepare them for self-government or independence.

The International Court of Justice - This group is also known as the World Court, and is the main judicial organ of the UN, settling legal disputes between Member States and giving advisory opinions to the UN and its agencies.

The Secretariat - The Secretariat works for the other five organs of the UN and administers their programmes.

The United Nations

The United Nations (UN) charter was adopted at the San Francisco Conference of 1945. The UN has a well-known peacekeeping role and delivers humanitarian assistance to countries. Less known is that the UN is a family of organizations who work together and individually to protect human rights; promote the protection of the environment; help the advancement of women and the rights of children; fight epidemics, famine and poverty. Throughout the world, the UN and its agencies assist refugees and help improve telecommunications; deliver food aid and protect consumers; combat disease and help expand food production; make loans to developing countries and help stabilize financial markets. UN agencies define the standards for safe and efficient transportation by air and sea, work to ensure respect for intellectual property rights and coordinate the allocation of radio frequencies. The UN's work has a long-term impact on the quality of our lives.

The UN is an organization of 185 sovereign nations - from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. It provides the machinery to help find solutions to international problems or disputes, and to deal with pressing concerns that face people everywhere. It does not legislate like a national parliament. But in the meeting rooms of the UN representatives of almost all countries of the world - large and small, rich and poor - with varying political views and social systems - have a voice and vote in shaping the policies of the international community.

Leadership

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General

Richard Holbrooke

U.S. Representative

The United Nations

S-378

New York, NY 10017, USA

212-963-7162

Website

www.un.org

The European Commission

4

The European Commission is an institution of the European Union (EU). They were created to give expression to an ever closer Union of European nations.

The other institutions of the European Union are:

The European Parliament

Council of the European Union

Court of Justice

Court of Auditors

European Investment Bank

Economic and Social Committee

Committee of the Regions

European Ombudsman

European Central Bank

The European Commission has three distinct functions:

- Initiating proposals for legislation;
- Guardian of the Treaties; and
- Manager and executor of Union policies and of international trade relationships.

Thus, the European Commission operates at the very heart of the European Union. Its role as the source of policy initiatives is unique; yet this role is not always clearly understood. The Commission has used its right of initiative to transform the framework provided by the Union's founding treaties into today's integrated structures. The benefits for citizens and companies throughout the Union

have been considerable: more freedom to travel and trade, more prosperity, much less red tape. The Commission has worked in close partnership with other European institutions and with the governments of the Member States. Although the Commission makes proposals, all the major decisions on important legislation are made by the minister of the Member States in the Council of the European Union, after taking account of the advice (or, in some cases, in codecision with) the democratically elected European Parliament.

The Commission consults widely with interested parties from all sectors and all walks of life when preparing draft legislation. In addition to its power of proposal, the Commission acts as the EU executive body and as guardian of the Treaties. The Commission represents the common interests and embodies, to a large degree, the personality of the Union. The 20 members of the Commission are drawn from the 15 EU countries, but each one swears an oath of independence, distancing himself or herself from partisan influences from any source.

The Commission's job is to ensure that the European Union can attain its goal of an ever-closer union of its peoples. A principal task is to ensure that goods, services, capital and persons can move freely throughout the territory of the Union. It must see to it that the benefits of integration are balanced between countries and regions, between businesses and consumers and between different categories of citizens.

Because of the breadth of its responsibilities, the Commission is the biggest of the European institutions. It has a staff of about 15,000 people, which is about twice the number of other institutions put together. However, its responsibilities are to 370 million citizens.

Leadership

Jacques Santer

President

European Commission

Rue de la Loi 200

1049 Brussels Belgium

322 299.39.00

Website

www.europa.eu.int/comm

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

6

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) provides for its 29 member countries to discuss, develop and perfect economic and social policy. They compare experiences, seek answers to common problems and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies that increasingly in today's globalized world are a must for a web of even practice across nations. Their exchanges may lead to agreements to act in a formal way, but more often, their discussion makes for better informed work within their own governments on the spectrum of public policy and clarifies the impact of national policies on the international community. It further offers a change to reflect and exchange perspectives with other countries similar to their own.

The forerunner of the OECD was the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which was formed to administer American and Canadian aid under the Marshall Plan for reconstruction of Europe after World War II. The OECD was formed in 1961. Since then, the focus has moved beyond the OECD countries and is setting its analytical sights on those countries - today nearly the whole world - that embrace market economy.

The OECD countries produce two thirds of the world's goods and services. Membership is limited only by a country's commitment to a market economy and a pluralistic democracy. The core of original members has expanded

from Europe and North America to include Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Mexico, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Korea. There are many more contacts with the rest of the world through programs with countries in the former Soviet bloc, Asia and Latin America. These contacts may, in some cases, lead to membership.

Exchanges between OECD governments' flow from information and analysis provided by a Secretariat in Paris. Parts of the OECD Secretariat collect data, monitor trends, analyze and forecast economic developments, while others research social changes or evolving patterns in trade, environment, agriculture, technology and taxation. This work is done in consultation with policy-makers who will use the analysis for discussion by member countries when they meet in specialized committees of the OECD.

Leadership

Donald J. Johnson

Secretary General

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

2, rue André-Pasca
75775 Paris Cedex 16
France

Website

www.oecd.org

The World Bank Group

The World Bank is not a single entity, but is a group of organizations known as the World Bank Group. It includes:

IDRB - The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IDA - The International Development Association

IFC - The International Finance Corporation

MIGA - The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

ICSID - The International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes

The mission of the World Bank is:

- To fight poverty with passion and professionalism for lasting results;
- To help people help themselves and their environment by providing resources, share in building capacity, and forging partnerships in the public and private sectors; and
- To be an excellent institution that is able to attract, excite, and nurture committed staff with exceptional skills who know how to listen and learn.

The Bank provides loans, advice and an array of customized resources to more than 100 developing countries and countries in transition. The goal is to help each country onto a path of stable, sustainable, and equitable growth. The main focus of its work is the poorest people and the poorest countries, but for all its clients, the Bank emphasizes:

- Investing in people, particularly through basic health and education;
- Protecting the environment;
- Supporting and encouraging private sector development;
- Strengthening the ability of the governments to deliver quality services, efficiently and transparently; and
- Promoting reforms to create a stable macroeconomic environment, conducive to long-term planning.

The World Bank is the largest provider of development assistance, committing about \$20 billion in new loans every year (in U.S. dollars). The Bank also plays a vital role coordinating with other organizations, private, government, multilateral and nongovernment - to ensure that resources are used to full effect in supporting a country's development agenda.

The World Bank raises money for development at the lowest rates by tapping the world's capital markets, and through contributions from wealthier member governments. The IBRD, which accounts for about three-fourths of the Bank's annual lending, raises almost all of its money in financial markets. One of the world's most prudent and conservative financial institutions, the IBRD sells AAA-rated bonds and other debt securities to pension funds, insurance companies, corporations, other banks, and individuals around the globe. The

IBRD charges interest to its borrowers on a rate, which is set as three-quarters of a percent above what it has paid for the funds it uses for lending. Loans must be repaid in 15 to 20 years.

The World Bank is owned by more than 180 member countries whose views and interests are represented by a Board of Governors and a Washington-based Board of Directors. Member countries are shareholders that carry ultimate decision-making power in the World Bank. Each member nation appoints a governor and an alternate to carry out these responsibilities.

The Bank's president is by tradition a national of the largest shareholder: the United States. Elected for a five-year renewable term, the president chairs meetings of the executive directors and is responsible for overall management of the World Bank. The President also serves as the head of the World Bank Group.

Leadership

James D. Wolfensohn

President

The World Bank

1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433, USA

Tel: (202) 477-1234

Home Page

www.worldbank.org

The IBRD is a specialized agency of the United Nations, with headquarters in Washington, D.C. The foundation for the IBRD was laid at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944, which called for the formation of such an entity. It was formally organized in 1945, when 28 countries ratified the agreement. When it was originally established, its first task was to help Europe to recover from the devastation of World War II. Once Europe was rebuilt, the Bank turned its attention to the developing countries.

The IBRD only makes loans to member nations, but under government guarantee, to private investors, for the purpose of facilitating productive investment, encouraging foreign trade, and discharging burdens of international debt. All members of the bank must belong to the International Monetary Fund. The bank, which includes all but a few nations, is self-sustaining and has maintained a profit on its lending activities. It is controlled by a Board of Governors, one from each member state.

Website

www.worldbank.org/ibrd

The IDA is the International Development Association is the World Bank Group's concessional lending window. It provides long-term loans at zero interest to the poorest of the developing countries. In fact, the IDA was established specifically to meet the need of the poorest developing countries, when it became apparent that they could not afford to borrow much-needed capital for development on the terms offered by the World Bank. The overarching goals of the IDA lending are to assist countries in reducing poverty and in achieving sustainable, broad-based economic growth. The IBRD and the IDA are run along the same lines. They share the same staff, the same headquarters, report to the same president and use the same standards when evaluating projects. IDA simply takes its money out of a different "drawer." A country must be a member of IBRD before it can join IDA; 160 countries are IDA members.

IDA lends only to those countries that have a per capita income in 1996 of less than \$925 and lack the financial ability to borrow from IBRD on market terms. At present, 80 countries are eligible to borrow from IDA.

Website

www.worldbank.org/ida

The IFC is the International Finance Corporation. The IFC shares the primary objective of all of the World Bank group institutions; to improve the quality of the lives of people in its developing member countries. Today, the IFC is the largest multilateral source of loan and equity financing for private sector projects in the development world. IFC finances and provides advice for private sector venture and projects in developing countries 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. Its particular focus is to promote economic development by encouraging the growth of productive enterprise and efficient capital markets in its member countries. IFC participates in an investment only when it can make a special contribution that complements the role of market operations. It also plays a catalytic role, stimulating and mobilizing private investments in the developing world by demonstrating that investments can be profitable. Since its founding in 1956, the IFC has committed more than \$21.2 billion in financing for its own account, and has arranged \$15 billion in syndications and underwriting for 1,852 companies in 129 developing countries.

While the IFC coordinates with other institutions within the World Bank Group, it is legally and financially independent, with its own Articles of Agreement, shareholders,

financial structure, management and staff. Its share capital is provided by 174 member countries, which collectively determine its policies and activities. Strong shareholder support and substantial paid-in capital base have allowed IFC to raise most of the funds for its lending activities through triple-A rated bond issues in the international financial markets. The President of the World Bank also functions as the President of the IFC.

International Finance Corporation

2121 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA

202-477-1234

Website

www.ifc.org

MIGA is the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, another member of the World Bank Group. Established in 1985 by the World Bank Board of Governors, they saw the need to create a new investment insurance affiliate. The mission is to enhance the flow to developing countries of capital and technology for productive purposes under conditions consistent with their developmental needs, policies and objectives, on the basis of fair and stable standards for the treatment of foreign investment. MIGA was also created to supplement national and private agencies supporting foreign direct investment through their own investment insurance programs. MIGA was designed to encourage foreign investment by providing viable alternatives in investment insurance against non-commercial risks in developing countries, thereby creating investment opportunities in those countries. MIGA carries out their program mission through provision of programs, dissemination of information on investment opportunities, and technical assistance that enhances national investment promotion capabilities in an increasingly competitive environment. The President of the World Bank is Chairman of the MIGA Board of Directors and President of the Agency.

Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency

1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433, USA

Website

www.miga.org

The ICSID is the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes. In the past, the World Bank and the President of the Bank have assisted in the mediation or conciliation of investments between governments and private foreign investors. The creation of the ICSID in 1966 was intended to manage the function when there are such disputes. The Bank's overriding consideration in the creation of ICSID was the belief that an institution specially designed to settle investment disputes between governments and foreign investors could promote increased flows of international investment. ICSID is an autonomous international organization; however, it has close links with the Bank. All of ICSID's members are also members of the Bank.

Website

*[www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/
icsid.html](http://www.worldbank.org/html/extdr/icsid.html)*

International Monetary Fund

12

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is a cooperative institution that 182 countries have voluntarily joined because they see the advantage of consulting with one another in this forum to maintain a stable system of buying and selling their currencies so that payments in foreign money can take place between countries smoothly and without delay. Members of the IMF believe that keeping other countries informed of their intentions regarding policies that influence payments of the government and residents of one country to those of another is to everyone's advantage. The IMF also believes that occasionally modifying those policies (by reducing export taxes, for instance) when fellow members agree that this is in the common interest, will help international trade to grow and will create more and higher-paying jobs in an expanding world economy. The IMF lends money to members having trouble meeting financial obligations to other members, but only on condition that they undertake economic reforms to eliminate these difficulties for their own good and that of the entire membership.

The IMF has no effective authority over domestic economic policies of its members. It is in no position to force members to spend money in any particular area. It can, and often does, urge members to make the best use of scarce resources by refraining from unproductive spending. IMF possesses only the authority to require the member to disclose information on its monetary and

fiscal policies, and to avoid, to the extent possible, putting restrictions on exchanging domestic for foreign currency and on making payments to other members.

The need for an institution like the IMF became evident during the Great Depression that ravaged the world economy in the 1930s. The economic devastation was not confined to the visible economy. It was no less destructive of the unseen world of international finance and monetary exchange. A widespread lack of confidence in paper money led to a demand for gold beyond what national treasuries could supply. A number of nations, led by the United Kingdom, were forced to abandon the gold standard. Many nations thus hoarded their gold.

Several international conferences convened during the 1930s to address world monetary problems ended in failure. Eventually, 44 nations gathered at the Bretton Woods, New Hampshire conference in July, 1944, and the IMF was born. It began operations in May, 1946.

Membership in the IMF is open to every country that conducts its own foreign policy and is willing to adhere to the IMF charter of rights and obligations. All major countries are not members of the IMF.

The IMF chain of command runs clearly from the governments of member countries to the IMF. In setting out the obligations of individual members to the IMF, or in working out the details of lending arrangements with a

member, the IMF acts not on its own but as an intermediary between the will of the majority of the membership and the individual member country.

The IMF is overseen by the Board of Governors, one from each member, and an equal number of Alternate Governors. The IMF has a staff of about 2,600, headed by a Managing Director, who is also chairman of the Executive Board. By tradition, the Managing Director is European, or at least, non-American (the President of the World Bank is traditionally a U.S. national).

The IMF's source of finance is quota subscriptions or membership fees. They constitute the largest source of money at the IMF's disposal. The IMF lends money only to member countries with payment problems; that is, to countries that do not take in enough foreign currency to pay for what they buy from other countries.

Leadership

Michel Camdessus

Managing Director

International Monetary Fund

700 19th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20431 USA

202-623-7000

Home Page

www.imf.org

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

14

The North Atlantic Treaty was signed in Washington in 1949, creating an alliance of 12 independent nations committed to each other's defence. Four more European nations later acceded to the Treaty between 1952 and 1982. In 1999, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined the Alliance, which now numbers 19 members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The North Atlantic Treaty has continued to guarantee the security of its member countries since its formation. Today, following the end of the Cold War and of the division of Europe, the Alliance has been restructured to enable it to participate in the development of cooperative security structure for the whole of Europe. It has also transformed its political and military structures in order to adapt them to peacekeeping and crisis management tasks undertaken in cooperation with countries, which are not members of the Alliance, and with other international organisations.

Through initiatives such as the creation of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and Partnership for Peace, and the establishment of a new Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the member countries of NATO have opened the way for new forms of partnership and cooperation with other countries within the framework of the Alliance.

Leadership

Dr. Javier Solana

Secretary General

Jamie Patrick Shea

NATO Spokesman

NATO Headquarters

Blvd Leopold III

1110 Brussels, Belgium

Website

www.nato.int

World Trade Organization

The World Trade Organization (WTO) was established in 1995, and is one of the youngest international organizations. The WTO is the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was established after World War I. The WTO multilateral trading system continues the tradition established by the GATT. In the last 50 years, there has been exceptional growth in world trade. GATT and the WTO have helped create a strong and prosperous trading system contributing to this unprecedented growth. The WTO's objective is to help trade flow smoothly, freely, fairly and predictably by:

- Administering trade agreements
- Acting as a forum for trade negotiations
- Settling trade disputes
- Reviewing trade disputes
- Assisting developing countries in trade policy issues through technical assistance and training programmes
- Cooperating with other international organizations

The WTO has more than 130 members, accounting for over 90% of world trade. Over 30 others are negotiating membership. Decisions are made by the entire membership, typically by consensus. The WTO's top level decision-making body is the Ministerial Conference, which meets at least once every two years. Next is the General Council (normally ambassadors and heads of delegations in Geneva), which meets several times a year in the Geneva headquarters.

The WTO Secretariat, based in Geneva, has about 500 staff and is headed by a director general. The Secretariat does not have the decision-making role that other international bureaucracies are given. Their main duties are to supply technical support for the various councils and committees and the ministerial conferences, to provide technical assistance for developing countries, to analyze world trade, and to explain WTO affairs to the public and media.

GATT is now the WTO's principal rule-book for trade in goods. There are also new rules for dealing with trade in services, relevant aspects of intellectual property, dispute settlement and trade policy reviews. Through these agreements, WTO members operate a non-discriminatory trading system that spells out their rights and their obligations. Each country receives guarantees that its exports will be treated fairly and consistently in other countries' markets. Each promises to do the same for imports into its own market. The system also gives developing countries some flexibility in implementing their commitments.

Leadership

Director-General

Position Vacant as of 4 May 1999

World Trade Organization

Centre William Rappard
Rue de Lausanne 154
CH-1211 Geneva 21, Switzerland

41-22-739 51 11

Website

www.wto.org

World Health Organization

16

The objective of the World Health Organization (WHO) is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. Health, as defined by the WHO Constitution, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

The WHO grew out of the cholera crisis in Europe in 1830. This led to the first International Sanitary Convention, in which an international agreement was developed for preventive measures against the plague. The group was re-named the Pan America Sanitary Bureau and set up in Washington, D.C. This is the forerunner of today's Pan American Health Organization, which is now the WHO regional office for the Americas. Eventually the League of Nations was created and took up the task of dealing with matters of international prevention and control of disease. In 1945, at a UN Conference, there was unanimous agreement to establish a new, autonomous international health organization. WHO was established in 1948.

In support of its main objective, the Organization has four main functions:

- To give worldwide guidance in the field of health;
- To set global standards for health;
- To cooperate with governments in strengthening national health programmes; and
- To develop and transfer appropriate health technology, information and standards.

All countries, which are Members of the United

Nations, may become members of WHO by accepting its Constitution. Other countries may be admitted as members when their application has been approved by a majority vote of the World Health Assembly. There are 191 Member States. Regional Offices are:

Regional Office for Africa

Regional Office for Americas

Regional Office for South-East Asia

Regional Office for Europe

**Regional Office for the Eastern
Mediterranean**

Regional Office for the Western Pacific

The World Health Assembly is usually held in Geneva in May each year and is attended by all delegations from all Member States. The Executive Board is comprised of 32 individuals technically qualified in the field of health; each one designated by a Member State elected to do so by the World Health Assembly. The Secretariat is staffed by some 3,800 health and other experts, working at headquarters and in the six regional offices.

Leadership

Dr. Gro Harlem Burndtland

Director-General

The World Health Organization

Avenue Appia 20, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland

00 41 22 791 21 11

Website

www.who.int

World Intellectual Property Organization

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is an intergovernmental organization with headquarters in Geneva. It is one of the 16 specialized agencies of the United Nations system of organizations. WIPO is responsible for the promotion of the protection of intellectual property throughout the world through cooperation among States, and for the administration of various multilateral treaties dealing with the legal and administrative aspects of intellectual property. Intellectual property comprises two main branches:

- 1) **Industrial property** - chiefly inventions, trademarks, industrial designs, and appellations of origin; and
- 2) **Copyright** - chiefly in literary, musical, artistic, photographic, and audiovisual works.

A substantial part of the activities and the resources of WIPO are devoted to development cooperation with developing countries. The number of State members of WIPO is 171, and several States have developed treaties administered by WIPO.

Leadership

Dr. Kamil Idris
Director General

World Intellectual Property Organization

34, chemin de Colombettes
P.O. Box 18
1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland
41-22 338 9111

Website

www.wipo.org

Organization of American States

18

The Organization of American States (OAS) is the world's oldest regional organization, dating back to the First International Conference of American States, held in Washington, D.C. in 1889 and 1890. The meeting established the International Union of American Republics. The Charter of the OAS was signed in 1948 and entered into force in December, 1991.

The basic purposes of the OAS are to strengthen peace and security of the continent, to promote and consolidate representative democracy with respect for the principle of nonintervention and to provide common action on the part of those States in the event of aggression. In addition, the OAS seeks to promote, by cooperative action, their economic, social and cultural development and to achieve an effective limitation of conventional weapons that will make it possible to devote the largest amount of resources to the economic and social development of the Member States.

The Office of Science and Technology is responsible for helping countries to develop an information infrastructure - telecommunications, information technology and broadcasting. These are essential components of political, economic, social and cultural development. The information infrastructure development needs in the Americas are immense. The governments of the Americas intend to meet these needs by engaging in multiple actions, such as: encouraging private sector investments to

increase participation in telecommunications and information infrastructure sectors; promoting competition; implementing flexible regulatory regimes; stimulating diversity of content, including cultural and linguistic diversity; providing access to information networks for service and information providers; and ensuring universal service so that the benefits of the information infrastructure will be available to all members of society. The Office of Science and Technology's RedHUCyT's main objective is to connect institutions in the member countries to the Internet. The project provides specialized training, and sponsors technical workshops and seminars in the region.

Leadership

César Gaviria

Secretary General

Organization of American States

17th & Constitution Avenues, NW
Washington, DC 20006, USA

202-458-3000

Website

www.oas.org

Asian Development Bank

The Asian Development Bank is a multilateral development finance institution founded in 1966 by 31 member governments to promote the social and economic progress of the Asian and Pacific region. Over the past 31 years, the Bank's membership has grown to 57, of which 41 are from within the region and 16 from outside the region. The Bank gives special attention to the needs of the smaller or less-developed countries and priority to regional, subregional and national projects and programs.

The Bank's principal functions are:

- To extend loans and equity investments for the economic and social development of its developing member countries;
- To provide technical assistance for the preparation and execution of development projects and programs and for advisory services;
- To promote and facilitate investment of public and private capital for development purposes; and
- To respond to requests for assistance in coordinating development policies and plans of its developing member countries.

The two largest shareholders of the Bank in 1997 were Japan and the United States, each accounting for 16 percent of total subscribed capital. Forty-one regional members accounted for 63 percent of total shareholding, while 16 nonregional members contributed 37 percent of the total.

The Bank's headquarters is located in Manila, Philippines. It has resident missions in eight countries, and is opening more each year. The resident missions improve the Bank's coordination with the government and donor agencies; assist with activities related to processing new loans and technical assistance programs and help ensure project quality.

Leadership

Tadao Chino

President

Asian Development Bank

P.O. Box 789, 0980 Manila

Philippines

Website

www.adb.org

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

20

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) was established in 1991. It exists to foster the transition towards open market-oriented economies and to promote private and entrepreneurial initiative in the countries of central and eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States committed to and applying the principles of multiparty democracy, pluralism and market economics.

The EBRD seeks to help its 26 countries of operations to implement structural and sectoral economic reforms, promoting competition, privatization and entrepreneurship, taking into account the specific needs of countries at different stages of transition. Through its investments it promotes private sector activity, the strengthening of financial institutions and legal systems, and the development of the infrastructure needed to support the private sector. The Bank applies sound banking and investment principles in all of its operations.

In fulfilling its role as a catalyst of change, the Bank encourages co-financing and forging direct investment from the private and public sectors, helps to mobilize domestic capital, and provides technical cooperation in relevant areas. In all of its activities, the Bank promotes environmental sound and sustainable development.

Leadership

Horst Köhler

President

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

One Exchange Square

London EC2A 2JN, United Kingdom

22 171 338 6000

Website

www.ebrd.com

African Development Bank Group

The African Development Bank's mandate is to contribute to the economic development and social progress of its regional members - individually and jointly. The Bank's mission is to assist Regional Member Countries (RMCs) to break the vicious cycle of poverty in which they are entrapped. Working towards this goal, the Bank endeavors to facilitate and mobilize the flow of external and domestic resources, public and private, promote investment, and provide technical assistance and policy advice to RMCs.

The Bank's vision has been defined with the objective of the making its operations more client focussed and competitive in the changing global economy. In order to ensure that it is shared by all its stakeholders, the Bank adopted a broad-based consultative process for the elaboration of the vision. Within the Bank, with the staff, the Board of Directors, Regional and Non-regional Governors; and outside the Bank, with some sixty different development agencies and organizations including non-governmental organizations, the civil society, the private sector, bi-lateral development agencies and other Multilateral Finance Institutions.

While the developing world as a whole has made substantial progress in poverty reduction during the past three decades, the gains have not been evenly spread. Africa has lagged behind in both absolute and relative terms. It is currently estimated that between 40 and 45 percent of Africa's 730 million people live in absolute poverty, with about 30 percent in the

extremely poor bracket, 70 percent of whom are women. The challenge to reduce poverty has dynamic dimensions which derive from Africa's relatively high population growth, accelerated degradation of renewable natural resources, growing urbanization, and a continued expansion of the informal sector and underground economy.

The underlying cause of poverty is the lack of access, by the poor, to productive assets, technology and information which keeps them in poverty and denies them access to social services and basic infrastructure. This compounds their problem by depriving them of basic entitlements for effective participation as economic agents in the development effort. The net effect is that the poor are entrapped in a vicious cycle and end up as an economic and social burden to society, rather than effective contributors to economic development. The African Bank Group's goal is central to the achievement of long-term sustainable development of the continent.

Leadership

Omar Kabbaj

President

African Development Bank Group

Rue Joseph Anoma
01 BP 1387, Abidjan 01
Côte d'Ivoire, W. Africa

225 20.44.44

Website

www.afdb.org

Inter-American Development Bank

22

The Inter-American Development Bank, the oldest and largest regional multilateral development institution, was established in December of 1959 to help accelerate economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Bank was created in response to a long-standing desire on the part of the Latin American nations for a development institution that would focus on the pressing problems of the region.

In its 35 plus years of existence, the membership has grown from 19 countries to 46. The Bank's charter states that its principal functions are to utilize its own capital, funds raised by it in financial markets, and other available resources, for financing the developing of the borrowing member countries; to supplement private investment when private capital is not available on reasonable terms and conditions; and to provide technical assistance for the preparation, financing, and implementation of development plans and projects. In carrying out its mission, the Bank has mobilized financing for projects that represent a total investment of \$240 billion. Annual lending has grown dramatically from \$294 million in loans approved in 1961 to \$10 billion in 1998.

During 1998, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the financial crisis in the east and Russia reduced access to external financing at a time when export values faltered. International reserves declined, their exchange rates came under pressure, and the

domestic interest rates rose. To compound the region's difficulties, natural disasters struck many countries with unprecedented strength. El Niño delivered a severe blow to Ecuador, Peru and other countries in the region, while hurricanes devastated the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and Honduras and severely damaged other countries. The IADB made a firm commitment to macroeconomic stability. Fiscal and monetary policies were aimed at curtailing fiscal imbalances and preventing foreign exchange disequilibria. Through sound policies, fiscal deficits were up by a mere 0.8 percent of GDP and major exchange rate depreciations were avoided. As a result, inflation remained under control at a median less than 10 percent. The fundamentals for future growth remained solidly in place.

Leadership

Enrique V. Iglesias

President

Inter-American Development Bank

1300 New York Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20577, USA

(202) 623-1371

Website

www.iadb.org

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, known as UNESCO, was established in 1945, and 20 States accepted membership in 1946. Currently, UNESCO has 186 member States. The main objective of UNESCO is to contribute to peace and security in the world by promoting collaboration among nations through education, science, culture and communication in order to further universal response for justice, for the rule of law, and for the human rights and fundamental freedoms which are affirmed for the peoples of the world, without distinction of race, sex, language or religion, by the Charter of the United Nations. UNESCO performs five principal functions:

- 1) **Prospective studies** - what forms of education, science, culture and communication for tomorrow's world?
- 2) **The advancement, transfer and sharing of knowledge** - relying on primary research, training and teaching activities.
- 3) **Standard-setting action** - the preparation and adoption of international instruments and statutory recommendations.
- 4) **Expertise** - provided to member States for their development policies and projects in the form of "technical co-operation."
- 5) **Exchange of specialized information.**

Three bodies comprise UNESCO:

The General Conference of Member States is the main decision-making body of UNESCO. It meets every two years and determines the policies of the Organization and approves programme and budget. **The Executive Board** is composed of 51 Members and meets twice a year. It is responsible for the execution of the programme adopted by the General Conference. **The Secretariat** consists of the Director-General (DG) and Staff appointed by him or her. The DG prepares the draft programme and budget and formulates proposals for appropriate action. In 1995, 60 UNESCO field offices and units exist in different parts of the world. There are 1,856 staff members at headquarters; 548 in field offices and 79 in field projects.

Leadership

Federico Mayor
Director-General

UNESCO
7, rue de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP
France

33 1 45 68 10 00

Website

www.unesco.org

International Centre for Science and High Technology

24

The International Centre for Science and High Technology (ICS) is an autonomous body operating under the aegis of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). It was established in 1988 as an initiative of Nobel-prize winner Abdus Salam as a UNIDO pilot project. Salam's vision was the creation of a Centre to complement and extend the theoretical research and transfer for scientific know-how of activities of the International Centre for Theoretical Physics, which he directed in Italy. ICS receives a contribution paid on an annual basis by the Italian government through the UNIDO Industrial Development Fund.

The goals of the Centre are to promote industrial development of developing countries and economies in transition, through promotion of innovative technology transfer relevant to national industry and capacity building. Target beneficiaries are national and regional institutes engaged in research and development, small and medium-sized industries operating in the sector of high technology, and policy makers. The technical areas chosen by the Centre for development are chemistry, the environment, high technology and new materials.

The Centre's goals are reached through the organization of training courses, seminars, grants and study visits. The effort is supported by a set of applied informatics tools (databases of technologies, mathematical modeling, process simulation

and image engineering), and by the publication of scientific and technical documents. These, and other activities act as the basis for formulation of collaborative projects, with counterparts in developing countries.

Leadership

Francesco Pizzio

Managing Director

ICS-UNIDO

AREA Science Park, Building L2

Padriciano 99

34012 Trieste, Italy

39 0409228111

Website

www.ics.trieste.it

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is the specialist United Nations agency helping developing countries and transition economies to pursue sustainable industrial development. It provides tailor-made solutions to today's industrial problems by offering a package of integrated services addressing three key concerns:

Competitive economy

Sound environment

Productive employment

UNIDO was established by the UN General Assembly in 1966, and became the sixteenth UN specialized agency in 1985. UNIDO's new integrated package of services was developed and approved by its Member States. The 16 Service Modules were designed to meet the specific needs and requests of developing countries and economies in transition. They are then adapted and customized to the specific needs of individual countries.

In addition, UNIDO has policy-making organs. The UNIDO Secretariat carries out programmes and activities approved by the UNIDO policy-making organs. UNIDO's current membership numbers 168 countries. They meet every two years at the General Conference. UNIDO has numerous field offices and operates a network of Investment Promotion Service offices, which promotes business contacts between industrialized and developing countries and economies in transition. UNIDO has cooperation

agreements and join initiatives with such partners as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Bank.

Leadership

Carlos Alfredo Magariños

Director-General

UNIDO

Bocage

Palais de Nations

CH-1211 Geneva 10

Switzerland

411 9173367

Website

www.unido.org

International Trade Centre

26

The International Trade Centre (ITC) is the focal point for technical cooperation with developing countries in trade promotion. ITC was created by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1964 and since 1968 has been operated by the World Trade Organization and the UN.

ITC works with developing countries and economies in transition to set up effective trade promotion programmes for expanding their exports and improving their import operations. This covers six key areas:

- 1) Product and market development
- 2) Development of trade support services
- 3) Trade information
- 4) Human resource development
- 5) International purchasing and supply management
- 6) Needs assessment programme design for trade promotion

Leadership

J. Denis Bélisle

Executive Director

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC)

Palais des Nations

1211 Geneva 10

Switzerland

41 22 730 01 11

Website

www.intracen.org

International Telecommunications Union

The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) is an international organization within which governments and the private sector coordinate global telecommunications networks and services. The ITU has its roots in telegraph, with the first convention of the International Telegraph Convention in 1865. Twenty European States worked out a framework agreement on common rules to standardize equipment to guarantee generalized interconnection, adopted uniform operating instructions, which hitherto had been different from one country to another. They also laid down common international tariff and accounting rules. Over the ensuing years, the ITU saw dramatic changes in the technology, but also the need for pan-national tariffs and rules. After World War II, the ITU agreed to become a specialized agency of the United Nations.

The work of the ITU is becoming increasingly complex. In the area of telecommunications, new trends are emerging: globalization, deregulation, restructuring, value added network services, convergence (of services as well as technologies), intelligent networks and regional arrangements.

Telecommunications have become a key ingredient in the transborder delivery of many non-telecommunications services such as banking, tourism, transportation, as well as consultancy and information services of various types. This development has led to the transformation of telecommunications

from its earlier status as a public utility to one having a greater nexus with commerce and trade. Currently, 188 countries are members of ITU.

Leadership

Yoshio Utsumi

Secretary-General

International Telecommunications Union

Place des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 20
Switzerland

41 22 7305111

Website

www.itu.int

United Nations International Computing Centre

28

The United Nations International Computing Centre (ICC) was established in Geneva in 1971 as a co-operative setup, providing a wide range of Computing and Communication Services, on a cost recovery basis, to its users worldwide. ICC is managed by a Management Committee representing the Organisations to which it provides services. In order to reflect the changing needs of its Members, ICC's role includes the following:

- To provide information technology services on a full cost-recovery basis;
- To implement Information Systems Co-ordination Committee (ISCC) programmes in accessing UN information by Member States and provide services in relations thereto;
- To assist in exploiting networking and computing technology;
- To provide information management services resulting in reduced overall costs; and
- To give advice and disseminate information on questions related to information management.

ICC participants comprise international organizations associated with the United Nations system of organizations. These organizations fund the main part of the ICC operations. At present, there are 28 participant organizations represented in the ICC Management Committee. Non-

participant users comprise National Governments (Embassies, Missions, etc.), Non-Governmental or Intergovernmental Organizations with Consultative Status with the United Nations or one of its Specialized Agencies, as well as educational and research organizations (universities, research institutes, and so forth.)

International Computing Centre

Palais de Nations
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
41 22 929 14 11

Website

www.unicc.org

The Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth is a unique family of 54 developed and developing nations around the world. It is a voluntary association of independent sovereign states spread over every continent and ocean. Its 1.7 billion people account for 30 percent of the world's population. They are found in every continent and ocean, and are of many religions, races, languages and cultures.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal Organisation of the Commonwealth. Together with its sister organisations, the Commonwealth Foundation, and the Commonwealth of Learning (in Canada), the Secretariat is the Commonwealth's own civil service, effectively carrying out the priorities of its 54 member governments.

Leadership

Emeka Anyaoku

Secretary-General

Commonwealth Secretariat

Marlborough House

Pall Mall,

London SW 1y 5HX

United Kingdom

0171 839 3411

Website

www.thecommonwealth.org

Beginning in 1975, the heads of state or government of the major industrial democracies have been meeting annually to deal with the major economic and political issues facing their domestic societies and the international community as a whole. The six countries at the first Summit, held at Rambouillet, France, were France, the United States, Great Britain, Germany, Japan and Italy. Canada joined them at the 1976 summit, and by the European Community at the 1977 summit. Since then, the G7 membership has been fixed, although 15 developing countries' leaders met with the G7 leaders before the 1989 summit, and the USSR, and then Russia have had a post-Summit dialogue with the G7 since 1991. Starting with the 1994 Summit, the G7 and Russia have met as the P9 (Political 8) following each G7 Summit. The Denver Summit of Eight was a milestone, marking full Russian participation in all but financial and certain economic discussions; and the 1998 Summit saw full Russian participation, thus creating the G8 (although the G7 continues to function along side the formal summits).

The G7/G8 Summit has dealt with macroeconomic management, international trade, and relations with developing countries. From this initial foundation, the Summit has broadened considerably to include microeconomic issues such as employment and the information highway, transnational issues such as the environment, crime and drugs, and a host of political security issues

ranging from human rights through regional security to arms control.

The Summit provides an important occasion for world leaders to discuss major, often complex international issues and to develop the personal relations that help them respond in an effective fashion to sudden crises or shocks. The Summit also gives direction to the international community by setting priorities, defining new issues, and providing guidance to established international organizations. At times, it arrives at decisions that address pressing problems or shape international order more generally.

The most visible part of the G8 process is the Summits themselves, held in the middle of the year, when Heads of State and Governments meet for a weekend. Each year another member of G8 takes over the presidency of the Group. High-ranking collaborators of the leaders, who are called sherpas and sous-sherpas in G8 language, prepare the Summits and the communiqué.

The G7 finance ministers (without Russia) meet several times throughout the year to coordinate macroeconomic and monetary policies. If necessary, the governors of the central banks of G7, and since this year, the European Central Bank, are included.

G8 Leaders

United States

President Bill Clinton

United Kingdom

Prime Minister Tony Blair

Russian Federation

President Boris Yeltsin

Japan

Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi

Italy

Prime Minister Massimo D'Alema

France

President Jacques Chirac

Germany

Chancellor Gerhard Schröder

Canada

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien

Website

G8 Information Centre

www.g7.utoronto.ca

Notes

32





Office of Intergovernmental Solutions
Office of Governmentwide Policy
U.S. General Services Administration
Washington, DC 20405 USA
202-501-0225
martha.dorris@gsa.gov