

Integral Development (CIDI) directs and monitors OAS technical co-operation programmes.

(d) The Inter-American Juridical Committee which acts as an advisory body to the OAS on juridical matters and promotes the development and codification of international law. 11 jurists, elected for four-year terms by the General Assembly, represent all the American States.

(e) The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights which oversees the observance and protection of human rights. Seven members elected for four-year terms by the General Assembly represent all the OAS member states.

(f) The General Secretariat, which is the central and permanent organ of the OAS.

(g) The Specialized Conferences, meeting to deal with special technical matters or to develop specific aspects of inter-American co-operation.

(h) The Specialized Organizations, intergovernmental organizations established by multilateral agreements to discharge specific functions in their respective fields of action, such as women's affairs, agriculture, child welfare, Indian affairs, geography and history, and health.

Headquarters: 17th St. and Constitution Ave., NW,
Washington, D.C., 20006, USA.

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

Secretary-General: José Miguel Insulza (Chile).

Publications. *Charter of the Organization of American States.* 1948.—As Amended by the Protocol of Buenos Aires in 1967 and the Protocol of Cartagena de Indias in 1985; *The OAS and the Evolution of the Inter-American System; Annual Report of the Secretary-General; Status of Inter-American Treaties and Conventions* (annual).

Secretariat for Central American Economic Integration (SIECA)

SIECA (Secretaría de Integración Económica Centroamericana) was created by the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration in Dec. 1960. The General Treaty incorporates the Agreement on the Regime for Central American Integration Industries. In Oct. 1993 the Protocol to the General Treaty on Central Economic Integration, known as the Guatemala Protocol, was signed.

Members. Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua. *Observer:* Panama.

Official language: Spanish.

Headquarters: 4a Avenida 10–25, Zona 14, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala.

Website: <http://www.aic.sieca.int>

Secretary-General: Ernesto Torres Chico (El Salvador).

Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)

Founded in March 1991 by the Treaty of Asunción between Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, MERCOSUR committed the signatories to the progressive reduction of tariffs culminating in the formation of a common market on 1 Jan. 1995. This duly came into effect as a free trade zone affecting 90% of commodities. A common external tariff averaging 14% applies to 80% of trade with countries outside MERCOSUR. Details were

agreed at foreign minister level by the Protocol of Ouro Preto signed on 17 Dec. 1994.

In 1996 Chile negotiated a free-trade agreement with MERCOSUR which came into effect on 1 Oct. Subsequently Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru have all been granted associate member status. Mexico has observer status. Venezuela, which had associate membership between 2004 and 2006, became the fifth member of MERCOSUR in July 2006, although it will not have full voting rights until all the other full members have ratified its entry into the organization. Paraguay has yet to approve Venezuela's full membership.

Organization. The member states' foreign ministers form a Council responsible for leading the integration process, the chairmanship of which rotates every six months. The permanent executive body is the Common Market Group of member states, which takes decisions by consensus. There is a Trade Commission and Joint Parliamentary Commission, an arbitration tribunal whose decisions are binding on member countries, and a secretariat in Montevideo.

Further to the treaty signed by 12 South American countries in May 2008, it is anticipated that Mercosur will gradually be integrated into the new Union of South American Nations.

Headquarters: Dr Luis Piera 1992, Piso 1, 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay.

Website (Spanish and Portuguese only):

<http://www.mercosur.org.uy>

Executive Director of the Secretariat: Agustín Colombo Sierra (Argentina).

Union of South American Nations (UNASUR)

History. Established in May 2008 in Brazil, it is anticipated that the Union of South American Nations will eventually supersede Mercosur and the Andean Community, creating an enlarged customs union with a single market, parliament, secretariat and central bank, based on the European Union structure. UNASUR is the successor body to the now defunct South American Community of Nations (CSN/SACN), founded in 2004. Despite initial problems, progress was made at UNASUR's fourth Summit in Nov. 2010 culminating in the 'Georgetown Declaration', with the attending heads of state and government and foreign ministers highlighting their commitment to working together to achieve a better South America. The Treaty establishing UNASUR became effective on 11 March 2011.

Members. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Asian Development Bank

A multilateral development finance institution established in 1966 to promote economic and social progress in the Asian and Pacific region, the Bank's strategic objectives are to foster economic growth, reduce poverty, improve the status of women, support human development (including population planning) and protect the environment.

The bank's capital stock is owned by 67 member countries, 48 regional and 19 non-regional. The bank makes loans and equity investments, and provides technical assistance grants for the