

Inter-Governmental Council comprising heads of state and government and foreign ministers, with, an integration committee of Ministers and an Inter-Parliamentary Committee. On 2 April 1996 the Presidents of Belarus and Russia signed a treaty providing for political, economic and military integration, creating the nucleus of a *Community of Russia and Belarus*. A further treaty was signed on 22 May 1997, instituting common citizenship, common deployment of military forces and the harmonization of the two economies with a view to the creation of a common currency. The Community was later renamed the *Union of Belarus and Russia* and signed subsequent agreements on equal rights for its citizens and equal conditions for state and private entrepreneurship. In March 1994 the CIS was accorded observer status in the UN.

Ukraine's continued involvement with the CIS was thrown into doubt after Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014.

Headquarters: 220030 Minsk, Kirova 17, Belarus.
Website (Russian only): <http://www.cis.minsk.by>
Executive Secretary: Sergei Lebedev (Russia).

Further Reading

Brzezinski, Z. and Sullivan, P. (eds.) *Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States: Documents, Data and Analysis*. 1996

Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC)

EurAsEC was formed in 2000 to develop economic co-operation and trade and to establish a customs union. The UN General Assembly awarded the organization observer status in 2003. Between 2007 and 2010 a customs union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia was created.

Membership. EurAsEC has five member states (Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan). Uzbekistan joined in 2006 but withdrew in 2008. Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine have observer status, as do the Interstate Aviation Committee and the Eurasian Development Bank.

Organization. The Interstate Council is the supreme governing body, comprising heads of state and government. The Integration Committee has offices in Almaty and Moscow, while the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly is based in St Petersburg and the Community Court has its headquarters in Minsk.

Headquarters: 6 1st Basmany Pereulok, Bldg 4, Moscow 105066, Russia.
Website: <http://www.evrazes.com>
Secretary-General: Tair Mansurov (Kazakhstan).

International Air Transport Association (IATA)

Founded in 1945 for inter-airline co-operation in promoting safe, reliable, secure and economical air services, IATA has approximately 240 members from 113 nations worldwide. IATA is the successor to the International Air Traffic Association, founded in The Hague in 1919, the year of the world's first international scheduled services.

Main offices: IATA Centre, Route de l'Aéroport 33, PO Box 416, CH-1215 Geneva, Switzerland. 800 Place Victoria, PO Box 113, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4Z 1M1. 111 Somerset Road, #14-05 Somerset Wing, Singapore 238164.

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

Director-General: Tony Tyler (UK).

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a Swiss-based impartial, neutral and independent organization ensuring humanitarian protection and assistance for victims of war and other situations of violence.

Established in 1863, the ICRC is a founding member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and of international humanitarian law, notably the Geneva Conventions.

The ICRC is mandated by the international community to be the guardian and promoter of international humanitarian law. It has a permanent mandate under international law to take impartial action for prisoners, the wounded and sick, and civilians affected by conflict.

The ICRC aims to ensure that civilians not taking part in hostilities are spared and protected; to visit prisoners of war and security detainees and ensure that they are treated humanely and according to recognized international standards that forbid torture and other forms of abuse; to transmit messages to and reunite family members separated by armed conflict; to help find missing persons; to offer or facilitate access to basic health care facilities; to provide food, safe drinking water, sanitation and shelter in emergencies; to promote respect for, monitor compliance with and contribute to the development of international humanitarian law; to help reduce the impact of mines and explosive remnants of war on people; and to support national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to prepare for and respond to armed conflict and situations of violence.

The ICRC is a global presence with offices in over 80 countries and some 12,000 staff worldwide. Its HQ is in Geneva, Switzerland.

Headquarters: 19 avenue de la Paix, CH-1202 Geneva, Switzerland.

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

President: Peter Maurer (Switzerland).

Further Reading

Forsythe, David P., *The Humanitarians: The International Committee of the Red Cross*. 2005

Forsythe, David P. and Rieffer-Flanagan, Barbara Ann J., *The International Committee of the Red Cross: A Neutral Humanitarian Actor*. 2007
Moorehead, Caroline, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross*. 1998

International Criminal Court (ICC)

Origin. As far back as 1946 an international congress called for the adoption of an international criminal code prohibiting crimes against humanity and the prompt establishment of an international criminal court, but for more than 40 years little progress was made. In 1989 the end of the Cold War brought a dramatic increase in the number of UN peacekeeping operations and a world where the idea of establishing an International Criminal Court became more viable. The United Nations Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an International Criminal Court took place from 15 June–17 July 1998 in Rome, Italy.