

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.

Aims and Activities. The ICC is a permanent court for trying individuals accused of committing genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, and is thus a successor to the *ad hoc* tribunals set up by the UN Security Council to try those responsible for atrocities in the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. Ratification by 60 countries was required to bring the statute into effect. The court began operations on 1 July 2002 with 139 signatories and after ratification by 76 countries. By early 2017 there had been 124 ratifications, although Burundi, the Gambia and South Africa had signalled their intention to leave the ICC over alleged bias against African countries. However, the new government in the Gambia rescinded its withdrawal decision in Feb. Its first trial, with Thomas Lubanga facing war crimes charges for his role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's civil war, opened on 26 Jan. 2009 and was not concluded until 14 March 2012. Lubanga was found guilty of conscripting and enlisting children under the age of 15 and using them to participate in hostilities.

Judges. The International Criminal Court's first 18 judges were elected in Feb. 2003, with six serving for three years, six for six years and six for nine years. Every three years six new judges are elected. At present the 18 judges, with the year in which their term of office is scheduled to end, are: Joyce Aluoch (Kenya, 2018); Chung Chang-ho (South Korea, 2024); Chile Eboe-Osuji (Nigeria, 2021); Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi (Argentina, 2018); Robert Fremr (Czech Republic, 2021); Geoffrey A. Henderson (Trinidad and Tobago, 2021); Olga Venecia Herrera Carbuccia (Dominican Republic, 2021); Piotr Hofmański (Poland, 2024); Péter Kovács (Hungary, 2024); Antoine Kesiya-Mbe Mindua (Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2024); Sanji Mmasenono Monageng (Botswana, 2018); Howard Morrison (United Kingdom, 2021); Kuniko Ozaki (Japan, 2018); Raul Pangalangan (Philippines, 2021); Marc Pierre Perrin de Brichambaut (France, 2024); Bertram Schmitt (Germany, 2024); Cuno Tarfusser (Italy, 2018); Christine Van Den Wyngaert (Belgium, 2018).

Prosecutor. Fatou Bensouda (The Gambia) was unanimously elected the second prosecutor of the Court on 12 Dec. 2011 and succeeded Luis Moreno-Ocampo (Argentina) on 16 June 2012.

Headquarters: Oude Waalsdorperweg 10, 2597 AK The Hague, Netherlands.

Website: <http://www.icc-cpi.int>

President: Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi (Argentina).

Further Reading

- Baker, Michael N. (ed.) *International Criminal Court: Developments and U.S. Policy*. 2012
- Mendes, Errol, *Peace and Justice at the International Criminal Court: A Court of Last Resort*. 2010
- Reydams, Luc, *Universal Jurisdiction: International and Municipal Perspectives*. 2003
- Schabas, William A., *An Introduction to the International Criminal Court*. 4th ed. 2011
- Struett, Michael J., *The Politics of Constructing the International Criminal Court: NGOs, Discourse, and Agency*. 2008

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

Created in 1995, International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization that supports sustainable democratic change through providing comparative knowledge, assisting in democratic reform, and influencing policies and politics. International IDEA focuses on the ability of democratic institutions to deliver a political system marked by public participation and inclusion, representative and accountable government, responsiveness to citizens' needs and aspirations, and the rule of law and equal rights for all citizens.

Aims and Activities. International IDEA undertakes work through three activity areas: providing comparative knowledge derived from practical experience on democracy-building processes—elections and referendums, constitutions, political parties, women's political empowerment and democracy self-assessments—from diverse contexts around the world; assisting political actors in reforming democratic institutions and processes, and engaging in political processes when invited to do so; influencing democracy-building policies and assistance to political actors.

Membership. International IDEA had 30 full member states and one observer state in Feb. 2017.

Organization. International IDEA has regional operations in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, and has a staff of over 70 worldwide.

Headquarters: Strömsborg, 103 34 Stockholm, Sweden.

Website: <http://www.idea.int>

Secretary-General: Yves Leterme (Belgium).

International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO)

Founded in 1979 as the International Maritime Satellite Organization (Inmarsat) to establish a satellite system to improve maritime communications for distress and safety and commercial applications. Its competence was subsequently expanded to include aeronautical and land mobile communications. Privatization, which was completed in April 1999, transferred the business to a newly created company and the Organization remains as a regulator to ensure that the company fulfils its public services obligations. The company has taken the Inmarsat name and the Organization uses the acronym IMSO. In Feb. 2017 the Organization had 102 member parties.

Organization. The Assembly of all Parties to the Convention meets every two years.

Headquarters: 99 City Road, London EC1Y 1AX, UK.

IMSO Website: <http://www.imso.org>

Email: info@imso.org

Inmarsat Website: <http://www.inmarsat.com>

Director General, IMSO: Capt. Moin Ahmed (Bangladesh).

Chief Executive, Inmarsat Ltd: Rupert Pearce (United Kingdom).

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Founded in 1894 by French educator Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the International Olympic Committee is an international non-governmental, non-profit organization whose members act as