

a Supreme 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*. The agreement establishes a Supreme Council comprising the Presidents, Prime Ministers and Speakers of both countries and the Chairman of the Executive Committee. 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.

Headquarters: 220000 Minsk, Kirava 17, Belarus.

Website: <http://www.cis.minsk.by>

Executive Secretary: Vladimir Rushailo (Russia).

Further Reading

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

With its HQ in Geneva, Switzerland, the ICRC is based in around 80 countries and has a total of more than 12,000 staff.

In situations of conflict the ICRC co-ordinates the response by national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies and their International Federation. It acts in consultation with all other organizations involved in humanitarian work.

The ICRC relies for its financing on voluntary contributions from States signatories to the Geneva Conventions, organizations such as the European Union, and public and private sources.

In 2004 ICRC delegates visited more than 570,000 people deprived of their freedom in some 80 countries. ICRC water, sanitation and construction projects catered for the needs of around 20m. people. The ICRC supported hospitals and health care facilities serving some 2.8m. people. It also provided essential household goods to more than 2.2m. people, food aid to 1.3m. people and assistance to another 1.1m. people in the form of sustainable food production and micro-economic initiatives.

Headquarters: 19 Avenue de la Paix, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland.

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

President: Jakob Kellenberger (Switzerland).

Further Reading

Moorehead, Caroline, *Dunant's Dream: War, Switzerland and the History of the Red Cross*. HarperCollins, London, 1998

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 250 members from 136 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. 77 Robinson Road, #05-00 SIA Building, Singapore 068896.

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

Director-General: Giovanni Bisignani (Italy).

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of war and internal violence and to provide them with assistance.

Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and of international humanitarian law, notably the Geneva Conventions. As the promoter and guardian of international humanitarian law, the ICRC must encourage respect for the law. It does so by spreading knowledge of the humanitarian rules and by reminding parties to conflicts of their obligations.

The ICRC has a permanent mandate under international law to take impartial action for prisoners, the wounded and sick, and civilians affected by conflict.

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 International Criminal Court is a permanent court for trying individuals who have been 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 Jan. 2007 the number of ratifications had increased to 104.

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 will be elected. At present the 18 judges, with the year in which their term of office is scheduled to end, are: René Blattmann (Bolivia, 2009); Maureen Harding Clark (Ireland, 2012); Fatoumata Dembele Diarra (Mali, 2012); Sir Adrian Fulford (United Kingdom, 2012); Karl Hudson-Phillips (Trinidad and Tobago, 2012); Claude Jorda (France, 2009); Hans-Peter Kaul (Germany, 2015); Philippe Kirsch (Canada, 2009); Erkki Kourula (Finland, 2015); Akua Kuenyehia (Ghana, 2015); Elizabeth Odio Benito (Costa Rica, 2012); Georghios Pikis (Cyprus, 2009); Navanethem Pillay (South Africa, 2009); Mauro Politi (Italy, 2009); Song Sang-hyun (South Korea, 2015); Sylvia Helena de Figueiredo Steiner (Brazil, 2012); Ekaterina Trendafilova (Bulgaria, 2015); Anita Ušacka (Latvia, 2015).