Aims. The ICFTU aims to promote the interests of working people and to secure recognition of workers' organizations as free bargaining agents; to reduce the gap between rich and poor; and to defend fundamental human and trade union rights. In 1996 it campaigned for the adoption by the WTO of a social clause, with legally binding minimum labour standards.

Organization. The Congress meets every four years. The 18th Annual World Congress was held in Miyazaki, Japan in Dec. 2004. It elects the General Secretary and an Executive Board of 53 members nominated on an area basis for a four-year period. Five seats are reserved for women, nominated by the Women's Committee, and one reserved for a representative of young workers. The Board meets at least once a year. Various committees cover economic and social policy, violation of trade union and other human rights, trade union co-operation projects and also the administration of the International Solidarity Fund. There are joint ICFTU–Global Union Federations for co-ordinating activities.

The ICFTU has branch offices in Geneva, New York and Washington, and regional organizations in Latin America (Caracas), Asia (Singapore) and Africa (Nairobi).

Headquarters: Bd. du Roi Albert II, N° 5, bte 1, Brussels 1210, Belgium.
Website: http://www.icftu.org
e-mail: intnetpo@icftu.org
General Secretary: Guy Ryder (UK).
President: Sharan Burrow (Australia).

Publications. Trade Union World (monthly); Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights (annual); ICFTU On-Line (daily electronic news bulletin). Other publications available; contact the press department.

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 Nov. 2005 the number of ratifications had increased to 100.

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); 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); Georgios 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 Usacka (Latvia, 2015).

Prosecutor. Luis Moreno-Ocampo (Argentina) was elected the first prosecutor of the Court on 21 April 2003.

Headquarters: Maanweg 174, 2516 AB The Hague, Netherlands.
Website: http://www.icc-cpi.int

Further Reading
Reydams, Luc, Universal Jurisdiction: International and Municipal Perspectives. OUP, 2003

International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

Created in 1995, International IDEA is an intergovernmental organization that promotes sustainable democracy worldwide. Global in membership and independent of specific national interests, IDEA works with both new and long-established democracies. IDEA brings together those who analyse and monitor trends in democracy and those who engage in political reform. Its partners include international, regional and national bodies devoted to democratic principles.

Aims and Activities. IDEA aims to: assist countries in developing and strengthening democratic institutions; offer researchers, policymakers, activists and professionals a forum to discuss democratic principles; blend research and field experience, and develop practical tools to improve democratic processes; promote transparency, accountability and efficiency in managing elections; help local citizens evaluate, monitor and promote democracy. The principal areas of activity include: democracy building and conflict management; electoral processes; political parties, including political equality and participation.

Membership. The International IDEA had 24 full member states and one observer state in Jan. 2006.

Organization. IDEA has regional offices in Armenia, Costa Rica, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, Peru and South Africa. In 2005 there were 51 international employees.

Headquarters: Strömsborg, 103 34 Stockholm, Sweden.
Website: http://www.idea.int
Secretary-General: Vidar Helgesen (Norway).

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