

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Observers. (22) Andean Development Corporation (CAF), China, Commission of the European Communities, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Inter-American Development Bank, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Italy, Latin American Economic System (SELA), Nicaragua, Organization of American States, Panama, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, UN Development Programme, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Official languages: Portuguese, Spanish.

Headquarters: Calle Cebollatí 1461, Casilla de Correos 20005, 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay.

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

Secretary-General: Juan Francisco Rojas Penso (Venezuela).

LATIN AMERICAN RESERVE FUND

Established in 1991 as successor to the Andean Reserve Fund, the Latin American Reserve Fund assists in correcting payment imbalances through loans with terms of up to four years and guarantees extended to members, to co-ordinate their monetary, exchange and financial policies and to promote the liberalization of trade and payments in the Andean sub-region.

Members. Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela.

Official language: Spanish.

Headquarters: Edificio Banco de Occidente, Carrera 13, No. 27–47, Piso 10, Santafe de Bogota, DC, Colombia.

Website: <http://www.flar.net>

Executive President: Julio Velarde (Peru).

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

Origin. On 14 April 1890 representatives of the American republics, meeting in Washington at the First International Conference of American States, established an International Union of American Republics and, as its central office, a Commercial Bureau of American Republics, which later became the Pan-American Union. This international organization's object was to foster mutual understanding and co-operation among the nations of the western hemisphere. This led to the adoption on 30 April 1948 by the Ninth International Conference of American States, at Bogotá, Colombia, of the Charter of the Organization of American States. This coordinated the work of all the former independent official entities in the inter-American system and defined their mutual relationships. The Charter of 1948 was subsequently amended by the Protocol of Buenos Aires (1967) and the Protocol of Cartagena de Indias (1985).

Members. This is on a basis of absolute equality, with each country having one vote and there being no veto power. *Members (2004):* Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba (suspended 1962), Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, USA, Uruguay, Venezuela.

Permanent Observers. Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, EU, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece,