

**Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Rights**

Contact: Greg Puley

Address: Apartado 8-6410-1000, San José, Costa Rica

Email: greg@arias.or.cr

Website: www.arias.or.cr/Eindice.htm

Telephone: (506) 255-2955 / Fax: (506) 255-2244

**Organization's mandate/goals:**

The Arias Foundation was created by former Costa Rican president (1986-90) and 1987 Nobel Peace Laureate Oscar Arias. Dr. Arias created the foundation in order to further his vision of democracy and non-violence. The mission of the Foundation is to promote just and peaceful societies in Central America and other regions.

The Foundation's continuing work is divided among three active and expanding programs: the Centre for Human Progress; the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation and the Centre for Organized Participation.

The Centre for Human Progress has two main initiatives: gender development and human rights. The Centre for Peace and Reconciliation is involved in various issues, including the First Central American Forum on the Proliferation of Light Weapons, Central American Dialogue, International Code of Conduct, Demilitarization and Permanent Security, Conflict Prevention and Democratic Governance and Development. The Centre for Organized Participation deals with a host of issues, including Law and Civil Society, Communication and Coordination, New Mechanisms for Resource Mobilization and NGO's as advocates for Social Change. Currently the Centre is coordinating international effort aimed at developing a Framework Convention on Small Arms.

**Areas of expertise relevant to 2001 UN Conference on Small Arms:**

**Human and Social Development -- *Promote respect for human rights***

The Centre for Human Progress, one of the three active programs, is dedicated to gender development and gender human rights. The purpose of the Center is to promote equality of opportunities for women and gender equity for the Central American population. It proposes to achieve these goals by means of a process involving research, dissemination, education and communication.

**Consultation, Co-operation and Information Exchange -- *Coalition building***

The Center for Peace and Reconciliation (CPR) seeks to promote pluralistic participation in the search for and consolidation of strategies to achieve lasting peace and security. The CPRs work is mostly focused in Central America, with more recent projects extending beyond this region. The purpose of the Center for Organized Participation is to strengthen the participation and actions of civil society in Central America by working together with civil society organizations to consolidate their proactive role in the development of the region.