

PRESIDENT OSCAR ARIAS

Oscar Arias Sanchez (surname Arias) was born on September 13, 1940 in Costa Rica. He graduated in economics and law from the University of Costa Rica, and obtained a Master's degree in economics at the London School of Economics and a Ph.D. in political science at the University of Essex.

Dr. Arias was Professor of Political Science at the University of Costa Rica from 1969 to 1972. During this period he also served as Economic Counsellor to the President of Costa Rica (1970-71) and Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the Central Bank of Costa Rica (1970-72).

Appointed Minister of National Planning and Economy in 1972, Dr. Arias continued in this position until 1977, and also served as a Director of the Central Bank of Costa Rica.

In 1975 Dr. Arias became International Secretary of the Partido de Liberacion Nacional (PLN), and entered electoral politics in 1978 as a member of the National Assembly of Costa Rica, serving in this latter body until 1981. Meanwhile, he was also elected as Secretary General of the PLN in 1979, and in 1985 won that party's presidential nomination.

Dr. Arias was elected President of Costa Rica on February 2, 1986 and was inaugurated on May 8, 1986 for a four-year term (only one term is allowed under the Costa Rican Constitution).

It was through the initiative of Dr. Arias that the Esquipulas II Accord was signed by all the Central American presidents in August 1987. This accord provides a framework for future Central American peace negotiations. For this work, President Arias was awarded the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize. He

