

BIOGRAPHY OF JOSÉ AYALA-LASSO

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Born in Quito, Ecuador, on January 29, 1932, José Ayala-Lasso holds degrees in Law and Economics, International Law, and Political and Social Sciences from the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Ecuador, the Universidad Central del Ecuador and the Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium respectively.

Before joining his country's foreign service, Mr. Ayala-Lasso taught at the International Law Institute of the Universidad Central del Ecuador and served as Deputy Legal Secretary of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, and as Vice-President of the Ecuadorean National Commission of the Alliance for Progress. He has published articles relating to international affairs in newspapers and journals and is currently preparing a book on the UN Security Council.

Over the course of his diplomatic career, Mr. Ayala-Lasso headed Ecuador's delegation to the 1977 and 1978 sessions of the UN General Assembly and the meeting of the "Group of 77" developing countries, as well as to the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and to the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea. Mr. Ayala-Lasso also served as his country's Ambassador to Peru, Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Union (former European Economic Community). Before that, he held a number of posts at the Embassies of Ecuador to Japan, the Republic of Korea, China and Italy. In 1977, Mr. Ayala-Lasso was Ecuador's Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Until his appointment as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in February 1994, Mr. Ayala-Lasso had been Ecuador's Permanent Representative to the United Nations since 1989. He also served as Ecuador's Permanent Representative to the Security Council in 1991-1992 and was President of the Council during August 1991 and September 1992. Also in 1992, he was Chairman of the Security Council Committee on the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Ayala-Lasso chaired the UN Working Group that considered the establishment of the post of High Commissioner for Human Rights and other aspects of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that emerged from the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993.

Mr. Ayala-Lasso is married and has four children.