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## Notes to the user

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### Introduction

The publication of this new specialized volume in the *Yearbook of International Organizations* series, appearing as Volume 5 for the first time in 2001, is in response to the many enquiries the editors receive for statistical information on international organizational activity.

The volume is also a response to the needs of many for new ways of thinking about the complexity of international organization networks – and the networks of problems with which they deal, and the networks of strategies advocated in that process.

The editors, the Union of International Associations (UIA), are faced with a major challenge of how to enable people to obtain greater insight into complex networks of relationships amongst international organizations, world problems, strategies in response to them, human development and human values. The challenge is to compensate for the natural tendency to rely on focused information on urgent issues by enabling people to work with contextual information and configurations of related issues and responses to them.

Since the 1970s the UIA has been exploring the visualization of international organization relationships (see Part B in this volume) and the possibility of some form of *Atlas of International Relationships*. Investigation of the latter was supported for a time by the publisher of this Yearbook and by UNESCO in the early 1990s but has only become feasible with recent software and hardware developments.

The main features of the volume in relation to the others in this series are:

**Transfer from Volumes 1-4 of this Yearbook series:** As from the 37<sup>th</sup> edition, all tables previously included as appendices in the Volumes 1B, 2, 3 and 4 now appear in this Volume 5: *Statistics, Visualizations and Patterns*. Volumes 1 to 4 include only tabular statistical summaries of the entries actually printed in those volumes.

**Historical data and analyses:** In addition to all the statistical tables formerly or currently included in Volumes 1 to 4, this volume contains more extensive historical statistical summaries and presentations of statistical data that have not previously been analysed for the Yearbook series.

**Meetings of international organizations:** This volume also includes statistical data from the international meetings database for meetings of international organizations as published in the *International Congress Calendar*.

**Preoccupations of international organizations:** The statistics in this Volume 5 include data on the number of problem and strategy profiles, the extensive network of relationships among them (including analyses of loops) and with international organizations. These are derived from a companion series, the 3-volume *Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential* (1994-95, 4th edition, subsequently updated in a continuing online version).

**Graphics:** The statistical data are also shown in standard graphical formats (pie charts, graphs, bar charts, etc.) and are accompanied by commentary on criteria, methodology and

interpretation, including possible shortcomings and biases in the data and their analysis.

**Visualizations and patterns:** Representations of non-quantitative relationships and patterns between organizations, problems and strategies are provided in the form of: network (spring) maps, concept (decision) maps, organization charts, etc. Online variants in colour of many of these may also be accessed from the web URLs referenced on individual presentations. In this edition, preference has been given to historical documents relating to visualization.

### Caveat

**Coverage:** The Yearbook attempts to cover all “international organizations”, according to a broad range of criteria. It therefore includes many bodies that may be perceived as not being fully international, or as not being organizations as such, or as not being of sufficient significance to merit inclusion. Such bodies are nevertheless included, so as to enable users to make their own evaluation in the light of their own criteria. See Appendix 7: “Types of organization” for further information.

**Sources:** The descriptions of organizations in this Yearbook are based on information received from a variety of sources. Priority is normally given to information received from the organizations themselves, and every effort is made by the editors to check this information against other sources (periodicals, official documents, media, etc.). Organizations may over time change their purpose or characteristics. The editors therefore use information from a variety of sources to present the most appropriate static picture of what is essentially a dynamic situation.

Because an organization's view of itself has been given priority, and because secondary sources confirming this view are not always available or reliable, the editors cannot take responsibility for any resulting inaccuracies in the information presented. The editors apologize for any inconvenience this might cause the user.

The final evaluation of the information presented here must be left to the users of this volume. See Appendix 6: “Contents of organization descriptions”, Appendix 7: “Types of organization” and Appendix 8: “Editorial problems and policies” for further information.

**Country names:** The geographical names used in this book are chosen for the sake of brevity and common usage. Wherever possible, the country (or territory) name preferred by the organization concerned is used, providing this is possible within the limits of standardization required for mailing or statistical purposes. It is important to note that some organizations insist on the inclusion of territories on the same basis as countries, or on the inclusion of countries or territories that are not recognized by other organizations. It is not the intention of the editors to take a position with regard to the political or diplomatic implications of geographical names or continental groupings used.