

# Nomination form

## International Memory of the World Register

### 1.0 Checklist

Nominees may find the following checklist useful before sending the nomination form to the International Memory of the World Secretariat. The information provided in italics on the form is there for guidance only and should be of deleted once the sections have been completed.

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|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Summary completed (section 1)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nomination and contact details completed (section 2)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Declaration of Authority signed and dated (section 2)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | If this is a joint nomination, section 2 appropriately modified, and <b>all</b> Declarations of Authority obtained  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Documentary heritage identified (sections 3.1 – 3.3)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | History/provenance completed (section 3.4)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bibliography completed (section 3.5)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Names, qualifications and contact details of up to three independent people or organizations recorded (section 3.6)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of owner completed (section 4.1)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of custodian – if different from owner – completed (section 4.2)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of legal status completed (section 4.3)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of accessibility completed (section 4.4)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of copyright status completed (section 4.5)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Evidence presented to support fulfilment of the criteria? (section 5)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Additional information provided (section 6)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Details of consultation with stakeholders completed (section 7)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Assessment of risk completed (section 8)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Summary of Preservation and Access Management Plan completed. If there is no formal Plan attach details about current and/or planned access, storage and custody arrangements (section 9) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other information provided – if applicable (section 10)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Suitable reproduction quality photographs identified to illustrate the documentary heritage. (300dpi, jpg format, full-colour preferred).   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Copyright permissions forms signed and attached. Agreement to propose item(s) for inclusion on the World Digital Library if inscribed   |

# Nomination form International Memory of the World Register

*Abolition of the Army in Costa Rica*

ID Code [2016-42]

## 1.0 Summary (max 200 words)

The National Archive of Costa Rica nominates two documents under its custody, on the abolition of the army in Costa Rica; it is an example to the world that it is possible to live in an unarmed democracy.

This was a decision of the provisional Government board, immediately after an armed conflict, which is even more worthy and it has allowed Costa Rica to become an example at world level, of a pacifist and civilian nation, resolving conflicts and external threats by means of instruments provided by International Law.

Since 1949, Costa Rica became the first country in the world to abolish the army. The decision gave institutional strength to the regime of civility of Costa Rica's political life. At the international level, the abolition of the army marked a new experience for diplomacy, giving pacifist will and credibility before the world, and showing it is possible for a country to live without an army, without armed forces, and investing these resources in greater and better social development. It proves that a State can be voluntarily disarmed, achieving a better distribution of richness, prioritizing development of social aspects such as health and education as not investing in weapons, contributing to a population with more rights, more stable and developed.

## 2.1 Name of nominator (person or organization)

*National Archive of Costa Rica*

## 2.2 Relationship to the nominated documentary heritage

*Custodian*

## 2.3 Contact person(s) (to provide information on nomination)

*Virginia Chacón Arias, Chief Executive of the National Archive*

## 2.4 Contact details

Name	Address	
<i>Virginia Chacón Arias</i>	<i>Curridabat, 900 meters south and 150 west from Centro Comercial Plaza of the Sol, San José, Costa Rica</i>	
<i>Javier Gómez Jiménez</i>		
Telephone	Facsimile	Email
<i>(506) 2283-1400</i>	<i>(506) 22347312</i>	<i>directora@dgan.go.cr</i>

Date

## 3.0 Identity and description of the documentary heritage

### 3.1 Name and identification details of the items being nominated

If inscribed, the exact title and institution(s) to appear on the certificate should be given

The documents are in the Congress documentary collection, which is open and currently in the Legislative Assembly, whose order dates are from 1823 to 1990, and the one known as Founding Board of the Second

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Republic, with order dates of the years 1948-1953.

### **Abolition of the army**

1. Decree No. 249 of the Founding Board of the Second Republic (October 11<sup>th</sup> of 1949), stipulating the transfer of the premises of what was the "Bella Vista" quarters to the University of Costa Rica, as a donation to serve the purposes of the National Museum. In this decree's whereas it is mentioned, so as to give a purely civil appearance to the political structure of the State that the army has been suppressed as permanent institution. ANCR, Founding Board of the Second Republic, 5. (página 158 a 160)

2. Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica of 1949, the army is outlawed in its article 12 ANCR, Congreso, 21341.

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### **3.4 History/provenance**

The documents are kept in the repositories of the Historical Archive, of the National Archive of Costa Rica, under suitable conditions for their conservation, under controlled temperature conditions and humidity.

The documents addressing the subject of the army's abolition in Costa Rica are conserved in the Congress' and Founding Board of the Second Republic's collection, which were added to the National Archive through transfers carried out by documentation-producing entities, following established records and controls.

The entry of the nominated documents is consigned in the Transfer Record of the years 1910-1962 of the National Archive of Costa Rica.

### **4.0 Legal information**

#### **4.1 Owner of the documentary heritage (name and contact details)**

Name	Address		
General Directorate of the National Archive of Costa Rica	Curridabat. 900 meters south and 150 west from Centro Comercial Plaza del Sol, San José, Costa Rica		
Telephone (506) 2283-1400	Facsimile (506) 22347312	Email directora@dgan.go.cr	

#### **4.2 Custodian of the documentary heritage (name and contact details if different from the owner)**

Name	Address		
Telephone	Facsimile	Email	

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### **4.3 Legal status**

Act N° 7202 of the National Archive System of October 24<sup>th</sup> of 1990, bestows the General Directorate of the National Archive the function of custodian of the Nation's documentary heritage, as established in the following articles:

Article 3: All the documents with scientific and cultural value are movable property and part of Costa Rica's scientific-cultural heritage. Determination of the document's scientific-cultural value shall lie with the National Commission for Selection and Removal of Documents.

Regarded of scientific-cultural are those text documents, manuscripts or printed materials, graphs, audiovisual and machine-legible, that because of their contents serve as testimony and express Costa Rican reality's development, such as: minutes, agreements, letters, decrees, reports, laws, resolutions, maps, blueprints, posters, photographs, films, recordings, magnetic tapes, "diskettes", and the others stated in the regulation of this law.

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Article 4: The documents regarded of scientific-cultural value must be safeguarded in the diverse public administration archives of the country. Once the deadlines for referral are complied with, they shall be transferred to the General Directorate of the National Archive.

Article 10: Unhindered access to all the documents produced or in custody of the institutions referred to in article second of this law is guaranteed.

In the case of documents declared secret of State, of restricted access, they shall lose this status after thirty years of having been produced, and made available for scientific-cultural research when duly verified, provided other constitutional rights are not disrupted.

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#### **4.4 Accessibility**

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The documents are of public access. The original ones are digitized, so they are supplied to users in this form.

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#### **4.5 Copyright status**

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Describe the copyright status of the item(s) / collection

Is no copyright.

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### **5.0 Assessment against the selection criteria**

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#### **5.1 Authenticity.**

The documents presented correspond to originals. The provenance and entry into the National Archive of Costa Rica is documented, there is evidence to show documents are authentic.

Since the creation of the National Archive in 1881, order was issued of transferring "all the papers, books, files, dockets and protocols, relating to civil, criminal, ecclesiastic, military, municipal matters, from Finance and Administration, dated previous to 1850, inclusive". (Article 2, Decree XXV of July 23<sup>d</sup> of 1881), to their office; therefore, the documents presented are part of an ongoing process of transfer, in coordination with the Governments offices.

For the case of the nominated documents, their entry is consigned in the Transfer Record of years 1910-1962.

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#### **5.2 World significance**

The documents nominated by the National Archive of Costa Rica on the army's abolition in Costa Rica, show a decision with significant impact on current Costa Rican society, a legacy of priceless value for future generations.

Costa Rica was the first country in the world to abolish its army. This historical process is an accurate expression of the civilian tradition developing in Costa Rican society; outstanding are respect for liberty, respect for human life, defense of human rights and the pacifist sentiment. Thus Costa Rican democracy has become a letter of presentation of the country's external policy.

The decision of the Governing Board thus gave institutional strength to the regime of civility of Costa Rica's political life. Stemming from that act, the country's external security was deposited in the solidarity and support others nations would give to Costa Rica in case of a conflict. It also granted

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credibility to the world of Costa Rican people's pacifist will. It represented an act of confidence in the international cooperation instruments for collective security. In the month of August of 1948 the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (Rio Treaty) had been approved by the Organization of American States (OAS), which remained open so states of the continent could accede.

In the following decades there were different occasions Costa Rica had to encounter challenges to its external security, even aggressions to the national territory; in all of them the Nation's response has been based on International Law and the use of pacifist methods for solution of disputes.

In these times when there are nations whose armed forces are still an instrument of oppression and unnecessary budget investment, generating poverty, the abolition of the army means a worldwide symbol.

The abolition of the army is part of a vital decision where arms would no longer be a political means and excessive expenditure of a Republic's budget. This provision permitted Costa Rica to be an example of a pacifist nation, where the national budget could have a new destination in the fields of education, culture, health, and others, for benefit of the entire population.

The army's abolition shows that for a small country, with very limited resources and influence on international policy, it is not necessary to have a military institution to protect it from external threats; it is a decisive lesson to consolidate our political institutions.

A culture of peace and civility is strengthened, becoming stronger over the years, and producing other future decisions such as a proclamation of neutrality and the peace plan for Central America, of great regional and global impact.

Thus it becomes evident how the act of abolishing the army is of great relevance for humanity, since an institution seen as intrinsically related to the State, and a referent of many nations, Costa Rica has proved is not essential, even dispensed with and yet possible to preserve peace.

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### **5.3 Comparative criteria:**

***Does the heritage meet any of the following tests? (It must meet at least one of them.)***

#### **1 Time**

At the international level, the army's abolition marked a new experience for diplomacy. After that act, the country's external security was placed in the solidarity and support other nations would offer Costa Rica in case of a conflict, since in cases of external threats, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance (TIAR) (Rio Treaty) of the Organization of American States (OAS) would be employed.

The country's political stability achieved after 1948 was an example confirming the pacifist conduct of a country without army before the international community. Thus, Costa Rican democracy became a letter of presentation for the country's external policy.

It was an act of trust in the international cooperation instruments for collective security.

It was of great impact to the world, since no government contemplated doing without an army in this historical turning point since it was the Cold War, World War II being recently over.

#### **3 People**

Not needing an organized entity to solve internal or external conflicts using armed forces evinces respect for human rights and life. This allowed Costa Ricans early in their political-social evolution to have a very ingrained pacifist culture.

For this reason Costa Rica becomes again exemplary to the world, being a referent when preferring and emphasizing civil, non-military institutions.

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#### **4 Subject and theme**

The relevance of the army's abolition, is that Costa Rica in a particular moment of its history- against all odds- became the first unarmed democracy of the planet; it reminds us of the ever present, yet valid utopia of Thomas Moore's dream of eradicating the army, least democratic of existing political institutions; the one most openly opposing each and every one of the values of the foundations of this political system.

#### **6 Social/ spiritual/ community significance:**

Costa Rican society's identity doesn't have the referent of armed forces; having a deep-rooted awareness of not needing an army, but is also clear that resources not used for military expenses are invested in health, education, and culture, among others.

Lack of an army had a social meaning of great value and being Costa Rican is a global referent.

### **6.0 Contextual information**

#### **6.1 Rarity**

The documents are unique and irreplaceable; therefore, finding an original someplace else is not possible.

The documentation submitted has the particularity of having been issued by the first and only legally competent decision making body; they were also transferred officially to the National Archive of Costa Rica, as consigned in the Transfer Record of the years 1910-1962.

They have the signature of persons occupying political positions of the historical context and the persons appealing to their right to recur to this high tribunal; their physical characteristics also correspond to documents from the period.

The documents are unique as there are no precedents or similar ones of the same period expressing a country's decision of no longer having its army.

#### **6.2 Integrity**

The documentation is complete, and has not been altered or damaged. The documents have not undergone restoration processes that could originate losses or modifications. From its moment of entry to the National Archive of Costa Rica the documentation has been preserved intact, respecting the principle of origin.

All the documents are integral part of a documentary resource. Each document is individually comprehensible, so it fulfills with documentary until integrity, but is also part of a documentary context, and so are pieces which united allow knowing the historical circumstances when they were created.

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