

was determined that middle powers like itself should be given the opportunity of making a meaningful contribution, in keeping with their wartime efforts, to the designing of a security system and the subsequent maintenance of the world's security and prosperity. For Canada, that meant a considerable contribution.

During the next year, documents were prepared by the four great powers as a basis for the Dumbarton Oaks conversations that took place in Washington in the summer and autumn of 1944. From these quadripartite conversations emerged detailed proposals, which, in April 1945, were placed before the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco. The House of Commons enthusiastically approved Canada's acceptance of the invitation to attend the San Francisco Conference and subsequent membership in "an effective international organization for the maintenance of international peace and security". After two months of discussion, the conference reached agreement on the Charter of the United Nations and the annexed Statute of the International Court of Justice. These were adopted unanimously by the 50 participating states and came into force on October 24, 1945.

From Covenant to Charter

In 1919, when the Covenant of the League of Nations was being written, Canada was intent on becoming a full member of the organization in order to assert a new international status that had been won by its heavy sacrifices in the First World War, but it declined to play even a modest role in the shaping of a new international order; indeed, it resisted the idea of having all members of the League take part in a joint guarantee of the territorial integrity of all other members. By 1945, Canada had learnt a lesson from the failure of the League of Nations and experience in the Second World War. With the development of atomic weapons, guided missiles and long-range aircraft, it was evident that the world was interdependent, that no nation could