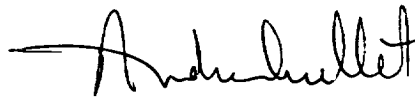


Message from the Minister of Foreign Affairs

Fifty years ago, as the Second World War was coming to a close, the allied countries gathered in San Francisco to create the United Nations - a new organization committed to promoting peace and security in the world and to advancing the human condition. Canada was among those countries and has been an active and important member of the United Nations in its first half century. It has been said that the United Nations brings out the best in Canada and in its foreign policy. Indeed, Canada has been an influential participant and Canadians have shown leadership in many of the crucial moments of UN history. Our most famous contribution was in 1956 when Lester B. Pearson conceived the first peacekeeping mission. Canadians have been members of almost all peacekeeping missions since then. Our peacekeepers are just some of the many Canadians who have worked behind the scenes to implement declarations and conventions and to do the day-to-day work that allows the UN to improve people's lives around the world.

This reference guide has been produced in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the UN. Our goal is to promote understanding of the organization and of Canada's noteworthy contributions. It addresses the goals that Canada holds for the UN and explains how that vast organization works. This document is also an expression of the importance we as Canadians place on the UN and our determination to see the organization continue as the main forum for international discussion on major issues such as the environment, human rights, disarmament, and peacekeeping.

I hope that through this book young Canadians will learn of the important work that is done at the UN. The spirit of co-operation that initiated the organization and that Canadians have perpetuated through their work at the UN can be continued and improved into the future through better understanding of this vital organization.



André Ouellet