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# Presidential Documents

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**Title 3—****Proclamation 7044 of October 23, 1997****The President****United Nations Day, 1997****By the President of the United States of America****A Proclamation**

In April of 1945, representatives of 50 nations gathered in San Francisco for the United Nations Conference on International Organization. The leaders assembled for that historic meeting were not idle dreamers. They were experienced statesmen and hard realists, horrified by the staggering destruction and human misery wrought by two world wars, and convinced that the conduct of international affairs must change. The United Nations Charter that emerged from their deliberations was a document both wise and hopeful—wise in its recognition that lasting peace comes only with respect for the dignity and value of every human being, and hopeful in its determination to protect future generations from the affliction of war.

As with all human enterprises, the United Nations has had its share of failure and success in the 5 decades since its Charter was ratified. But no one can dispute that the U.N. has worked to make the world a better place. Human suffering knows no borders, and men and women of goodwill from nations across the globe have dedicated their skills and energy to U.N. programs committed to relieving such suffering. For half a century, the organizations and programs of the United Nations have fought hunger and disease, defended human rights, provided disaster relief, taught sustainable development, and cared for refugees.

The United Nations has also fulfilled its mission as a force for peace in the world. For 50 years, it has helped to avert another world war and prevent nuclear holocaust. Today, it continues working to keep nations like El Salvador, Haiti, Cyprus, and Bosnia from further bloodshed. It serves as a voice for the international community in defining acceptable behavior and punishing those states that ignore the most basic global norms of conduct. And the United Nations has become a vital international crossroads, where men and women of every race, culture, religion, and ethnic background can come together to share their common hopes and dreams.

The leaders who gathered in San Francisco so many years ago would scarcely recognize our world today. For the first time in history, more than half the world's people freely choose their own governments. Free markets are expanding, bringing with them exciting opportunities for growth and prosperity. The satellite and the microchip have revolutionized human communication, changing forever the way we live and work and interact. In this new global community, the U.N. mission is as important as it was in the waning days of World War II—pursuing peace and security, promoting human rights, and striving to help move people from poverty to prosperity.

We in the United States must continue our efforts to help the United Nations rise to the challenges of our time. Thanks to an ongoing reform process, we have seen substantial improvements in management, administrative accountability, and the setting of priorities by the U.N. This progress has set the stage for broader efforts to ensure that the United Nations is fully prepared to continue to pursue the goals laid down in its Charter.

As we observe United Nations Day this year, let us remember all those whose foresight and determination created this great international institution, and let us thank all those who, with courage and conviction, continue to fulfill its vital missions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Friday, October 24, 1997, as United Nations Day. I encourage all Americans to acquaint themselves with the activities and accomplishments of the United Nations, and to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities furthering the goal of international cooperation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "W" and "C".