



The United Nations

Still the Best Hope for Humankind?



By Douglas Mattern

Although often maligned, misunderstood, and even maliciously used as a scapegoat by governments and uninformed individuals, the United Nations remains the only pivotal global force to move toward the world community that is imperative for our civilization to survive and move forward to the 21st century.

It is important to remember that the creation of the UN was something of a miracle itself, coming as it did during one of the darkest periods of human history: World War II. A foundation of principles began as early as 1941, as embodied in the Atlantic Charter designed by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill. In 1942, a total of 47 allied nations agreed to a Declaration of the United Nations (named by President Roosevelt) which

supported the Atlantic Charter. In 1943, a major step was achieved through the Moscow Declaration when the allied nations first openly committed themselves to the creation of this new world organization. In 1944, representatives from the major allied powers met at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. to establish the first blueprints for the UN Charter. In 1945, at Yalta, the U.S., USSR, and the United Kingdom ironed out the final details of the new global organization.

Later in that same year the United Nations Charter was completed in San Francisco. Representatives from 50 nations worked for three months in harmony to produce one of history's greatest documents. Moreover, this work was not confined to the ideas of government rep-

