

THE NEXT STEP FOR PEACE

BY

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From the President of the United States

My dear Dr. Abbott:

June 8, 1905.¹

When the next Hague Conference is held, I trust that all the nations there represented will join in framing a general arbitration treaty. In the first Hague Convention the nations, through their representatives, declared that they recognized arbitration "as the most efficacious and at the same time the most equitable method of deciding controversies which have not been settled by diplomatic methods." It seems to me that the signatory powers at the next Hague Convention ought to take steps to put this declaration into effect. It is neither possible nor desirable in the present stage of the world's progress to agree to arbitrate all questions that may come up between different nations. But it is entirely possible and exceedingly desirable to limit the classes of cases which it is not possible definitely to promise beforehand to arbitrate, and to provide not only that all other questions shall be arbitrated, but so far as possible the manner and method of proceeding to such arbitration. Such a convention should be approved by the treaty-making powers of the several nations in form that would, of course, permit arbitration to be entered into without any subsequent treaties, but in accordance with the procedure agreed to when the original treaty or convention was ratified. The Executive must be given power to arrange the details indispensable to the execution of the general treaty, as applied in each special case that arises.

Yours truly,

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

¹ This letter was written, as its date will indicate, shortly after the second Hague Conference was determined upon. Under date of April 30, 1907, the President authorizes its publication.—THE EDITORS.