

Chapter 8 Peace, Security and Deterrence. 'The greatest work of civilization' The Hague conferences of 1899, 1907 and 1915

Maartje Abbenhuis, Associate Professor of Modern European History, University of Auckland*

Where the nineteenth century witnessed the rise of organized peace activism in the Anglo-European world, the early twentieth century confirmed a shift to internationalism among these activists. Sandi Cooper defines the turn as one reflecting a change in purpose: where the ambitions of peace organizations shifted from the advance of peace in a broad sense to a pragmatic strategy for improving international relations in a specific sense (1976). By 1900, many peace groups - including the London Peace Society, the American Peace Society, the International Arbitration and Peace Association and the majority of the organizations associated with the International Peace Bureau - embraced the general principles promoted by so-called 'liberal internationalists'ⁱ who advocated for the advance of international arbitration, the limitation of war through the regulation of international law and the gradual demilitarization of armed force. Most of these activists promoted the concept of 'peace through law', that is, the regulation of international affairs through treaty law and multilateral agreement. Most of them were progressivists convinced that every small step taken in aid of peaceful diplomatic relations and the avoidance of war was a worthwhile and significant one. While radical pacifists existed in all western

societies at the *fin de siècle*, they represented a minority voice, even among peace activists themselves. By 1900, most internationalists did not support the idea that peace had to be achieved at any cost. Rather, they looked for achievement in managing state behavior through rational and realistic steps, keeping the regulation of international law, the limitation of arms and the creation of international conciliation mechanisms as foremost priorities. For them, peace and security were to be secured through international agreement.

The two Hague peace conferences of 1899 and 1907 offered these internationalists a key focal point for their activism. Like other historians of peace, Cooper argues for the seminal importance of the Hague conferences to expanding the agenda of peace activists and the prominence of peace topics in public affairs (1991). Historians of internationalism and world governance, including Inis L. Claude (1956), Warren F. Kuehl (1969), Ian Clark (2007), Glenda Sluga (2013) and Mark Mazower (2013), also contend that the Hague conferences mattered in setting the tone of twentieth-century NGO (non-government organisation) activism and the concept of internationalism more broadly. International legal historians acknowledge that the Hague conferences brought into existence some of the most significant developments in the growth of a global judicial order (Best 1983, 1991; Rosenne 2001; Hueck 2004). Cornelia Knab and Madeleine Herren-Oesch, furthermore, suggest that the Hague conferences presented break-through moments for thinking internationally (2007).

The Hague conferences marked, as Warren Kuehl argues, both a beginning and an end (1969: 48). They functioned as the hinge linking the nineteenth-century world of localised peace activism to the twentieth-century world of global internationalist activism. Certainly, the Hague conferences birthed key changes in international relations, even if some of them came into the world, as Barbara Tuchman suggests, "by forceps and barely breathing" (1966: 266). As an example: the 1899 conference established the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), offering a conciliation mechanism for all signatory powers. The 1899 Hague Conventions also created a universally applicable code of military conduct, the first of its kind, and confirmed the significance of Geneva law (Wylie 2017). Embedded in the conventions were several declarations and *voeux* ('wishes') that set the tone for international treaty law for decades to come, including the Martens Clause, which still forms the basis of much humanitarian and human rights law today (Cassese 2000; Meron 2000; Schmircks nd; Sarkin 2007). The 1899 Hague declarations ensured that arms limitation became a legitimate topic for diplomatic negotiation (Webster 2017; Cf Tate 1942). The declarations banning dum-dum bullets, the lobbing of gas canisters and aerial bombardment also had a long-lasting effect on the expectation that military restraint should be a feature of 'civilised' warfare (Dorsey 2017). The subsequent 1907 Hague Conference delineated the law of neutrality, confirming that states could declare their non-belligerency when others went to war and protecting their sovereignty and economic rights when that happened (Abbenhuis 2013, 2014). The 1907 Hague Conventions also regulated maritime warfare, aiming to overcome centuries of contested practice and conflicting customary rights (Abbenhuis 2013, 2014).

It is a rather easy argument to make that the Hague conferences mattered. They offer a convincing (if somewhat simplistic) 'point of origin' story for all manner of twentieth- and twenty-first-century developments in international affairs (Cf Lesaffer 2013). But presenting The Hague as an origins' argument alone undercuts the internationalist agency that abounded in the western world before 1899. It also wrongly implies that there were few restraints placed on the conduct of war before 1899 and suggests that The Hague's primary relevance relates to its longer-term legacies.ⁱⁱ Most historians tend to argue that the age of internationalism, the judicial ordering of the world, the limitation of armaments and the regulation of warfare, human rights and humanitarianism did not make tangible progress until after the First World War. They suggest that the twentieth century was the 'age of internationalism' (as opposed to the nineteenth-century 'age of nationalism') and posit that this internationalist age began in 1918, not 1899 (Cf Sluga 2013).

Such arguments have obvious merit. The Hague mattered to a whole range of twentieth-century shifts in international politics, including to the rise of the League of Nations and United Nations, the concept of collective security and the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice in 1919 (later the International Court of Justice). However, the Hague conferences also mattered to contemporaries. The conferences held in The Hague in 1899 and 1907 and the cultural productions that evolved around them had a significant bearing on contemporary international affairs. They helped to shape perceptions of the

rights and wrongs of state behavior, the waging of war and the principles that underwrote the concept of 'civilization' in international relations more broadly. The Hague mattered to people from the moment the Russian Tsar Nicholas II recommended the idea of a disarmament conference in August 1898. The relevance of the conferences should not be presented as an origins story alone.

Figure 8.1 Getty Images 6404453721 Peace Conference at The Hague 1899

This chapter argues that the two Hague conferences of 1899 and 1907, and the 1915 Hague conference that was never held, spoke to a globalized public audience fearful of war and hopeful for change in international affairs. It argues that peace was a powerful contemporary idea represented in the world's newspaper media.ⁱⁱⁱ It connects this peace reporting to the activism of key internationalists, including by organizations like the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the Institute of International Law (Institut de droit international) and the International Council of Women (ICW). Above all, the chapter argues that The Hague mattered to contemporary assessments of war, peace and international affairs. In so doing, it builds on Glenda Sluga's contention that the early twentieth century witnessed a global internationalist turn and 'cultivated an international sociability and a specifically internationally minded public opinion' (2013: 16, 19, 21; Cf Cooper 1976: 249). It thereby disputes the historiography that suggests that the subject of peace was of little concern to Anglo-Europeans before 1914 (Cf Winter 2006). According to Roger Chickering, for example, peace advocacy was an irrelevant idea in Wilhelmine Germany: it failed to permeate the mainstream press and the German peace movement only registered 10,000 members out of a population of nearly 70 million in 1914 (1988; Cf Riesenberger

1999). Sandi Cooper admits that while peace 'pricked at the public conscience' of Europeans, nationalism overwhelmed pacifist sentiment in that same period (1976: 11). Martin Ceadel, meanwhile, makes a persuasive case for the ideal of peace making slow progress across the 'long' nineteenth century that stretched from 1815 to 1914 (2000; Cf Clark 2007: 64). In the United States, furthermore, Progressive Era Americans may have happily embraced internationalism as an all-American notion, but as Patterson suggests, the American organised peace movement nevertheless remained largely ineffective before the outbreak of global war in 1914 (1976: vii-viii; Cf Kuehl 1969: 75-76; Cf Marchan 1972: 5, 10, 23).

Such arguments are further supported by the work of international historians, who present the two Hague conferences as distractions from the 'real business' of great power politics. The origins of the First World War were the product of ethnic nationalism, heightened militarism and aggressive imperialism after all. As a result, many historians - Richard Langhorne (1981: 65), Margaret MacMillan (2013: 284), Sondra Herman (1969: 18), Calvin DeArmond Davis (1962: Cf 1975), N. J. Brailey (2002) and Daniel Hucker (2015: 406) among them - consider the conferences largely as failures. Historians of the early twentieth century's arms race, furthermore, tend to dismiss the attempts made in 1899 and 1907 to limit arms and weapons development as meager at best (Keefer 2006). Historians of humanitarianism attach some contemporary relevance to the Hague events, but it is only recently that Neville Wylie suggested that the 1899 Hague conference was essential to the development of Geneva law (2017). Even

historians of international law in the early twentieth century tend to prefer the argument that the Hague conventions enabled state violence, be it genocide, warfare or imperialism (Bourke 2015; Hull 2003, 2008; Cf Best 1983: 177).

Relegating The Hague to the margins of the history of international relations and peace activism to the margins of social history in the pre-1914 era, robs the Hague conferences of much of their contemporary color and relevance. In contrast, this chapter argues that the history of The Hague is more than an origins story. It suggests that The Hague permeated global media representations of war and international crisis from 1899 on and that by 1914, the term 'The Hague' signified what was considered as 'civilized' behavior by states. An analysis of the public meanings attached to the term 'The Hague' after 1899 illustrates that this age of rising nationalism and excessive militarism was also characterized by a media critique of those same developments. Military power had many detractors before 1914 and peace mattered to many people, who feared the prospect of industrial warfare. Furthermore, organized peace activism after 1899 was defined by attempts to advance and promote the Hague conventions and the Hague conferences as forums for advancing international diplomacy. If the *fin de siècle* confirmed the turn from peace activism to internationalism, as Cooper rightly contends, then it was The Hague which defined the terms of that internationalist agency.

The first Hague conference was called at the insistence of Russia's emperor, Nicholas II, whose rescript released in August 1898 called for an international

conference to 'put an end to ... incessant armaments' and 'seek the means of warding off the calamities which are threatening the whole world'.^{iv} The rescript astounded the diplomats who received it at the Romanov court in St Petersburg as much as it dismayed their home governments. None of the great powers had any desire to discuss, let alone commit to, the limitation of their armies and armaments. Military leaders and most diplomats were scathing of the Tsar's suggestion even if they lauded it in their official responses.^v

Figure 8.2: [AB 1]

Source: *De vredes-conferentie. Prentenboek voor oud en jong*. Amsterdam, H.

Gerlings, 1899, p. 29.

Caption:

This contemporary cartoon entitled 'The peace oracle' presented the first Hague peace conference of 1899 as a ruse: more a conference of war and militarists than an event aimed at promoting global peace.

The world's newspaper reading publics, who encountered the rescript in their local dailies, were equally astonished. As the clergyman, J. Guinness Rogers, noted in a remarkably insightful editorial: "It came upon the world as a surprise – it would not be too much to describe it as a sensation" (1898: 707). Across the world, editorials reflected on the rescript and commented on its relevance. This commentary presented an array of opinions, some of which was cynical, others approving and hopeful. For example, the editor of the *Friend of India &*

Statesman, India's older liberal newspaper, proclaimed that the most 'striking feature of this remarkable document' was "the fact that the head of the greatest army in the world has invited all the nations to lay down their arms" (29 September 1898: 4). It begged belief, so the editorial continued, that any power would take the initiative seriously. Yet numerous other newspaper editors in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe, praised the Tsar's initiative. The *Australasian*, a Melbourne newspaper, enthused in March 1899 that thanks to the Tsar, statesmen everywhere "had grown eloquent on the advantages of peace" (11 March 1899: 537). The *Gazette Algerienne* feared that if the Tsar's conference failed then the earth would be struck by a "formidable tremblement" (formidable trembling) when the industrial powers launched their monstrous military arsenals at each other (12 April 1899: 1). Several Austro-Hungarian newspapers considered the rescript as the Tsar's olive branch to stabilise international affairs, while the pacifist-inspired *Indépendance Belge* hailed the announcement as the "first step to a peace union between all the peoples of earth" (*Surinamer*, 22 September 1898: np). Across the Atlantic Ocean, the *New York Times* went so far as to claim that the Tsar's conference might spell "the beginning of the most momentous and beneficent movement in modern history, indeed, of all history" (*Chicago Daily Tribune*, 31 August 1898: 6). In general, and regardless of their national or imperial affiliations, militarists and conservatives everywhere tended to dismiss the Tsar's conference as a farcical development, not worthy of serious deliberation (Stengel 1899; Chomé 1899; Low 1899: 689). Liberals, for their part, hedged their bets, hopeful for the promise of the regulation of the international law of war and the potential to advance arbitration at the conference. Most socialists and anarchists, however, were

cynical and dismissed the idea as quickly and easily as their conservative counterparts (Gustavo 1899: 2). Yet numerous trade union groups nevertheless proclaimed their favor for the Tsar's proposals (*Australasian* 3 September 1898: 542; Hamann 1996: 142; Dülffer 1988: 28-29; Newton (1985): 64; Suttner (1910b): 198).

Most importantly, the rescript inspired a wide-ranging and globalized public movement in its support. In Britain, hundreds of public meetings, some of which were organised by W. T. Stead's International Peace Crusade, were held from September 1898 on in church halls, trade union quarters, the meeting rooms of the Society of Friends, town squares and the parlors of women's organizations. More than 1400 petitions landed on Lord Salisbury's desk in the Foreign Office urging the British government to do all it could to support the Tsar's peace cause (Higgins 2016, 2017; PRO).^{vi} In Germany, Margarethe Lenore Selenka mobilized the International Council of Women to organize celebrations around the world on 15 May 1899 to acclaim the conference and to send resolutions to The Hague promoting the principles of peace, arbitration and disarmament. More than 585 meetings across 18 countries were held that day throughout the Americas, Europe, Japan, Russia and the British Empire. These meetings, representing as many as three million women in total, celebrated the message of peace and applauded The Hague's conference (International Council of Women 1899: 232; Selenka 1900: VII). But these women were not alone. Across Europe, petitions signed by hundreds of thousands of individuals were collected urging their governments to make history at The Hague.^{vii} A 'monster petition' representing

the opinions of eight million Christians from 145 American churches was handed to President McKinnon late in December 1898 (*Evening Post* 57 (1) 3 January 1899: 5). According to Rybachenok, thousands of letters, resolutions and proposals were also sent to St Petersburg from around the world (2005: 135). Even though most of the diplomats who went to The Hague were pessimistic about the event and believed little would be achieved there, the 'will of the people' as expressed by this global activism as well as by an extensive media coverage ensured that the Tsar's conference had to succeed, even if only as a public relations' stunt (Cf Cooper 1972: 13). As the French Foreign Minister, Théophile Delcassé, exasperatedly exclaimed at the time: the conference must bear fruit if Europe's governments were to "spare the public opinion of Europe, since this has been aroused by the senseless step of the Russians" (in Porter 1936: 210).

Figure 8.3 Getty Images 555004111 Peace Envoys at The Hague 1899

In the end, the Hague conference opened on 18 May 1899 amidst widespread public aplomb. Twenty-six governments sent representatives to discuss disarmament, arbitration and the regulation of the laws of war on land. At least 37 newspapers sent special correspondents (Eyffinger 1999: 346; Gestrich 2001: 233). No newspaper left the conference off their publication agenda, however. Their readers were attentive to the event and to its results. The world's leading peace activists were also in The Hague during the conference, including Baroness Bertha von Suttner, W. T. Stead, Ivan Bloch, Felix Moscheles, Charles Richet, Jacques Novicov, Alfred Fried, William Evans Darby, Benjamin Trueblood and Lady Ishbel Aberdeen. They came, as Darby noted, to influence the negotiators,

to keep the press focused on the issues that mattered and to witness history being made (in *Herald of Peace* 599, 1 July 1899: 245; Hamann 1996: 148).

The extraordinary achievements of the conference - including the establishment of the PCA, the extension of Geneva law to warfare at sea, the invention of the Martens Clause and the creation of a military code of conduct - heartened most internationalist activists. These achievements came in part due to the willingness of key delegates and their governments to support these developments (Lammasch 1922: 14-15). Despite their pessimism about the likelihood of any success, they took the process and the negotiations seriously (Eyffinger 1999; Dülffer 1980; Davis 1962; Scott 1909a). To that end, it mattered that several prominent delegates were members of the internationalist Inter-Parliamentary Union and others of the Institut de droit international (Wehberg 1939; Quidde 1939; Lammasch 1922: 13). Both organizations dedicated their advocacy to advancing international arbitration and the regulation of international law. But it also mattered that the conference made headline news. As Tuchman suggests, the 'delegates were uncomfortably aware of the conscience of the world over their shoulder' (1962: 257).^{viii} There is ample evidence in the official transcript of the conference to recognize that many delegates (and thus their governments) took President Baron de Staal's reminder - that their 'deliberations must lead to a tangible result which the whole human race confidently expects' - to heart (in Scott 1909: 17).

Figure 8.4 [AB 2]

The source is *De vredes-conferentie. Prentenboek voor oud en jong*. Amsterdam, H. Gerlings, 1899, p. 13

Caption:

This cartoon, originally printed in the German *Ulk* magazine in 1899, with the title 'A new tenor in the European concert', depicted Tsar Nicholas II singing from a new song sheet, namely that of Baroness Bertha von Suttner's famous pacifist novel *Die Waffen Nieder* (Lay Down Your Arms). In the cartoon the Tsar's voice is drowned out by the loud militarist music made by the European powers playing instruments around him. The original caption of the cartoon read: 'The voice may be sympathetic but it is a little weak for the orchestra'.

Despite claims that not much attention was given to the Hague conference in the media, a study of contemporary newspaper reports suggests otherwise (Perris 1911: 29; Suttner 1901: 88-89; Eyffinger 1999: 347). Between 18 May and 29 July 1899, The Hague featured prominently in the world's news. As the *Friend of India* suggested: 'nothing strikes the newspaper reader more at the present moment than the progress of measures taken to promote international peace' (6 July 1899: 6). The editor of the *Los Angeles Times* agreed and noted that The Hague presented a 'prolific theme for the paragraphers and editorial writers of the world' (23 June 1899: 8). As an example, the *Los Angeles Times* referred to the event 118 times between 18 May and 1 August 1898, including in several pointed editorials. The Parisian daily *Le Matin* made 201 references to 'La Haye' in that same period, while 64 out of a total of 74 issues of the *Wiener Zeitung* in Vienna discussed the conference, often at great length.^{ix} Even in Australia, Sydney's *Children's Newspaper* reported on The Hague's events on at least three

occasions in 1899 (28 April 1899: 6; 30 May 1899: 4; 27 June 1899: 6). Many newspaper editors also voiced their fury when the conference secretariat declared that the conference negotiations would happen behind closed doors (*Los Angeles Times* 21 May 1899: A4; Rybachenok 2005: 133-134, 251; NA 2.21.018: 314; *Algemeen Handelsblad* 28 May 1899: np; *Children's Newspaper* 27 June 1899: 6). Only after noting the high level of public backlash to the announcement did the secretariat establish a press office – the first of its kind – which relayed a daily account of agenda items and decisions made. But the compromise was unsatisfactory: the briefings were short and lent no color or depth to what occurred (Scott 1910: 20; Scott 1909a: 54; R. P. Maxwell to British Foreign Office 30 May 1899: PROFO83/1700). As a result, journalists had to find their own conference ‘news’ by courting and interviewing official delegates and peace activists alike, hoping for leaks. Bertha von Suttner, for example, was considered the most interviewed person in The Hague (Hamann 1996: 150). Between May and July 1899, peace topics infused the press.

Thus, it is particularly significant that when the German delegation purposely stalled the negotiations regarding the establishment of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, newspapers around the world reported that two envoys from The Hague travelled to Berlin to negotiate directly with Kaiser Wilhelm II on the matter (*Neue Hamburger Zeitung* 19 June 1899: 1; White 1912: 61-77). Many of the English-language newspapers condemned the German emperor for his hardline position on international arbitration (eg *Los Angeles Times* 13 June 1899: 8). In turn, the German government quickly realized that if the

negotiations stalled, Germany would be held to account. Altogether, it was a public relations disaster that the Kaiser and his government could ill afford (Dülffer 1980:131-137; Campbell 1957: 158). In the end, the Germans accepted the establishment of the PCA, albeit on a voluntary basis. Wilhelm II also undertook damage control by speaking directly to the subject at a Wiesbaden dinner, proclaiming his favor for The Hague (in private he despised the conference for undermining Germany's sovereign authority: Dülffer 1988: 23). The *Berlin Post* judiciously reported the Kaiser's speech, ensuring its circulation around the world's major newspapers (*Friend of India & Statesman* 22 June 1899: 20-21). But the damage was done. If any state came out looking bad at The Hague in 1899, it was Germany (Basily 1973: 12; Hamilton 2008: 19).

For most delegates, the 1899 Hague conference was a success: they made tangible progress on a range of incredibly complex and difficult concepts. For most internationalists, The Hague's achievements were also welcome developments that made possible a future where warfare would be a state's last act, not its first, as Ludwig Quidde explained (D'Estournelles 1899: 127). The world's media was altogether less complimentary. Across the globe, editorials assessed the conference's achievements as bleak, 'woe-begone' and failed (*Wahre Jacob* 338, 4 July 1899: 3019; *Anglo-Saxon Review* September 1899: 260; *Friend of India & Statesman* 3 August 1899: 1; *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* July 1899: 139-142; *Japan Times* 9 September 1899: 2; *Los Angeles Times* 29 June 1899: 8). It certainly did not help that Britain engaged in a war in South Africa within weeks of the closing of the conference and refused to send the Boers'

claims to the PCA for arbitration. The outbreak and repression of the Boxer rebellion in China soon after did little to help alleviate these doleful perspectives. The world's peace seemed as far off as ever. If the Tsar's rescript had spoken of the potential of a new world order then these crises reinforced the general understanding that military power still ruled supreme.

Yet it would be a mistake to suggest that contemporaries considered the first Hague peace conference only in negative terms. Many newspapers published thoughtful editorials reflecting on the significance of The Hague's achievements and on the conference's importance as a turning point in international affairs. The *Japan Times*, for example, described the event both as a failure and a new beginning (31 August 1899: 4). The *Cologne Gazette* in Germany talked of the conference acting as an effective "barrier" to the outbreak of war, while the *Berlin Tageblatt* considered the establishment of the PCA as "an important step to securing the peace of the world" (both in *Los Angeles Times* 16 July 1899: A2; 30 July 1899: 2). In an incisive editorial in that same paper, Arthur Levysohn exclaimed that the conference had ensured a more 'peaceful attitude' (*friedfertige Haltung*) among Germans (*Berliner Tageblatt* 23 July: 1). In Britain, the *Economist's* editors wrote "in no mood of cynicism": "we do not doubt that the conference will have useful results, and that everyone will discover that is so" (15 July 1899: 1007). The Anglican *Church Times* echoed a similar sentiment, suggesting that "the establishment of a permanent Court of Arbitration is an admission by the civilised world that reason and justice ought to prevail" (8 August 1899: 129). In the Netherlands, the *Leeuwarder Courant* intimated that

arbitration was the most important legacy of the conference and that the 'softening of war' was a "priceless legacy" given by "this century to the next" (8 August 1899: np). In Russia, the *Peterburgskija Vledeomosti* also editorialised that the "meeting at The Hague will exercise an important and beneficent [*sic.*] effect. ... Every new idea requires time to mature" (in *Herald of Peace* 1 August 1899: 258).

These same newspapers also embraced The Hague as a lens through which to gauge the conduct of the Anglo-Boer War, the Boxer crisis and Russo-Japanese War. Whether the belligerents breached the Hague conventions was a topic of discussion in many newspapers, as was the understanding that armed forces should behave in prescribed ways. Assessments of the rights and wrongs of these wars were filtered through the terms of the Hague rules and the expectation that warfare should only occur if the avenue of mediation or arbitration was exhausted. Such conceptualizations of the legitimate limits of 'civilized' warfare continued well into the First World War and were conducted by the neutral and belligerent press, with obvious exceptions (Munro 2017). After 1899, in fact, The Hague underpinned the moral framing of conflict in the media across the globe. With The Hague also came expectations that the peace and security of the world depended on successful international agreements.

Figure 8.4 [AB 3]

Source:

'Kruistocht tegen den Oorlog', cartoonist unknown, *De Amsterdammer* 8 April 1899, np.

Caption:

This cartoon from the Dutch newspaper *De Amsterdammer* comments on the first Hague peace conference by suggesting that it would leave Death with nothing to do. Entitled, 'War against War', the caption had Death lamenting: 'Must I lose my best harvest?'

The first Hague conference was also extraordinarily inspirational. After 1899, internationalists everywhere embraced the success of the conference's messages and mobilized behind them, as did a number of the official delegates. They aimed at promoting understanding of The Hague's achievements and advocated for future Hague conferences and the gradual advance of international law as a way of improving international relations more generally. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, for example, announced its intentions of perfecting the Hague conventions, especially those relating to international arbitration, at its annual conference in August 1899 (*Advocate of Peace* 61 (9) October 1899: 220). From this point on, it used The Hague as a platform for much of its internationalist advocacy and set up several committees to advance key internationalist ideas associated with the Hague conventions (Inter-Parliamentary Union 1902). In turn, the International Council of Women not only reiterated its commitment to arbitration at its 1899 quinquennial meeting, it also set up committees to promote the work of the Hague conference more generally (International Council for Women 1899: 48). By 1914, the ICW's Peace and Arbitration

Committee promoted peace-friendly school curricula, held an annual celebration of the Hague peace conferences on 18 May 'Peace Day', distributed peace and arbitration literature around the world and promoted key changes to the Hague conventions for governments to consider at the forthcoming third Hague conference (International Council for Women 1914). The members of the Institut de droit international, for their part, made careful study of the conventions and initiated research projects around their extension and improvement, which they published and circulated among the world's governments (Scott 1916). Alfred Fried, the Austrian peace activist and editor of the German-language *Friedens-Warte* journal, presented all these internationalists' actions as holy writ, as the "grössten Kulturwerke aller Zeiten" ("the greatest work of civilization of all time": in *Die Friedens-Warte* September 1899: 75).

That a second Hague peace conference was held was almost entirely the outcome of public diplomacy. In 1904, the Inter-Parliamentary Union met for the first time on American soil in the city of St Louis. The conference sent a resolution to President Roosevelt urging him to call the world back to The Hague to improve the PCA, to advance the disarmament agenda and to rework the laws of war and neutrality. Roosevelt saw the potential public appeal of the move and sent out a missive to the world's governments. This act helped to solidify his nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize, which he won later that year, the first world leader to do so. Roosevelt's Hague initiative, however, fizzled when the diplomacy of hosting a conference proved too complicated for the United States State Department and his own resolve slackened (Tuchman 1962: 275). At any rate,

Russia and Japan were not about to attend to a peace conference while they were at war. At the conclusion of the conflict, however, Nicholas II took up the initiative, in part to regain public favor after Russia's devastating military demise and to off-set public resentment at the revolutionary developments in his empire's heartland.

The second Hague peace conference, held between 15 June and 18 October 1907, was as publicly appealing as its predecessor. Peace petitions, manifestos, resolutions, letters and grand schemes for the betterment of the world were forwarded to St Petersburg, The Hague and home governments everywhere.^x The Hague's conference secretariat included 26 secretaries who worked at collating and responding to the material received (Beresteyn 1907: 1). The global press was equally attentive, again reflecting a wide array of opinions about the likely success of the event. Where cynicism abounded in some publications, others were hopeful of the potential of advancing the regulation of international affairs (Choate 1913: 55-56). They recognized that this second Hague conference built on the work of the first and, much like many liberal internationalists, saw potential in progressing the laws of war and neutrality, the PCA and international arbitration more generally.

Unlike the 1899 conference, however, the governments that met in The Hague in 1907 were better prepared. Not only were there more of them: 44 delegations participated, globalizing the reach of the negotiations substantially. These governments were also more aware of the need to manage the public relations of

the event. The conference secretariat carefully prepared for the media attention, issuing passes and credentials to key correspondents for plenary sessions, writing press releases, and fielding enquiries (Beresteyn 1907). Delegations had clearer strategies for courting the press, too. The Germans were particularly judicious to the press attention: advancing a public image of conciliation and support for positive change to maritime and neutrality law. At any rate, the German government had prepared their public relations field well in advance (Obkircher 1939: 80-81). Disarmament had been purposely kept off the agenda, at Germany's insistence, in order to avoid the negative ramifications of that particular political hot potato.

Altogether the second Hague conference was more global, more contested and lasted longer than its predecessor. After four months of deliberations, the 1907 Hague Conventions made substantial improvements to the PCA, established a comprehensive law of neutrality, recommended the creation of an International Prize Court (IPC) and made substantial improvements to the maritime law of war (Scott 1909b; Davis 1975; Dülffer 1980; Eyffinger 2007). At the insistence of Great Britain, a follow-up conference involving the world's maritime powers was held in London in 1909, which made extraordinary advances to the laws governing warfare at sea. In the end, it was Britain's inability to ratify the Declaration of London that prevented the establishment of the IPC. Though internationalists and peace activists were disappointed they were not despondent. As the prominent international lawyer T. J. Lawrence declared in 1912: the House of Lords' rejection of the Declaration of London and with it the

establishment of the IPC was not reflective of "the opinion of the people". All that was needed was "a serious effort" by the public to promote the IPC at the next Hague conference, which "would generate the force required, and make it clear that the British public will tolerate no further failure" (1912: 7).

As with the 1899 event, the second Hague peace conference received concerted and global attention in the press. The new states in attendance not only signed up to the 1899 Conventions, thereby expanding their global reach, but also made much of their involvement in the 1907 conference. The Latin American delegates were particularly attentive to their public profile, holding protracted speeches during the deliberations, which they hoped would be widely reported, thereby promoting the importance of their country's voice on this global diplomatic stage. The world's internationalists and peace activists also came to The Hague in 1907 to promote their causes, in greater numbers and with more impressive agendas than they had in 1899. The Koreans, who did not have an official delegation at the conference nevertheless sent a secret mission to The Hague to protest Japan's occupation of their country. They attained widespread media attention, even if most governments would not receive them (Ceuster 2008; Moon 2013).

Perhaps the most significant achievement of the second Hague conference was the decision to regularize the event. Delegates agreed that a third Hague conference should be held in 1913 or 1914 (in the end, it was postponed until 1915). The Dutch government was appointed to take care of the administrative

process in consultation with a committee of key states (NA 2.05.03: 560). Their ambition was to establish an on-going working agenda focused on key international laws and international developments. For internationalists, the declaration to regularize the Hague conferences confirmed their faith in the progressive promise of international law. It also inspired them to professionalize their Hague advocacy even further. There was real reason to do so, as The Hague was now a permanent feature of the international environment. As the American peace journal, the *Arbitrator* exclaimed in 1908: "The Palace of Peace which Mr Carnegie is building is not likely to want tenants" for the "representatives of the nations ... do not consider their work completed" (April: 139).

By this stage, the city of The Hague had also become a key site for on-going internationalist activism. Enterprising individuals sought to physically rebuild The Hague as the center of the world. For example, Peter Horrix and P. H. Eijkman's Fondation internationale aimed at turning the city into a "world capital", replete with a world library, world university, world newspaper and office space for all the world's international organizations (Somsen 2012: 45-64; Somsen 2013: 201-220). All these developments received widespread media attention. It was the building of a Peace Palace funded by a generous grant from the American philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, however, that solidified The Hague's internationalist status (Eyffinger 1988; Leeuwin 2000; Joor 2013). The palace, which housed the PCA, a law academy and library, took years to appear. Its design was commissioned by international competition, won (rather controversially) by the French architect Louis Cordonnier. The first stone was

laid down in an elaborate ceremony held during the second Hague conference. The finished building was officially opened in 1913 amidst much pomp and circumstance. The ostentatious building was lauded and hated in equal part by locals and visitors alike. Yet it also offered a focal point for the idea of The Hague to foment.

The outbreak of the First World War disrupted these Hague developments. Most importantly, the third Hague peace conference was never held. The outbreak of war ended the hopes and dreams many internationalists had for The Hague's mechanisms. The outbreak of the war also solidified the opinion that the Hague conferences had failed. Where in 1908 James Brown Scott proudly declared that the second Hague conference was an enormous achievement for international relations (Scott 1908: 12) and Raymond L. Bridgman called the conference "a success so conspicuous its failures combined were merely an insignificant incident" (1908: 29), in 1923, A. W. Ward and G. P. Gooch remarked on the conference's "slender harvest" in their seminal study of British foreign politics (354). Other academic studies in the interwar years also decimated The Hague's reputation (Junk 1928; Langer 1935; Beazly 1936).

But The Hague's legacies nevertheless abounded after 1914. Throughout the war, the media invoked the Hague conventions to assess the morality of the belligerents' war conduct. Internationalists and governments alike also planned for a post-war world order by assessing which of The Hague's developments they would keep and which they wanted to adapt or jettison (Macdonnell 1915:

xxiv). In 1915, an international congress of women was held in The Hague amidst a wave of controversy. The congress involved women from around the world, who collectively professed the need for the belligerent governments to negotiate an end to the war (Patterson 2008). The congress received concerted attention in the world's media (Munro 2018). If anything, it confirmed that the city of The Hague remained a powerful site of peace activism and judicial development. That legacy continues to this day.

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ⁱ For a history of the term see Kuehl 1986: 1-10.

ⁱⁱ With thanks to Randall Lesaffer.

ⁱⁱⁱ For more on the 'world news order' see: Barth 2013: p. 36.

^{iv} While the word 'rescript' may not be the most technically accurate term, it is the name contemporaries attached to the Tsar's memorandum. The text of the rescript is available in all manner of published forms, in the original French and in translation. For an English translation: Scott 1909a: 41-42. For more on the reasons why the Tsar released the rescript see Morrill 1974: 296-313; Ford 1936: 354-382.

^v There is some evidence to suggest that after the rescript's release, even Nicholas II became increasingly reluctant to hold the event (Morrill 1974: 308; Rybachenok 2005).

^{vi} The petitions can be found in: PRO FO83/1699, 1734, 1735, 1736, 1737, 1738, 1739.

^{vii} Many of these petitions are available in: NA 2.05.03: 524 - 528.

^{viii} Tuchman may have channeled Belgian delegate Auguste Beernaert's claim in 1907 that 'to-day there is no assembly which must not sit with the windows opened, listening to the voices from outside' (Eyffinger 1999: 342).

^{ix} In searching for the term 'La Haye', 'vredesconferentie', 'The Hague' and 'Den Haag' across thirty different newspaper databases, none of the newspapers selected here were extraordinary in terms of the quantity of their references to the conference or in the quality of their editorial content.

^x Many of them can be found in NA2.05.03: 534, 542, 543, 544, 545.