



The search for a satisfactory procedure for amending the constitution in Canada which satisfies the need to safeguard basic provincial and minority rights and yet possesses sufficient flexibility to ensure that the constitution can be altered to meet changing circumstances has been the subject of repeated consideration in the Parliament of Canada as well as in a series of federal-provincial conferences and meetings held in 1927, 1935-36, 1950 and 1960-61. In October 1964 the text of a draft bill "to provide for the amendment in Canada of the Constitution of Canada", which embodied an amending procedure or formula, recommended by a conference of Attorneys General, was unanimously accepted by a conference of the Prime Minister and the Premiers. However, Quebec subsequently withdrew its approval of the formula and it was never adopted.

Between February 1968 and June 1971, eight federal-provincial conferences were held to study the drafting of a new constitution. A committee was established to provide assistance in the study of constitutional questions. The provincial governments, with one exception, and the federal government submitted proposals for a new constitution. The discussions culminated in the drafting of the Canadian Constitutional Charter, 1971, which set out specific constitutional reforms, including a revised amendment procedure. The charter was considered at the Constitutional Conference in Victoria, BC in June 1971, but was not accepted.

### Treaty-making powers

### 2.1.2

The federal government has primary responsibility for the conduct of external affairs. The policy in discharging this responsibility is to promote the interest of the entire country and of all Canadians.