

The effects of world war ii essay samples

[War](#), [World War 2](#)



Perhaps the most notable effect of World War II is the formation of the United Nations, a body that reins over most of today's world issues. Initially, the term United Nations was used in 1942 as the World War II raged on. In the month of January 1942, representatives from about 26 nations that were at war gathered in Washington and signed the Atlantic Charter and pledged that their governments would fight together against the Axis. However, major leaders of the Allies nations proposed an international organization that would be based on the equality of all nations with their sovereignty being recognized. The US, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and China would be responsible for enforcing peace, while other Allied states would be involved in setting up other task-oriented organizations such as FAO. With the Axis losing to the Allies, representatives drawn from 50 nations converged in San Francisco in 1945 and completed the Charter of the United Nations comprised of a Security Council made up of 5 permanent members and 6 non-permanent members, and the General Assembly. The United Nations has been rather successful when compared to the League of Nations which was formed after World War I. To date, the international body is active in social, economic and political issues across the globe. Though it has failed to prevent wars, it has been influential in moderating over many international disputes, with the Security Council being charged with ensuring international peace.

The World War II also had a great impact in Africa. By the 1900s, most African countries fell to European and conquests and were colonized. However, after World War II, colonial control of the African continent began to crumble. This resulted from the new political climate which led to the rise

of nationalism and the onset of independence struggles in many of the colonies. At the same time, the colonial masters such as England and France had fresh domestic priorities to worry about in the period after the war. A new political climate means that the United Nations guaranteed equality of all nations under the principle of sovereignty. As a result, colonial governments came under pressure in justifying the colonization of African countries despite the United Nations guaranteeing the right to self-determination. With more calls for independence coming from various corners of the continent, the colonial governments had no choice but to give independence. Where diplomatic means failed, uprisings broke out. Since the colonial governments were still suffering from the scars of World War II, they could not suppress the uprisings for long and thus many African countries gained independence in the Post-World War II period.

World War II also had lasting effects on science and technology. During the war, there was huge technological progress, with Great Britain developing radar, a technology which was the forerunner of television. There was a rapid progress made in the development of electronics and computers, and this is what laid the foundation for the developments witnessed today. In addition to these technological advancements, the atomic bomb was developed by American and European scientists. The atomic bomb was to be later used in Japan when two atomic bombs were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki literally bringing the war to an end. This technology marked the start of the nuclear power industry and changed the nature of possible future wars. After the surrender of Japan in 1945, various people called on nuclear weapons to be banned so as to prevent a nuclear arms race which would

pose the risk for future tragedies such as those in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. While the United States and the Soviet Union declared that they would put the nuclear bomb under control, the two powers went ahead with their nuclear programs. The Soviets went ahead to test their nuclear bomb in 1949 and this further led to the proliferation of nuclear weapons as the US developed the hydrogen bomb. Today, the USA, Russia, the United Kingdom, China, France, Israel, Pakistan and India all possess nuclear weapons. There have been long running issues about North Korea developing nuclear weapons and Iran having a uranium enriching program suspected to be used for the development of nuclear weapons. On the flipside, the nuclear power industry has been instrumental in meeting the world's energy demands in terms of electricity.

World War II also resulted in various geopolitical alliances that continue to shape today's world politics. During the war, the two main alliances were the Allies and the Axis. The Allies comprised of major powers such as the US, Great Britain, Canada, France and China. The Axis comprised of Germany, Japan and Italy. After World War II, political alliances shifted as the fall of Germany became imminent. Pushed back by both the Allies and the Soviet Union, the forces on either side converged on what came to be known as the Berlin Wall. The war ended with two victorious superpowers that had different ideologies. The United States was capitalist while the Soviet Union was communist. The Soviet Union controlled Eastern Europe with the United States and its allies keeping control of West Germany. Germany became divided by the Berlin wall into West and East Germany. This can be said to be the start of the Cold War, a war which would continue on up to the late

1980s. The Cold War was a war of ideologies rather than arms, and saw the aligning of countries either to Communism or Capitalism. To this date, these ideologies still shape world politics even after the fall of the Soviet Union. World War II also had its economic implications with the direct cost of the war in monetary terms being put at about \$4 trillion. It also led to the raising of taxes and popularized income tax. However, the end of the war led to the formation of the International Monetary Fund. It also led to the creation of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, a treaty that aimed to regulate world trade. Its main objective was the reduction of barriers to international trade by reducing quotas, tariffs and subsidies. GATT was to be replaced by the World Trade Organization, an international body that regulates international trade and solves trade disputes between member states. Generally, World War II can be viewed as an unfortunate event that offered lasting lessons to the world. With millions of people (mostly civilian) dying in the war and mammoth destruction, the world had witnessed a near annihilation. It was a devastating war that made people realize that war could only destroy and not build. It led to the creation of institutions and structures that have ensured that harmony exists among the many nations and different cultures.

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