

Rio De Janeiro Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security, August 15-September 2, 1947

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Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance⁽¹⁾

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In the name of their Peoples, the Governments represented at the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Continental Peace and Security, desirous of consolidating and strengthening their relations of friendship and good neighborliness, and

Considering:

That Resolution VIII of the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, which met in Mexico City, recommended the conclusion of a treaty to prevent and repeal threats and acts of aggression against any of the countries of America;

That the High Contracting Parties reiterate their will to remain united in an inter-American system consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and reaffirm the existence of the agreement which they have concluded concerning those matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security which are appropriate for regional action;

That the High Contracting Parties reaffirm their adherence to the principles of inter-American solidarity and cooperation, and especially to those set forth in the preamble and declarations of the [Act of Chapultepec](#), all of which should be understood to be accepted as standards of their mutual relations and as the juridical basis of the Inter-American System;

That the American States propose, in order to improve the procedures for the pacific settlement of their controversies, to conclude the treaty concerning the "Inter-American Peace System" envisaged in Resolutions IX and XXXIX of the Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace,

That the obligation of mutual assistance and common defense of the American Republics is essentially related to their democratic ideals and to their will to cooperate permanently in the fulfillment of the principles and purposes of a policy of peace;

That the American regional community affirms as a manifest truth that juridical organization is a necessary prerequisite of security and peace, and that peace is founded on justice and moral order and, consequently, on the international recognition and protection of human rights and freedoms, on the indispensable well-being of the people, and on the effectiveness of democracy for the international realization of justice and security,

Have resolved, in conformity with the objectives stated above, to conclude the following Treaty, in order to assure peace, through adequate means, to provide for effective reciprocal assistance to meet armed attacks against any American State, and in order to deal with threats of aggression against any of them:

Article 1.

The High Contracting Parties formally condemn war and undertake in their international relations not to resort to the threat or the use of force in any manner inconsistent with the provisions of the [Charter of the United Nations](#) or of this Treaty.

Article 2.

As a consequence of the principle set forth in the preceding Article, the High Contracting Parties undertake to submit every controversy which may arise between them to methods of peaceful settlement and to endeavor to settle any such controversies among themselves by means of the procedures in force in the Inter-American System before referring it to the General Assembly or the Security Council of the United Nations.

Article 3.

1. The High Contracting Parties agree that an armed attack by any State against an American State shall be considered as an attack against all the American States and, consequently, each one of the said Contracting Parties undertakes to assist in meeting the attack in the exercise of the inherent right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by [Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations](#).

2. On the request of the State or States directly attacked and until the decision of the Organ of Consultation of the Inter-American System, each one of the Contracting Parties may determine the immediate measures which it may individually take in fulfillment of the obligation contained in the preceding paragraph and in accordance with the principle of continental solidarity. The Organ of Consultation shall meet without delay for the purpose of examining those measures and agreeing upon the measures of a collective character that should be taken.

3. The provisions of this Article shall be applied in case of any armed attack which takes place within the region described in [Article 4](#) or within the territory of an American State.

When the attack takes place outside of the said areas, the provisions of [Article 6](#) shall be applied.

4. Measures of self-defense provided for under this Article may be taken until the Security Council of the United Nations has taken the measures necessary to maintain international peace and security.

Article 4.

The region to which this Treaty refers is bounded as follows: beginning at the North Pole; thence due south to a point 74 degrees north latitude, 10 degrees west longitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 47 degrees 30 minutes north latitude, 50 degrees west longitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 35 degrees north latitude, 60 degrees west longitude; thence due south to a point in 20 degrees north latitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 5 degrees north latitude, 24 degrees west longitude; thence due south to the South Pole; thence due north to a point 30 degrees south latitude, 90 degrees west longitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point on the Equator at 97 degrees west longitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 15 degrees north latitude, 120 degrees west longitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 50 degrees north latitude, 170 degrees east longitude; thence due north to a point in 54 degrees north latitude; thence by a rhumb line to a point 65 degrees 30 minutes north latitude, 168 degrees 58 minutes 5 seconds west longitude; thence due north to the North Pole.

Article 5.

The High Contracting Parties shall immediately send to the Security Council of the United Nations, in conformity with [Articles 51](#) and [54](#) of the [Charter of the United Nations](#), complete information concerning the activities undertaken or in contemplation in the exercise of the right of self-defense or for the purpose of maintaining interAmerican peace and security.

Article 6.

If the inviolability or the integrity of the territory or the sovereignty or political independence of any American State should be affected by an aggression which is not an armed attack or by an extracontinental or intra-continental conflict, or by any other fact or situation that might endanger the peace of America, the Organ of Consultation shall meet immediately in order to agree on the measures which must be taken in case of aggression to assist the victim of the aggression or, in any case, the measures which should be taken for the common defense and for the maintenance of the peace and security of the Continent.

Article 7.

In the case of a conflict between two or more American States, without prejudice to the right of self-defense in conformity with [Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations](#), the High Contracting Parties, meeting in consultation shall call upon the contending States to suspend hostilities and restore matters to the status quo ante bellum, and shall take in addition all other necessary measures to reestablish or maintain inter-American peace and security and for the solution of the conflict by peaceful means. The rejection of the pacifying action will be considered in the determination of the aggressor and in the application of the measures which the consultative meeting may agree upon.

Article 8.

For the purposes of this Treaty, the measures on which the Organ of Consultation may agree will comprise one or more of the following: recall of chiefs of diplomatic missions; breaking of diplomatic relations; breaking of consular relations; partial or complete interruption of economic relations or of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, telephonic, and radiotelephonic or radiotelegraphic communications; and use of armed force.

Article 9.

In addition to other acts which the Organ of Consultation may characterize as aggression, the following shall be considered as such:

- a. Unprovoked armed attack by a State against the territory, the people, or the land, sea or air forces of another State;
- b. Invasion, by the armed forces of a State, of the territory of an American State, through the trespassing of boundaries demarcated in accordance with a treaty, judicial decision, or, arbitral award, or, in the absence of frontiers thus demarcated, invasion affecting a region which is under the effective jurisdiction of another State.

Article 10.

None of the provisions of this Treaty shall be construed as impairing the rights and obligations of the High Contracting Parties under the [Charter of the United Nations](#).

Article 11.

The consultations to which this Treaty refers shall be carried out by means of the Meetings of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the American Republics which have ratified the Treaty, or in the manner or by the organ which in the future may be agreed upon.

Article 12.

The Governing Board of the Pan American Union may act provisionally as an organ of consultation until the meeting of the Organ of Consultation referred to in the preceding Article takes place.

Article 13.

The consultations shall be initiated at the request addressed to the Governing Board of the Pan American Union by any of the Signatory States which has ratified the Treaty.

Article 14.

In the voting referred to in this Treaty only the representatives of the Signatory States which have ratified the Treaty may take part.

Article 15.

The Governing Board of the Pan American Union, shall act in all matters concerning this Treaty as an organ of liaison among the Signatory States which have ratified this Treaty and between these States and the United Nations.

Article 16.

The decisions of the Governing Board of the Pan American Union referred to in Articles 13 and 15 above shall be taken, by an absolute majority of the Members entitled to vote.

Article 17.

The Organ of Consultation shall take its decisions by a vote of two-thirds of the Signatory States which have ratified the Treaty.

Article 18.

In the case of a situation or dispute between American States, the parties directly interested shall be excluded from the voting referred to in the two preceding Articles.

Article 19.

To constitute a quorum in all the meetings referred to in the previous Articles, it shall be necessary that the number of States represented shall be at least equal to the number of votes necessary for the taking of the decision.

Article 20.

Decisions which require the application of the measures specified in Article 8 shall be binding upon all the Signatory States which have ratified this Treaty, with the sole exception that no State shall be required to use armed force without its consent.

Article 21.

The measures agreed upon by the Organ of Consultation shall be executed through the procedures and agencies now existing or those which may in the future be established.

Article 22.

This Treaty shall come into effect between the States which ratify it as soon as the ratifications of two-thirds of the Signatory States have been deposited.

Article 23.

This Treaty is open for signature by the American States at the city of Rio de Janeiro, and shall be ratified by the Signatory States as soon as possible in accordance with their respective constitutional processes. The ratifications shall be deposited with the Pan American Union, which shall notify the Signatory States of each deposit. Such notification shall be considered as an exchange of ratifications.

Article 24.

The present Treaty shall be registered with the Secretariat of the United Nations through the Pan American Union, when two-thirds of the Signatory States have deposited their ratification.

Article 25.

This Treaty shall remain in force indefinitely, but may be denounced by any High Contracting Party by a notification in writing to the Pan American Union, which shall inform all the other High Contracting Parties of each notification of denunciation received. After the expiration of two years from the date of the receipt by the Pan American Union of a notification of denunciation by any High Contracting Party, the present Treaty shall cease to be in force with respect to such State, but shall remain in full force and effect with respect to all the other High Contracting Parties.

Article 26.

The principles and fundamental provisions of this Treaty shall be incorporated in the Organic Pact of the Inter-American System.

In witness whereof, the, undersigned Plenipotentiaries, having deposited their full powers found to be in due and proper form, sign this Treaty on behalf of their respective Governments, on the dates appearing opposite their signatures.

Done in the City of Rio de Janeiro, in four texts in the English, French, Portuguese and Spanish languages, on the second of September, nineteen hundred forty-seven.

Reservation of Honduras:

The Delegation of Honduras, in signing the present Treaty and in connection with [Article 9, section \(b\)](#), does so with the reservation that the boundary between Honduras and Nicaragua is definitively demarcated by the Joint Boundary Commission of nineteen hundred and nineteen hundred and one, starting from a point in the Gulf of Fonseca, in the Pacific Ocean, to Portillo de Teotecacinte and, from this point to the Atlantic, by the line that His Majesty the King of Spain's arbitral award established on the twenty-third of December of nineteen hundred and six.

STATEMENTS

Argentina:

The Argentine Delegation declares that within the waters adjacent to the South American Continent, along the coasts belonging to the Argentine Republic in the Security Zone, it does not recognize the existence of colonies or possessions of European countries and it adds that it especially reserves and maintains intact the legitimate titles and rights of the Argentine Republic to the Falkland (Malvinas) Islands, the South Georgia Islands, the South Sandwich Islands, and the lands included in the Argentine Antarctic sector, over which the Republic exercises the corresponding sovereignty.

Guatemala:

Guatemala wishes to place on record that it does not recognize any right of legal sovereignty of Great Britain over the territory of Belice, called British Honduras, included in the Security Zone, and that once again, it expressly reserves its rights, which are derived from the Constitution of the Republic, historical documents, juridical arguments and principles of equity which have on appropriate occasions been laid before the universal conscience.

Mexico:

Only because the Delegation of Guatemala has seen fit to make the preceding declaration, the Delegation of Mexico finds it necessary to reiterate that, in case there should occur a change in the status of Belice, there cannot fail to be taken into account the rights of Mexico to a part of the said territory, in accordance with historical and juridical precedents.

Chile:

The Delegation of Chile declares that, within the waters adjacent to the South American Continent, in the extension of coast belonging to the Republic of Chile, comprised within the Security Zone, it does not recognize the existence of colonies or possessions of European countries and it adds that it specially reserves and maintains intact the legitimate title and rights of the Republic of Chile to the lands included in the Chilean Antarctic zone, over which the Republic exercises the corresponding sovereignty.

United States of America:

With reference to the reservations made by other Delegations concerning territories located within the region defined in the Treaty, their boundaries, and questions of sovereignty over them, the Delegation of the United States of America wishes to record its position that the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro has no effect upon the sovereignty, national or international status of any of the territories included in the region defined in [Article 4 of the Treaty](#). (1) Department of State Bulletin of September 21, 1917, pp. 565-567, 572. Senate document, Executive II, 80th Cong., 1st sess. The treaty was ratified by the President on behalf of the United States on December 19, 1947, and the instrument of ratification was deposited with the Pan American Union in Washington on December 30, 1947.

Source: Avalon Project. Yale University.