



Peace Events of the 20th and 21st Centuries*

The 20th century witnessed the most destructive wars in human history. Perhaps as many as twenty-five million people died and countless others were wounded; millions more suffered from famine, plague, dislocation, devastation and all the other hardships war can bring.

Yet the 20th century also saw the most concerted efforts ever attempted to limit and even prevent war, to constrain arms proliferation, to advance peaceful means of resolving conflicts, to protect human rights, to prosecute war crimes, to prevent genocide, and to promote peace. Listed below in chronological order are some of the more important measures undertaken during the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century in the ongoing worldwide struggle to achieve these goals.

Included in the listing are such disparate events as efforts to create global and regional international bodies and other mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts; major armistices which sought not only to end wars but also promote lasting peace; treaties and other agreements meant to halt or control the spread and use of weapons, especially weapons of mass destruction; establishment of international standards to promote human rights and discourage crimes and other atrocities against nationalities, civilians, prisoners and combatants; and other significant events intended in one way or another to promote peace or oppose war. Treaties proposed more to end specific conflicts than propose a systemic and lasting peace are generally not included.

Many of the treaties and other documents for which links are provided are available from more than one source. The links used here were selected to provide a sampling of non-commercial sources for such documents, and their usage here should not be inferred as suggesting a preference for any source over any other.

It is beyond the purview of this listing to provide the contemporary political, social, military and economic contexts for the events listed here, but an understanding of the events listed here does require an appreciation of the contexts within which they occurred.

*This introduction was originally written and the list originally compiled by Jim Cornelius, former Information Services Librarian at the U.S. Institute of Peace. It has been updated by the Global Peacebuilding Center at the U.S. Institute of Peace, August 2013.

Chronological List of Peace Events

[From 1901 to 1910](#)

[From 1911 to 1920](#)

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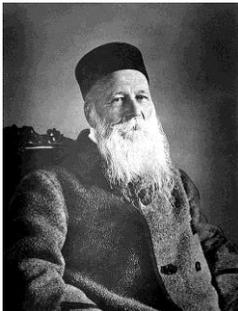
[From 1991 to 2000](#)

[From 2001 to 2010](#)

From 1901 to 1910

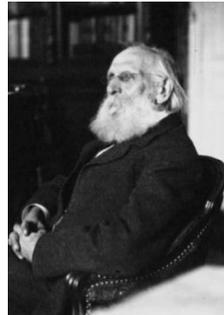
- **December 10, 1901**

[Nobel Peace Prize](#) first awarded. The first award was shared by Jean Henri Dunant and Frédéric Passy.



Henry Dunant, Swiss philanthropist and co-founder of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Photo credit: the Library of Congress, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jean_Henri_Dunant.jpg



Frédéric Passy, French economist.

Photo credit: Bibliothèque nationale de France, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fr%C3%A9d%C3%A9ric_Passy_1910.jpg

- **January 16, 1906**

Multinational Algeiras Conference, led to Act of Algeiras, limiting the manufacture and trade in arms in Morocco; this was an early attempt to regulate the arms trade.

- **July 6, 1906**

[Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field](#) adopted in Geneva by 32 nations. Entered into force August 9, 1907 and remained in force until superseded by the Geneva Convention of 1929.

Soldiers wounded during the First World War are transported by the 2nd Australian Light Horse Camel Field Ambulance.

Photo credit: the Collection Database of the Australian War Memorial, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cacolet_AWM_J02848.jpg



- **September 11, 1906**

Mohandas Gandhi began the [first Satyagraha campaign](#) in Johannesburg, South Africa, in protest against a proposed Asiatic ordinance directed against Indian immigrants in Transvaal.



Mohandas Gandhi with leaders of the Satyagraha campaign in South Africa.

Photo credit: mahatma.org,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gandhi_group_South-Africa.jpg

- **June 15, 1907**

The [Second Hague conference](#) held, leading to further conventions governing the practice of war and providing for arbitration of international disputes. The first Hague conference had produced on July 29, 1899 a series of conventions, declarations and a final act governing the practice of war and providing for international arbitration.

- **November 13-22, 1908**

Mohandas Gandhi wrote [Hind Swaraj](#), which was published in installments and later in book form. With it, Gandhi argued not only for Indian self-rule, but decried the use of violence to achieve it; the book is a seminal work in the development of Gandhi's critique of western civilization and his espousal of the adoption of nonviolence as the means for political change.

- **November 25, 1910**

[Carnegie Endowment for International Peace](#) established by Andrew Carnegie to "hasten the abolition of international war, the foulest blot upon our civilization."

From 1911 to 1920

- **December 1914**

[Fellowship of Reconciliation \(FOR\)](#) formed in Cambridge, England. FOR is a worldwide interfaith peace organization and may be the largest and oldest such organization.

First international meeting of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). Bilthoven, Nederland, 1919.

Photo credit: the IFOR Archives,
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1919-IFOR-c.png>



- **December 25, 1914**
Soldiers on World War I's Western Front temporarily stopped fighting and made peace to celebrate Christmas during the [Christmas Truce of 1914](#).



British and German troops meet each other in No Man's Land during the Christmas Truce of 1914.

Photo by Lt C A F Drummond, credit: the Imperial War Museums,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christmas_Truc_1914_IWM_HU_35801.jpg

- **January 1915**
[Woman's Peace Party \(WPP\)](#) formed by Jane Addams and other women peace activists to protest the start of World War I. A few months later, the WPP joined with other prominent women in the International Suffrage Alliance to create the [Women's International League for Peace and Freedom \(WILPF\)](#). WILPF is still in existence today.

Jane Addams is recognized as a leader in social work, the peace movement, and the suffrage movement. She was the first American woman to receive a Nobel Peace Prize, winning in 1931. Learn more about Jane Addams [here](#).

Photo credit: the United States Library of Congress's Prints and Photographs division,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jane_Addams_profile.jpg



- **1917**
Mohandas Gandhi led the first successful satyagraha campaign, for the rights of peasants on indigo plantations in Champaran region of India.
- **April 1917**
[American Friends Service Committee \(AFSC\)](#) formed in Philadelphia to promote peace and reconciliation. With another Quaker organization, the British Friends Service Council, AFSC won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947.



English Quakers Corder and Gwen Catchpool, around 1927. Corder Catchpool served time in prison for being a conscientious objector and refusing to serve in active military duty during World War I. After the end of World War I, Corder and his wife Gwen moved to Germany to help with relief and reconciliation efforts in Berlin. Learn more about their story [here](#).

Photo credit: Achim von Borries, "Quiet helpers: Quaker service in postwar Germany," London & Philadelphia: Quaker Home Service and the American Friends Service Committee, 2000,
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Catchpool-1927ca.jpg>

- **January 18, 1919**
Paris Peace Conference convened in the wake of World War I (which ended on November 11, 1918), and involved 32 nations including the allied powers, but not Germany. The League of Nations covenant and the peace treaties concluding World War I emerged from the Conference.



The Big Four at the Paris Peace Conference, from left to right: Lloyd George of Great Britain, Vittorio Orlando of Italy, Georges Clemenceau of France, and Woodrow Wilson of the United States.

Photo credit: the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library Archives, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Big_Four,_Paris_peace_conference.jpg

- **April 28, 1919**
[League of Nations covenant](#) signed. League inaugurated Jan. 16, 1920.
- **June 28, 1919**
[Treaty of Versailles](#) signed, ending World War I. Among other purposes, the treaty defined [post-war Germany's borders, limited German armaments, and provided for war reparations](#).
- **September 10, 1919**
The Convention for the Control of the Trade in Arms and Ammunition, also known as the St. Germain Convention, was intended to restrict the international arms trade and prohibit the export of arms to Africa and parts of Asia, but was never put into force due to U.S. objections.
- **February 9, 1920**
[Svalbard treaty](#) signed in Paris by nine states originally, and by 99 by the end of the century. The treaty demilitarized Spitzbergen, awarded sovereignty over the archipelago to Norway, and regulated mining on the islands. The treaty entered into force August 14, 1925.

From 1921 to 1930

- **December 13, 1921**
The League of Nations ratified the [Permanent Court of International Justice](#), the predecessor of the International Court of Justice. The PCIJ allowed states to clarify and develop international law.
- **February 6, 1922**
Five Power Naval Limitation Treaty signed (the major treaty of the Washington Naval Conference treaties of 1921-1922, limiting naval armaments for the major powers).
- **May 4, 1925**
The Convention for Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War was signed by the League of Nations in Geneva on June 17, 1925; intended to regulate the international arms trade, the convention was never implemented, but the related protocol prohibiting the use of poisonous gas was, as noted below.

- **June 16, 1925**
[Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating Gas, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare](#) signed in Geneva; entered into force February 8, 1928. The United States ratified the treaty on April 10, 1975.
- **October 16, 1925**
[Locarno Pact](#) signed in Locarno by major European powers. It was intended to fix Germany's western borders, demilitarize the Rhineland and renounce war in Western Europe.
- **September 25, 1926**
[Slavery Convention](#) signed in Geneva prohibiting slavery and the slave trade; entered into force March 9, 1927.
- **August 27, 1928**
[Kellogg-Briand Pact](#) (Pact of Paris) signed, renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Signatories included the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and nine others.



Signatories of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, including, standing from left to right, Calvin Coolidge, Herbert Hoover, and Frank B. Kellogg, in the White House East Room.
Photo credit: the Library of Congress, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kellogg_Briand_Pact.jpg

- **July 27, 1929**
[Third Geneva Convention](#), pertaining to the treatment of prisoners of war, signed by 47 nations in Geneva. Entered into force August 4, 1932.
- **March 12, 1930**
Mohandas Gandhi begins the all-India non-violent civil-disobedience campaign known as the [Salt March](#) intended to break the British monopoly on salt in India.



Mohandas Gandhi picks up sand at the end of the Salt March at Dandi, South Gujarat.

Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Salt_March.jpg

- **April 22, 1930**
[London Naval Treaty](#) signed by Great Britain, the United States and Japan, regulating submarine warfare, enacting a moratorium on battleship construction until 1937, and limiting construction of other ships among other provisions. France and Italy refused to sign.
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From 1931 to 1940

- **1932-34**
First world Disarmament Conference, convened under the League of Nations in Geneva, which attempted to renounce war, limit military expenditures, prohibit chemical and biological warfare, and govern the arms trade.
 - **October 10, 1933**
[Anti-War Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation](#) (Saavedra Lamas Treaty) signed in Rio de Janeiro by Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Mexico and Uruguay, with U.S. adherence. Entered into force November 13, 1935. The Treaty provided for conciliation in international disputes within Latin America.
 - **March 25, 1936**
Second London Naval Treaty signed by Great Britain, the United States, and France. Japan withdrew from discussions, and Italy refused to sign, which limited the scope of the agreement, but the treaty did place limitations on ship size and armament on the signatories.
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From 1940 to 1950

- **August 14, 1941**
United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Great Britain Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill issued the [Atlantic Charter](#). This joint agreement affirmed their mutual hope for a better future and set the stage for world organization.

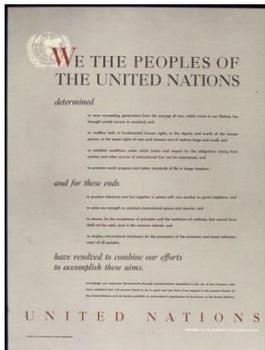


British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on board the USS Augusta days before issuing the Atlantic Charter.

Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Atlantic_charter.jpg

- **March, 1945**
[Pax Christi](#), an international Catholic peace movement, founded in France by Marthe Dortel-Claudot. Pax Christi is active in over 30 countries, with sections in 19 countries, plus additional associated groups and affiliated organizations. [Pax Christi USA](#) was formed in 1972.

- **July 17, 1945**
[Potsdam Conference](#) began, involving the United States, Soviet Union, and Great Britain, establishing post-World War II Allied policy regarding the defeated Axis Powers. Among other provisions, the protocols of the conference defined Germany's borders and the allies' zones of occupation within Germany and Austria, and provided for the demilitarization, denazification, democratization, decentralization, and deindustrialization of Germany and the prosecution of war criminals. The conference concluded August 2, 1945.
- **February 1945**
The United States, Soviet Union, and United Kingdom discussed the war's progress and the postwar world during the [Yalta Conference](#), making decisions on the future of Germany, Eastern Europe, and the United Nations.
- **May 8, 1945**
End of World War II in Europe.
- **1945**
End of World War II in Pacific.
- **June 26, 1945**
[Charter of the United Nations](#) signed in San Francisco. Chapter VI of the charter provides for the pacific settlement of disputes, and Chapter VII establishes the mechanism for the United Nations to respond to threats to peace, or breaches of the peace or acts of aggression, while authorizing member states to engage in self-defense and collective defense against armed attacks. The United Nations was established October 24, 1945.



Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations.

Photo credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:UNITED_NATIONS_-_PREAMBLE_TO_THE_CHARTER_OF_THE_UNITED_NATIONS_-_NARA_-_515901.jpg

- **October 18, 1945**
Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal begins, trying Nazi war crimes suspects. Documents pertaining to the trials, including the proceedings volumes of the Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal, are available throughout the [Avalon Project at Yale Law School](#).
- **November 3, 1946**
The [modern Japanese constitution](#) promulgated, renouncing war and the threat of force as means of settling international disputes. Entered into effect March 3, 1947.
- **June 5, 1947**
In a speech at Harvard University, U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed a [plan for the economic reconstruction of Europe](#). On December 19, 1947, President Truman proposed European Recovery Program legislation, which was enacted April 3, 1948 as the Economic Cooperation Act but became popularly known as the Marshall Plan.

- **April 30, 1948**
[Charter of the Organization of American States \(OAS\)](#), which includes most states in the western hemisphere, signed in Bogota. The OAS goals include maintenance of peace within the region and prevention of intervention by outside states.
- **May 29, 1948**
First [United Nations peacekeeping force](#) established. This force, the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTO) was sent to observe the ceasefire between Israel and the Arab states engaged against it. UNSTO continued operating throughout the rest of the century. By the end of the century, 53 United Nations peacekeeping forces had been deployed. United Nations peacekeepers were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1988.

United Nations peacekeepers from Jordan help women in Haiti move bags of food as part of the humanitarian response to the 2010 earthquake.

Photo credit: U.S. Department of Defense, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_United_Nations_peacekeeper_from_Jordan_assists_a_Haitian_woman_carrying_a_100-pound_bag_of_rice_outside_Port-au-Prince,_Haiti_100213-N-HX866-003.jpg



- **June 26, 1948**
United States and Britain began flying food and other supplies into Berlin to circumvent the Soviet blockade of that city. The [Berlin airlift](#) was accompanied by an embargo on strategic exports from Eastern Europe. The airlift continued until the blockade was lifted on May 12, 1949, and beyond, until October 6 of that year.
- **December 9, 1948**
Convention on the [Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide](#) adopted by United Nations General Assembly; entered into force on Jan. 12, 1951.
- **December 10, 1948**
[Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) adopted by United Nations General Assembly.



First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt looks at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in Spanish. Eleanor Roosevelt chaired the UDHR drafting committee and was considered the “[driving force behind the Declaration’s adoption](#).” See <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml> to learn more.

Photo credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eleanor_Roosevelt_and_United_Nations_Universal_Declaration_of_Human_Rights_in_Spanish_text_-_NARA_-_195981.tif

- **August 12, 1949**
Approval of four conventions of the fourth Geneva Convention. The four conventions entered into force October 21, 1950.
Convention I, [pertaining to the treatment of the wounded of armed forces on land](#)

Convention II, [pertaining to the treatment of the wounded and shipwrecked of armed forces at sea](#)
Convention III, [pertaining to the treatment of prisoners of war](#)
Convention IV, [pertaining to the protection of civilians during war](#)

From 1951 to 1960

- **July 28, 1951**
[Convention relating to the Status of Refugees](#) adopted by the United Nations. Entered into force April 22, 1954.
- **July 27, 1953**
[Korean armistice agreement](#) signed in Panmunjom, ending combat in the Korean War.



Signing of the Korean War armistice agreement.

Photo credit: the U.S. Department of Defense, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Korean_War_armistice_agreement_1953.jpg

- **December 1, 1955**
Rosa Parks arrested in Montgomery, Alabama for refusing to give up her seat to a white passenger on a segregated bus, sparking not only the [Montgomery bus boycott](#) but the non-violent campaigns of civil disobedience against segregation in the American South.



Rosa Parks with Martin Luther King Jr., around 1955. While Parks is best known for refusing to give up her seat on a bus, she had been actively working for civil rights long before her arrest. Learn more about her commitment to civil rights [here](#).

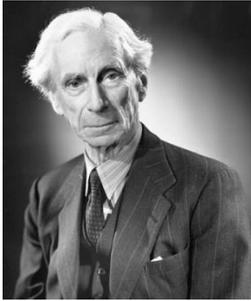
Photo: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rosaparks.jpg>

- **November 5, 1956**
First armed [U.N. peacekeeping force](#) established. This first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF I) was intended to secure and monitor a ceasefire ending the Sinai war between Israel,

Britain, France and Egypt, create a buffer zone, deter military activity in border areas, and secure an armistice agreement between Egypt and Israel. Egypt compelled UNEF I to withdraw in 1967.

- **July 1957**

First [Pugwash Conference](#), held in Pugwash, Nova Scotia. A response to the Bertrand Russell/Albert Einstein manifesto of July 1955, the Pugwash Conference sought to bring together influential scientists and public figures from around the world to work to reduce the danger of nuclear war and promote arms control. Conferences are held at least annually, in differing locales.



Bertrand Russell, left, and Albert Einstein, right. Russell, Einstein, and 9 additional scientists invited other scientists and the public to sign the following resolution: "In view of the fact that in any future world war nuclear weapons will certainly be employed, and that such weapons threaten the continued existence of mankind, we urge the governments of the world to realize, and to acknowledge publicly, that their purpose cannot be furthered by a world war, and we urge them, consequently, to find peaceful means for the settlement of all matters of dispute between them." Read the entire Russell-Einstein Manifesto here: <http://www.pugwash.org/about/manifesto.htm>.

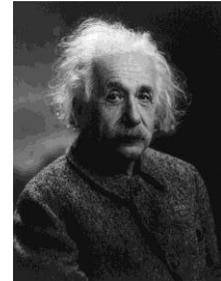


Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bertrand_Russell.jpg; http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albert_Einstein_1947.jpg

- **1957**

National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) formed in New York City. SANE merged in 1986 with the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign to become SANE/FREEZE, and was renamed [Peace Action](#) in 1993.

- **March 25, 1957**

[Treaty of Rome](#) signed by six western European nations, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC, or Common Market), went into effect January 1, 1958, with other nations joining later. EEC was established to promote post-World War II reconciliation, economic cooperation, and economic unity in western Europe.

- **April 29, 1957**

[European Convention for the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes](#) signed by members of the Council of Europe, in Strasbourg; entered into force April 30, 1958. The convention provides for adjudication, conciliation or arbitration of disputes.

- **1958**

[Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament](#) established in Britain.



Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) march in London, 1961, led by Bertrand Russell and his wife Edith Russell. The peace sign, seen on the CND's flag, was originally created in 1958 as the symbol of the anti-nuclear movement. Learn more here:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/7292252.stm.

Photo by Tony French, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bertrand_Russell_leads_anti-nuclear_march_in_London_Feb_1961.jpg

- **December 10, 1959**
United Nations adopts the [Declaration of the Rights of the Child](#). While not legally binding, this declaration laid the groundwork for the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989.
 - **December 1, 1959**
[Antarctic Treaty](#) signed in Washington and entered into force June 23, 1961. This was the first post-World War II arms control treaty, and both internationalized and demilitarized the continent.
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From 1961 to 1970

- **April 18, 1961**
[Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations](#) adopted by the United Nations Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities, outlining the rules of diplomatic law.
- **1961**
United States President John F. Kennedy creates the [U.S. Peace Corps](#).



President John F. Kennedy shakes hands with Peace Corps Volunteers, 1961.

Listen to Kennedy introduce the Peace Corps:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JFK_Establishment_of_the_Peace_Corps_edit.ogg.

Photo:
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kennedy_greeting_Peace_Corps_volunteers,_1961.jpg

- **1961**
[Amnesty International](#), an organization dedicated to protecting the rights of people around the world, is founded.
- **October 1962**
[Cuban missile crisis](#) resolved.
- **August 28, 1963**
Martin Luther King Jr. gave his [“I have a dream”](#) speech in Washington, DC.

250,000 people took part in the 1963 March on Washington, during which they heard Martin Luther King Jr. give his “I have a dream” speech.

Photo by Warren K. Leffler, credit: the Library of Congress,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:March_on_Washington_edit.jpg



- **April 11, 1963**
[Encyclical Pacem in Terris](#) (Peace on Earth), calling for peaceful coexistence, given in Rome by Pope John XXIII.
- **May 25, 1963**
[Organization of African Unity](#) (OAU) established, to promote international cooperation and unity among African states, among other purposes. The OAU has mediated and attempted to mediate to resolve a number of international and internal conflicts in Africa.
- **June 20, 1963**
Memorandum of understanding between the U.S. and the Soviet Union establishing a direct communications link ("[Hot Line](#)") signed in Geneva.
- **August 5, 1963**
[Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty](#), signed in Moscow between the U.S., the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom. The treaty prohibits nuclear tests and other nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, oceans or space. Entered into force October 10, 1963.
- **December 21, 1965**
[International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), prohibiting arbitrary and unreasonable racial discrimination, adopted by the U.N. General Assembly. The United States is a party to this convention. Entered into force January 4, 1969.
- **January 27, 1967**
[Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space](#) between the U.S., Soviet Union, and United Kingdom signed simultaneously in Washington, Moscow and London. Entered into force October 10, 1967. The treaty governs the exploration of space, including the de-militarizing of space and celestial bodies.
- **January 31, 1967**
[Protocol relating to the status of refugees](#) adopted. The protocol extends the 1951 Geneva Convention on the status of refugees to refugees displaced subsequent to January 1, 1951. Entered into force October 4, 1967.
- **February 14, 1967**
[Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America](#) (Treaty of Tlatelolco) signed in Mexico City, prohibiting nuclear weapons in Latin America. Entered into force April 22, 1968. On July 3, 1990, the treaty was extended to include the Caribbean. The Treaty of Tlatelolco was the first of five regional nuclear weapons free zones established by treaty.
- **August 8, 1967**
[Association of Southeast Asian Nations](#) (ASEAN) created when Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand signed the ASEAN Declaration, with the aim of promoting regional peace and stability, in addition to other purposes.



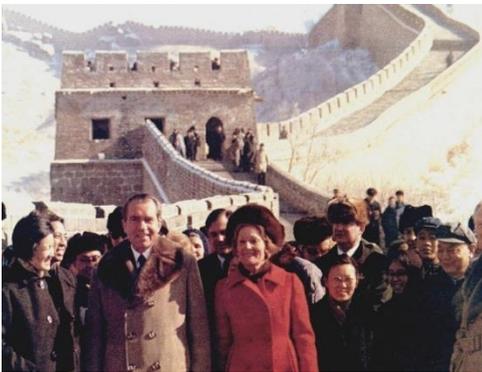
Ministers of Defense from ASEAN countries and elsewhere pose for a photo before the first meeting of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus in Hanoi, Vietnam, in 2010.

Photo by Jerry Morrison,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:ASEAN_Defense_Ministers%27_Meeting_Plus_Oct_12_2010_in_Hanoi_Vietnam.jpg

- **July 1, 1968**
[Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#) (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or NPT) signed simultaneously in Washington, Moscow and London; entered into force March 5, 1970.
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From 1971 to 1980

- **February 11, 1971**
[Treaty prohibiting placement of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on the ocean floor](#) signed simultaneously in Washington, Moscow and London. Entered into force May 18, 1972.
- **February 21-28, 1972**
Richard Nixon is the first U.S. president to visit China, in a visit called "[the week that changed the world.](#)"



President and Mrs. Nixon on the Great Wall during their 1972 trip to China.

Photo by Byron E. Schumaker, credit: the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_and_Mrs._Nixon_visit_the_Great_Wall_of_China.jpg

- **April 10, 1972**
[Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction](#) signed; entered into force March 26, 1975.
- **May 25, 1972**
[Agreement on the Prevention of Incidents on and over the High Seas, between U.S. and U.S.S.R.](#) signed in Moscow. Entered into force May 25, 1972.
- **May 26, 1972**
[Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems](#) (ABM Treaty) signed in Moscow between the United States and the Soviet Union, which established strict limits on ABM deployments. Entered into force October 3, 1972. The United States withdrew from the treaty December 13, 2001.
- **May 26, 1972**
[Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms](#) (SALT I) between United States and the Soviet Union, signed in Moscow. The treaty established limits on the numbers of strategic ballistic missiles permitted each country. Entered into force October 3, 1972.
- **June 22, 1973**
[Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War](#), between the United States and the Soviet Union, signed in Washington.

- **January 27, 1973**
[Paris Peace Treaty](#), between United States, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and Viet Cong, intended to end Vietnam War.



Signing of the Paris Peace Treaty.

Photo by Robert L. Knudsen, credit: the National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vietnam_peace_agreement_signing.jpg

- **July 3, 1974**
[Treaty on the Limitation of Underground Nuclear Weapon Tests](#) (Threshold Test Ban Treaty), between the United States and the Soviet Union, signed in Moscow. Entered into force December 11, 1990.
- **November 24, 1974**
Vladivostok Accord, a joint United States/Soviet Union statement establishing principles and goals for subsequent strategic arms limitations talks.
- **August 1, 1975**
[Helsinki Final Act](#) signed in Helsinki by all European nations except Albania, as well as by the United States and Canada. The Act established what became known as the “Helsinki Process” or “CSCE Process,” providing for balanced progress in the areas of European security, disarmament, confidence-building, humanitarian affairs, economics, technology, and other matters.
- **May 28, 1976**
[PNE Treaty](#) (Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on Underground Nuclear Explosions for Peaceful Purposes) signed in Moscow. The PNE Treaty governs all nuclear explosions outside of designated weapons test sites specified under the Threshold Test Ban Treaty of June 3, 1974, including their use in third countries. Entered into force December 11, 1990.
- **May 18, 1977**
[Environmental Modification \(ENMOD\) Convention](#) signed in Geneva prohibiting military or other hostile use of environmental modification techniques; entered into force October 5, 1978.
- **June 8, 1977**
Two protocols amending the 1949 Geneva Conventions adopted by the Diplomatic Conference of Geneva. [Protocol I](#) and [Protocol II](#) extend to anticolonial and other non-international wars the rules of war and protections of the victims of war provided in the case of international conflicts by the 1949. Both protocols entered into effect December 7, 1978.

- **September 17, 1978**
[Camp David Accords](#), reached in Camp David between Israel, Egypt and the United States, establishing the framework for a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, and for a broader peace in the Middle East.



Left, members of the Israeli, Egyptian, and U.S. delegations at one of their meetings.

Photo credit: the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Members_of_the_U.S.,_Egyptian_and_Israeli_delegations_meet_at_Camp_David_-_NARA_-_181245.tif

Right, Anwar Sadat, Jimmy Carter, and Menahem Begin hold a meeting on the patio at Camp David.

Photo credit: the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anwar_Sadat,_Jimmy_Carter_and_Menahem_Begin_hold_one_of_their_Camp_David_meetings_on_the_Aspen_Cabin_patio_-_NARA_-_181114.tif



- **March 26, 1979**
[Peace treaty between Israel and Egypt](#) signed in Washington, DC.
- **June 18, 1979**
[Treaty on the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms](#) (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, or SALT II) between the United States and the Soviet Union, signed in Vienna. The treaty was never ratified, but its terms, which set equal limits on strategic arms and prohibited certain types of arms improvements, were observed.
- **December 18, 1979**
[Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. Entered into effect September 3, 1981. The United States is a signatory.

From 1981 to 1990

- **November 30, 1981**
September 21 established by the United Nations General Assembly as the [International Day of Peace](#).

- **April 10, 1981**
United Nations Convention prohibiting and restricting certain types of weapons, such as anti-personnel mines and the use of incendiary weapons against civilians, signed in New York.
- **August 1, 1982**
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) Document on Confidence-Building Measures in Europe, signed in Helsinki, requiring advance notice of major troop movements in Europe.
- **January 1983**
A regional diplomatic initiative ([Contradora Process](#)) to resolve conflicts in Central America began on Contadora Island off the Pacific coast of Panama. The Contradora Process was led by Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama, and produced a draft treaty, the Contadora Act for Peace and Cooperation in Central America (The Contradora Acta), which was formally presented on September 12 and 13, 1985. The process was unofficially suspended in June, 1986, and was superseded by direct negotiations.
- **October 19, 1984**
The [United States Institute of Peace \(USIP\) Act](#) passed by Congress and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, establishing USIP as a national institution chartered to "serve the American people and the federal government through the widest possible range of education and training, basic and applied research opportunities, and peace information services on the means to promote international peace and the resolution of conflicts among the nations and peoples of the world without recourse to violence."



A USIP staff member works with women civil society leaders in Darfur, Sudan, in 2006.

Photo credit: U.S. Institute of Peace, <http://www.buildingpeace.org/train-resources/multimedia/photos/usip-field/new>

- **December 10, 1984**
[Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#) (the "Torture Convention") adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.
- **August 6, 1985**
[South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty](#) (Treaty of Rarotonga) signed at Rarotonga, Cook Island, by Australia, New Zealand, and 11 other, smaller Pacific island nations. Entered into force December 11, 1986.
- **September 22, 1986**
[Stockholm Conference on Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe](#) signed in Stockholm by the member states of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). Among other measures, the agreement called for notification of large-scale military maneuvers, and on-site inspection. The official signing date was September 16, but the actual date was six days later. Participating countries included all European states except Albania, and included the Soviet Union and the United States.

- **1987**
Founding of [Women in International Security \(WIIS\)](#), a global network of women dedicated to increasing support and opportunities for women in international peace and security leadership roles. WIIS's network continues to operate around the world today.



Madeleine Albright, chair of the WIIS Global Leadership Council, became the first female United States Secretary of State in 1997.

Photo credit: United States Government,
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Secalbright.jpg>

- **July 29, 1987**
[Indo-Sri Lankan accord](#) signed in Colombo by the governments of India and Sri Lanka.
- **August 7, 1987**
Esquipulas Peace Agreement signed by Central American leaders, creating a regional peace and democratization plan.
- **December 8, 1987**
[Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate and Shorter-Range Missiles](#) (INF, or Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty), between the U.S. and the Soviet Union signed in Washington. Entered into force June 1, 1988.
- **November 9, 1989**
The Berlin Wall falls, leading to the peaceful reunification of East and West Germany on October 3, 1990.
- **December 3, 1989**
[Malta Summit](#) ends the Cold War.



U.S. President George H.W. Bush and U.S.S.R. President Mikhail S. Gorbachev at the Malta Summit, 1989.

Photo by David Valdez, credit: the George Bush Library,
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bush_and_Gorbachev_at_the_Malta_summit_in_1989.gif

- **November 19, 1990**
[Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe](#) (CFE) signed in Paris to limit NATO and Warsaw Pact aircraft, artillery and armor forces in Europe. Entered into force November 9, 1992.
- **November 21, 1990**
[Charter of Paris for a New Europe](#) signed in Paris by the member states of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

From 1991 to 2000

- **July 31, 1991**

[Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union](#) providing for the reduction and limitation of strategic armaments (START I) signed in Moscow. The treaty provided for the elimination of certain strategic weapons to a level of 6,000 deployed warheads.



U.S. President George H.W. Bush and U.S.S.R. President Mikhail S. Gorbachev sign the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty in Moscow, 1991.

Photo credit: the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_Bush_and_President_Gorbachev_sign_the_Strategic_Arms_Reduction_Treaty_%28START%29_in_the_Kremlin_in_Moscow..._-_NARA_-_186435.tif

- **January 30, 1992**

[Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula](#) signed in Vienna by the two Korean governments. Entered into force February 19, 1992.

- **February 7, 1992**

[Treaty on European Union](#) (Maastricht Treaty) signed in Maastricht, Netherlands, by European Community (EC) members. The Maastricht Treaty created the European Union (EU) out of the EC, which itself was an outgrowth of the European Economic Community. The treaty provided EU citizenship to citizens of all EC member states, a central banking system, a common currency (the Euro), and committed EC members to implementing common foreign and security policies.

- **January 3, 1993**

A [second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty](#) (START II) between the United States and the Soviet Union and providing for the further limitation of strategic offensive arms was signed in Moscow. Among other provisions, the treaty required strategic arsenals to be reduced to a maximum of 3,500 warheads. Final ratification came on April 14, 2000.

- **January 13, 1993**

[Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction](#) signed in Paris. Entered into force April 29, 1997.

- **September 13, 1993**

[Declaration of Principles on Interim Self-Government Arrangements](#) (Oslo Accords), between the Palestinian Liberation Organization and Israel, signed in Washington.

- **May 4, 1994**

[Agreement on the Gaza Strip and the Jericho Area](#) signed in Cairo by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. Among other provisions, this agreement provided for establishment of a Palestinian Authority and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Jericho area and Gaza.

- **July 25, 1994**
[Washington Declaration](#) signed by Israel, Jordan and the United States committing Israel and Jordan to working towards a peace agreement on the basis of the [Agreed Common Agenda](#) of September 14, 1993.



Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel and King Hussein of Jordan sign the Washington Declaration with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the White House lawn, 1994.

Photo: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr_-_Government_Press_Office_%28GPO%29_-_PM_YITZHAK_RABIN_AND_JORDAN%27S_KING_HUSSEIN_SIGN_THE_PEACE_TREATY.jpg

- **August 29, 1994**
[Agreement on the preparatory transfer of powers and responsibilities](#) signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization providing for the transfer of certain powers in the West Bank and Gaza from Israeli military government to the Palestinian Authority, signed at Erez.
- **October 26, 1994**
[Peace treaty between Israel and Jordan](#) signed at the Arava/Araba Crossing Point.
- **October 21, 1994**
[Agreed Framework](#) between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (D.P.R.K., or North Korea) signed in Geneva. The Agreed Framework established a process for negotiation of an overall resolution of nuclear proliferation and energy issues on the Korean Peninsula.
- **September 4-15, 1995**
[United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women](#) held in Beijing, China, to discuss a range of issues concerning women. It is widely considered a pivotal moment in defining the protection and promotion of women's human rights. United Nations Fourth World Conferences were held in [2000](#) and in [2005](#) to review progress on commitments made in 1995.
- **September 28, 1995**
[Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip](#) signed in Washington, furthering the Oslo process.
- **November 21, 1995**
[General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) (Dayton Peace Accords) initiated in Dayton, Ohio, and signed December 14, 1995 in Paris.



President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, President Alija Izetbegovic of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and President Franjo Tudjman of the Republic of Croatia sign the Dayton Peace Accords, following peace talks held at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, 1995.

Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian Schlumbohm,
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DaytonAgreement.jpg>

- **December 15, 1995**
[Central American Democratic Security Treaty](#) signed in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, by Costa Rica, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama. The treaty is intended to promote regional democracy, protect human rights, reduce narcotics trafficking, and promotes arms control and peace.
- **December 15, 1995**
[Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone](#) (Treaty of Bangkok) signed in Bangkok by 10 nations of Southeast Asia. Entered into force March 27, 1997.
- **April 11, 1996**
The [African Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaty](#) (Treaty of Pelindaba) signed by 50 African nations in Cairo. Not yet in force.
- **September 10, 1996**
[Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty](#) opened for signature in New York, but is not yet in force. It would prohibit nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosives tests.
- **December 3, 1997**
[Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction](#) opened for signature in Ottawa. The convention bans and restricts the use of land mines. Entered into force March 1, 1999.



Mine Detection Dogs with the Marshall Legacy Institute sniff out land mines that litter the regions where conflict has taken place. **Watch** the Witnesses to Peacebuilding video here: <http://www.buildingpeace.org/teach-visit-us-and-learn/exhibits/witnesses-peacebuilding/dogs-detecting-landmines-building-peace>.

Photo credit: U.S. Institute of Peace

- **April 10, 1998**
[Multilateral Northern Ireland Peace Agreement](#) (Good Friday Agreement) signed, involving the governments of the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland, and most of the major political parties of Northern Ireland, including both Republicans and Loyalists. The agreement provided for creation of power-sharing and cross-border bodies, as well as other matters.

The Good Friday Agreement brought peace to Northern Ireland in 1998. **Watch** the Witnesses to Peacebuilding video here: <http://www.buildingpeace.org/teach-visit-us-and-learn/exhibits/witnesses-peacebuilding/george-mitchell-building-peace-northern-ir>.

Photo credit: U.S. Institute of Peace.



- **July 17, 1998**
[Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court](#) signed in Rome, establishing the International Criminal Court. Entered into force July 1, 2002.
- **October 23, 1998**
[Wye River Memorandum](#) between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization and intended to facilitate implementation of the Sept. 28, 1995 Interim Agreement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip, signed in Washington, D.C.

- **September 4, 1999**
[Sharm el-Sheikh Memorandum on Implementation](#) signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization in Sharm el-Sheikh. Among other provisions, the memorandum provided for resumption of permanent status negotiations and established a timeline for further steps in the peace process.

From 2001 to 2010

- **May 25, 2000**
United Nations General Assembly adopts the [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict](#), designed to protect children from taking part in hostilities.
- **October 31, 2000**
United Nations [Security Council Resolution 1325](#) adopted, calling for increased protection of women during conflict and for greater involvement of women in decision-making and peace processes. Since then, individual countries have developed National Action Plans for national implementation of Resolution 1325, including the [United States in 2011](#).

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, Africa's first female president, has led her country during a time of transition and recovery following 14 years of civil war.

Learn more about the critical role Liberian women played in bringing peace to their country:
<http://www.usip.org/publications/women-s-role-in-liberia-s-reconstruction>

Photo credit: U.S. Institute of Peace, <http://www.usip.org/events/liberia-through-the-eyes-president-ellen-johnson-sirleaf>



- **May 24, 2002**
The United States and Russia sign the [Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty](#) (SORT), limiting their nuclear arsenal to between 1700 and 2200 warheads each.
- **December 20, 2005**
United Nations [Peacebuilding Commission](#) established to support and coordinate post-conflict reconstruction efforts.
- **September 15, 2005**
[Resolution supporting the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine](#) endorsed at the 2005 United Nations General Assembly World Summit, stating that the prevention of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes is a global responsibility.



Skulls from victims of the Rwandan genocide are displayed in the Genocide Memorial Church in Western Rwanda, under the slogan "Never Again."

Photo by Adam Jones, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Never_Again_-_With_Display_of_Skulls_of_Victims_-_Courtyard_of_Genocide_Memorial_Church_-_Karongi-Kibuye_-_Western_Rwanda_-_02.jpg

- **June 7, 2006**
[Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development](#) adopted, committing signatories to recognize and act upon the responsibilities of states and civil society in preventing and reducing armed violence, and placing armed violence within a development context. The Geneva Declaration currently has 112 signatories.
- **June 15, 2007**
A United Nations resolution established October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, as the [International Day of Non-Violence](#).
- **October 2009**
[Kampala Convention](#) adopted by member states of the African Union, addressing issues of and states' responsibilities to persons internally displaced by conflict or other causes.
- **April 30, 2010**
Member states of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa signed the [Kinshasa Convention](#), which aims to control the sale and use of small arms in Central Africa.
- **August 1, 2010**
The [Convention on Cluster Munitions](#), an international treaty banning the use of cluster bombs, adopted on May 30, 2008, enters into force.
- **April 8, 2010**
The United States and Russia sign the [New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty](#) (START), replacing the Treaty of Moscow (SORT).

U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev sign the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, 2010.

Photo credit: the Presidential Press and Information Office (Russia),
http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Dmitry_Medvedev_in_the_Czech_Republic_8_April_2010-11.jpeg

