

Major United States Treaties: 1776 to Present

This document provides a historical and educational overview of major treaties entered into by the United States from 1776 to the present. It is not an exhaustive legal registry of every treaty, agreement, or executive accord. The purpose is to document the most significant treaties shaping U.S. sovereignty, territorial expansion, diplomacy, trade, military alliances, and international law.

Foundational Treaties (1776–1800)

- **1778 – Treaty of Alliance (France):** Secured French military support during the American Revolution.
- **1783 – Treaty of Paris:** Ended the American Revolutionary War; Britain recognized U.S. independence.
- **1794 – Jay Treaty (Britain):** Resolved post-war disputes and normalized trade relations.

Early Expansion & Indigenous Treaties (1800–1860)

- **1803 – Louisiana Purchase Treaty (France):** Doubled U.S. territory.
- **1819 – Adams–Onís Treaty (Spain):** Acquired Florida; defined western boundaries.
- **Numerous Indigenous Treaties:** Hundreds of treaties with Native nations governing land cessions and sovereignty.

Civil War & Reconstruction Era (1861–1890)

- **1867 – Alaska Purchase Treaty (Russia):** Acquired Alaska.
- **Post-war Treaties:** Re-established relations with former Confederate-aligned tribes.

Imperial & Trade Expansion (1890–1918)

- **1898 – Treaty of Paris:** Ended Spanish-American War; U.S. acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and Philippines.
- **1903 – Hay–Bunau-Varilla Treaty:** Established Panama Canal Zone control.

World War Era Treaties (1919–1945)

- **1919 – Treaty of Versailles:** Ended World War I (U.S. did not ratify).
- **1928 – Kellogg–Briand Pact:** Renounced war as national policy.

- **1945 – United Nations Charter:** Established the United Nations.

Cold War Treaties (1945–1991)

- **1949 – North Atlantic Treaty (NATO):** Military alliance.
- **1963 – Limited Test Ban Treaty:** Restricted nuclear weapons testing.
- **1972 – SALT I:** Strategic arms limitation with USSR.
- **1987 – INF Treaty:** Eliminated intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

Modern Global Treaties (1991–Present)

- **1994 – NAFTA:** Trade agreement with Canada and Mexico (later replaced).
- **1995 – World Trade Organization Agreement:** U.S. became founding member.
- **2015 – Paris Climate Agreement:** Global climate framework (rejoined 2021).
- **2020 – USMCA:** Replaced NAFTA.

Indigenous Treaties (Ongoing Legal Significance)

- Over 370 treaties ratified with Native nations.
- Treaties remain the supreme law of the land under the U.S. Constitution.
- Many disputes continue in federal courts regarding treaty rights.

Notes on Scope

This document highlights major treaties for educational purposes. It does not include every bilateral agreement, executive agreement, or unratified treaty. Executive agreements increasingly replaced treaties after World War II.