

# London Naval Treaty

The **London Naval Treaty** (officially the **Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament**) was an agreement between Great Britain, Japan, France, Italy and the United States, signed on 22 April 1930. Seeking to address a loophole in the formidable 1922 Washington Naval Treaty (that created tonnage limits for each nation's surface warships), it regulated submarine warfare and limited naval shipbuilding. Ratifications were exchanged in London on 27 October 1930, and the treaty went into effect on the same day. It was largely ineffective.<sup>[1]</sup> <sup>[2]</sup>

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## Conference

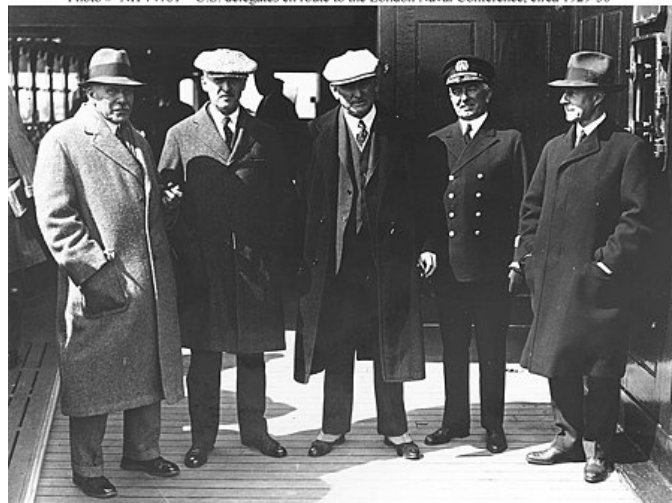
The signing of the treaty remains inextricably intertwined with the ongoing negotiations which began before the official start of the London Naval Conference of 1930, evolved throughout the progress of the official conference schedule, and continued for years thereafter.

## London Naval Treaty

**Long name:**

**International Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament**

Photo # NH 74761 U.S. delegates en route to the London Naval Conference, circa 1929-30



Members of the United States delegation en route to the conference, January 1930

<b>Type</b>	<u>Arms control</u>
<b>Context</b>	<u>World War I</u>
<b>Signed</b>	22 April 1930
<b>Location</b>	<u>London</u>
<b>Effective</b>	27 October 1930
<b>Expiration</b>	31 December 1936 (Except for Part IV)
<b>Negotiators</b>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Henry L. Stimson <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Ramsay MacDonald <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> André Tardieu <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Dino Grandi <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Wakatsuki Reijirō
<b>Signatories</b>	<span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Herbert Hoover <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> George V <span><span><span></span></span><span> </span></span> Gaston Doumergue

During the first four decades of the twentieth century, Prince Iyesato Tokugawa led a political movement in Japan that promoted democracy and international goodwill with the U.S., Europe, and Asia. During the 1921-1922 Washington Naval Conference Tokugawa headed the Japanese delegation that ratified that treaty. The Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1929 photo to the right presents the Japanese again participating in the renewal of the 22 Washington Naval Treaty. [3] [4]

	 <u>Victor Emmanuel III</u>
	 <u>Hirohito</u>
<b>Parties</b>	 <u>United States</u>
	 <u>British Empire</u>
	 <u>French Third Republic</u>
	 <u>Kingdom of Italy</u>
	 <u>Empire of Japan</u>
<b>Depository</b>	<u>League of Nations</u>
<b>Language</b>	<u>English</u>

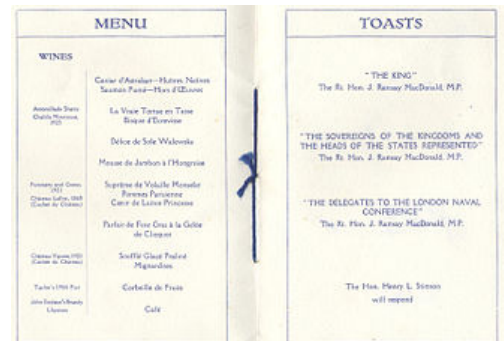
## Terms

The terms of the treaty were seen as an extension of the conditions agreed in the Washington Naval Treaty, an effort to prevent a naval arms race after World War I.

The Conference was a revival of the efforts which had gone into the Geneva Naval Conference of 1927. At Geneva, the various negotiators had been unable to reach agreement because of bad feeling between the British Government and that of the United States. The problem may have initially arisen from discussions held between President Herbert Hoover and Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald at Rapidan Camp in 1929, but a range of factors affected tensions, exacerbated by the other nations at the conference. [5]

Under the treaty, the standard displacement of submarines was restricted to 2,000 tons, with each major power being allowed to keep three submarines of up to 2,800 tons and France one. Submarine gun caliber was also restricted for the first time to 6.1 in (155 mm) with one exception, an already-constructed French submarine allowed to retain 8 in (203 mm) guns. That put an end to the 'big-gun' submarine concept pioneered by the British M class and the French Surcouf.

The treaty also established a distinction between cruisers armed with guns no greater than 6.1 in (155 mm) ("light cruisers" in unofficial parlance) from those with guns up to 8 in (203 mm) ("heavy cruisers"). The number of heavy cruisers was limited: Britain was permitted 15 with a total tonnage of 147,000, the U.S. 18 totalling 180,000,



Menu and List of Official Toasts at formal dinner which opened the London Naval Conference of 1930



December 23, 1929: Washington, D.C. The Japanese Naval Delegation is visiting the White House to meet with President Herbert Hoover. The delegation are on their way to Europe for negotiations leading to the ratification of the 1930 London Naval Treaty.

and the Japanese 12 totalling 108,000 tons. For light cruisers, no numbers were specified but tonnage limits were 143,500 tons for the U.S., 192,200 tons for the British, and 100,450 tons for the Japanese.<sup>[6]</sup>

Destroyer tonnage was also limited, with destroyers being defined as ships of less than 1,850 tons and guns not exceeding 5.1 in (130 mm). The Americans and British were permitted up to 150,000 tons and Japan 105,500 tons.

Article 22 relating to submarine warfare declared international law applied to them as to surface vessels. Also, merchant vessels that demonstrated "persistent refusal to stop" or "active resistance" could be sunk without the ship's crew and passengers being first delivered to a "place of safety."<sup>[7]</sup>

Article 8 outlined smaller surface combatants. Ships less than 2,000 tons, with guns not exceeding 6 in (152 mm), with a maximum of four gun mounts above 3 in (76 mm), without torpedo armament and not exceeding 20 kn (37 km/h) were except from tonnage limitations. The maximum allowed specifications were designed around the Bougainville-class avisos then entering French service. Warships under 600 tons were also completely exempt. This led to creative attempts to utilize the unlimited nature of the exemption with the Italian Spica-class torpedo boats, Japanese Chidori-class torpedo boats, French La Melpomène-class torpedo boats and British Kingfisher-class sloops.<sup>[8]</sup>

The next phase of attempted naval arms control was the Second Geneva Naval Conference in 1932; and in that year, Italy "retired" two battleships, twelve cruisers, 25 destroyers, and 12 submarines—in all, 130,000 tons of naval vessels (either scrapped or put in reserve).<sup>[9]</sup> Active negotiations amongst the other treaty signatories continued during the following years.<sup>[10]</sup>

That was followed by the Second London Naval Treaty of 1936.

## See also

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- Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament
- Washington Naval Treaty
- Second London Naval Treaty – List of treaties signed in London.
- Treaty of London – List of treaties signed in London.
- May 15 Incident - attempted coup in Japan

## Notes

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1. John Maurer, and Christopher Bell, eds. *At the crossroads between peace and war: the London Naval Conference in 1930* (Naval Institute Press, 2014).
2. It was registered in League of Nations Treaty Series on 6 February 1931. *League of Nations Treaty Series*, vol. 112, pp. 66–96.

3. "Introduction to The Art of Peace: the illustrated biography of Prince Iyesato Tokugawa" (<https://theemperorandthespy.com/2020/04/the-art-of-peace-the-illustrated-biography-on-prince-iyasato-tokugawa/>). *TheEmperorAndTheSpy.com*.
4. Katz, Stan S. (2019). *The Art of Peace*. Horizon Productions.
5. Steiner, Zara S. (2005). *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919–1933*, pp. 587 ([https://books.google.com/books?id=rJ9JJIVmFpkC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Lights+that+Failed:+European+International+History+1919-1933&client=firefox-a&source=gbs\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#PPA587,M1](https://books.google.com/books?id=rJ9JJIVmFpkC&printsec=frontcover&dq=The+Lights+that+Failed:+European+International+History+1919-1933&client=firefox-a&source=gbs_summary_r&cad=0#PPA587,M1))-591.
6. U.S. Department of State. "The London Naval Conference, 1930" (<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1921-1936/london-naval-conf>). Retrieved 20 March 2014.
7. Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armaments, (Part IV, Art. 22, relating to submarine warfare). London, 22 April 1930 (<http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/310?OpenDocument>)
8. John, Jordan (13 September 2016). *Warship 2016*. Conway. pp. 8–10. ISBN 9781844863266.
9. "Italy Will Retire 130,000 tons of Navy; Two Battleships, All That She Owns, Are Included in the Sweeping Economy Move. Four New Cruisers to go [plus] Eight Old Ones, 25 Destroyers and 12 Submarines Also to Be Taken Out of Service" (<https://www.nytimes.com/1932/08/18/archives/italy-will-retire-130000-tons-of-navy-two-battleships-all-that-she.html?sq=burzagli+ernesto&scp=1&st=p>). *New York Times*. 18 August 1932.
10. "Naval Men See Hull on the London Talks; Admiral Leigh and Commander Wilkinson Will Sail Today to Act as Advisers" (<https://www.nytimes.com/1934/06/09/archives/naval-men-see-hull-on-the-london-talks-admiral-leigh-and-commander.html>). *New York Times*. 9 June 1934.

## Further reading

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- Dingman, Roger. *Power in the Pacific: the origins of naval arms limitation, 1914-1922* (1976)
- Goldstein, Erik, and John H. Maurer, eds. *The Washington Conference, 1921-22: Naval Rivalry, East Asian Stability and the Road to Pearl Harbor* (Taylor & Francis, 1994).
- Maurer, John, and Christopher Bell, eds. *At the crossroads between peace and war: the London Naval Conference in 1930* (Naval Institute Press, 2014).
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- Steiner, Zara S. (2005). *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919–1933*. ([https://books.google.com/books?id=rJ9JJIVmFpkC&dq=The+Lights+that+Failed:+European+International+History+1919-1933&client=firefox-a&source=gbs\\_summary\\_s&c](https://books.google.com/books?id=rJ9JJIVmFpkC&dq=The+Lights+that+Failed:+European+International+History+1919-1933&client=firefox-a&source=gbs_summary_s&c)

ad=0) Oxford: Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-822114-2; OCLC 58853793 (<http://www.worldcat.org/wcpa/oclc/58853793>)

## External links

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- [Text of the treaty \(http://www.navweaps.com/index\\_tech/tech-089\\_London\\_Treaty\\_1930.php\)](http://www.navweaps.com/index_tech/tech-089_London_Treaty_1930.php)
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Photo # NH 74761 U.S. delegates en route to the London Naval Conference, circa 1929-30





# MENU

## WINES

Amontillado Sherry  
Chablis Moutonne,  
1923

Pommery and Greno,  
1921  
Château Lafite, 1865  
(Cachet du Château)

Château Yquem, 1921  
(Cachet du Château)

Taylor's 1904 Port

John Exshaw's Brandy  
Liqueurs

Caviar d'Astrakan—Huitres Natives  
Saumon Fumé—Hors d'Œuvres

La Vraie Tortue en Tasse  
Bisque d'Écrevisse

Délice de Sole Walewska

Mousse de Jambon à l'Hongroise

Suprême de Volaille Monselet  
Pommes Parisienne  
Cœur de Laitue Princesse

Parfait de Foie Gras à la Gelée  
de Clicquot

Soufflé Glacé Praliné  
Mignardises

Corbeille de Fruits

Café

[ Pilgrims Society Jan. 28, 1930 dinner in London for The Delegates to the London Naval Conference. ]

# TOASTS

" THE KING "

The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.

" THE SOVEREIGNS OF THE KINGDOMS AND  
THE HEADS OF THE STATES REPRESENTED "

The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.

" THE DELEGATES TO THE LONDON NAVAL  
CONFERENCE "

The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P.

The Hon. Henry L. Stimson  
will respond





