

Ad-Hoc: Topic A Primary Sources

The Situation in Eastern Europe

Here are the primary sources that your moderator or legal chair thought would be helpful in gaining an understanding of the topic. These are by no means all of the sources available, just sources we wanted to highlight.

Source #1: The Triple Alliance between Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Germany—Articles II, IV, & VI

On May 20, 1882, representatives from the nations of Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Germany formed a triple alliance in which each member promised support should another be attacked by a foreign power—Italy would stipulate, however, that they would remain neutral in the event of a war between Austria-Hungary and Russia. Articles II and IV address the military obligations held by the member nations to support one another in the event of war, however article VI may have been the most dangerous in the treaty as it demanded secrecy from every member nation regarding the very existence of the agreement. When conflict was first initiated in 1914, secret agreements such as this resulted in multiple nations being tied into a conflict that did not initially involve them—Italy, however, proclaimed its neutrality at the onset of the war, considering Austria-Hungary the aggressor and defaulting on a previous obligation to attempt to keep the status quo in the Balkans. They would later join the war on the side of the Allies hoping to gain territories held, at the time, by Austria.

[https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The Triple Alliance \(The English Translation\)](https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Triple_Alliance_(The_English_Translation))

Source #2: The Franco-Russian Alliance Military Convention—Articles I, II, & VII

The Franco-Russian Alliance Military Convention was established on August 18, 1892 by representatives from France and Russia with the intention of guaranteeing mutual military support in the event of war. This agreement would become the first direct rival to the Triple Alliance of 1882 as Article I creates an obligation for each signing nations to support the other should they be attacked by any of the Triple Alliance. Furthermore, Article II creates more preventative measures by committing both powers to the mobilization of their military forces upon first word of the mobilization of enemy troops. Just as the Triple Alliance of 1882 was kept secret from all foreign powers, Article VII accomplishes the same in this agreement and prevented foreign aggressors from knowing the full breadth of any aggressive action.

[https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The Franco-Russian Alliance Military Convention](https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Franco-Russian_Alliance_Military_Convention)

Source #3: Entente Cordiale

The Entente Cordiale was a series of agreements signed on April 8th, 1904 between the United Kingdom and France that played a key role in improving diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Entente was the last of the three major alliances that would lead to the entanglement of multiple nations at the onset of the Great War. While the agreement did not contain any articles directly addressing aggressive action by the Allied Powers of Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary, it did contain secret clauses that addressed foreign interference in Morocco and Egypt—these clauses would be put to the test in 1905 when Germany attempted to check the growth of French influence in Morocco. Growing ever more distrustful of Germany, France and the UK met at the Algeiras Conference in 1906 where their social, and more importantly, military, relationships were strengthened. Thus, when conflict broke out in 1914, France, Russia, and the UK were all tied into one alliance via the Entente Cordiale and the Franco-Russian Alliance Military Convention.

<http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/ententecordiale1904.htm>

Source #4: Austria-Hungarian Ultimatum to Serbia

On July 23, 1914, the ambassador of Austria-Hungary to Serbia delivered an ultimatum to the Serbian foreign ministry that seemed intentionally doomed and impossible to accept—the Serbian government would allow the foreign power to enter their borders and investigate the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, suppress all anti-Austrian propaganda, and work to root out any rebel terrorist groups, most notably the Black Hand. Austria-Hungary had delivered these impossible requests in hopes that it would prompt a conflict that would allow them to easily crush Serbia and solidify control of the region. This was not the case, however, as by the time Austria-Hungary had declared for Serbia's refusal to accept, Serbia and its ally, Russia, had already begun to mobilize their troops and the multiple secret alliances of Europe were called into action.

[https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Austro-Hungarian_Ultimatum_to_Serbia_\(English_translation\)](https://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/The_Austro-Hungarian_Ultimatum_to_Serbia_(English_translation))

Source #5: Wilson's Fourteen Points—Points I, IX, XI, XIII, XIV

Woodrow Wilson's famous January 8, 1918 address to congress outlined what he saw as the ideal outcome from peace negotiations following the conclusion of the Great War in fourteen specific points. The first point addressed "open diplomacy," meaning a world free of secret alliances to prevent the future development of malicious military webs that would commit many nations' armies to battles that were not their own. Points IX, XI, and XIII all display Wilson's goal of redrawing national lines and creating states that better reflected traditional lines of ethnicity and/or nationality. Finally, in Article XIV, Wilson sought a "general association of nations" that could work to civilly resolve international disputes (this concept would be the predecessor to the League of Nations). While many Europeans were very supportive of Wilson's goals, his Allied colleagues believed that his idealistic objectives were far too ambitious and highly unachievable.

<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=62&page=transcript>

Source #6: Covenant of the League of Nations—Articles III, X, XI

The specific topic of our debate encompasses the "Situation in Eastern Europe" following World War I, thus we are able to safely assume that the Covenant of the League of Nations, established by a specific committee separate from the general body of the Paris Peace Conference that we represent today, still would have decided upon these articles. The League of Nations—the predecessor to today's United Nations—was established in fulfillment of Wilson's Fourteenth Point, a "general association of nations" that could work to discuss international crises in a more diplomatic manner. Article III of the covenant sets out to grant a broad power to the assembly of nations—"any matter... affecting the peace of the world"—so as not to limit the body's ability to address any concern that could potentially lead to future conflicts. The covenant would soon face great criticism, however, especially in the then isolationist United States. Articles X and XI were highly alarming to American politicians, as they seemed to tie member nations into conflicts that were not their own, a concept highly reminiscent of the pre-war European alliances that had dilated a minor conflict into one of catastrophic proportions. The United States congress would eventually decide not to join the League, severely compromising the assembly's ability to function properly.

http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp