

Signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty (August 23, 1939)

Abstract

In 1939, German war preparations were advancing rapidly on all fronts, including the diplomatic one. Over the course of the year, the German Reich formed a multitude of alliances to optimize the country's economic and military-strategic position before the start of war. These alliances included non-aggression pacts with Latvia, Estonia, and Denmark, as well as raw materials agreements with Sweden, Norway, and Romania. The most important diplomatic success, however, was the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty on August 23, 1939. Hitler knew that the Soviet Union, alone or together with Great Britain and France, could endanger his plans for a war against Poland. For his part, Stalin wanted to ensure that German expansion would be limited to Polish territory for the time being. After weeks of negotiations, Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Foreign Minister Soviet Foreign Minister Viacheslav Molotov reached an agreement that astonished the international community. The ideological archenemies committed themselves for the next ten years to neutrality in the event of war, to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and to the broadening of their trade relationship. In a secret supplementary protocol, Germany and the Soviet Union also agreed to divide up the territory of Poland and Eastern Europe between themselves. The photo shows, from left to right, Ribbentrop, Stalin, and Molotov at the signing of the Non-Aggression Treaty.

Source



Source: After the signing of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact on August 23, 1939. Unknown photographer.

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