

German-Russian Treaty of Rapallo (April 16, 1922)

Abstract

The Rapallo Treaty, which was signed on April 16, 1922 between Germany and Soviet Russia, marked the resumption of bilateral relations between the two states, both of which were in a position of international isolation at that time. It was agreed that diplomatic relations would be established, trade would be facilitated and that both sides would renounce war reparations. According to Article 116 of the Treaty of Versailles, Russia would have been entitled to reparations, which it now waived. In return, Germany declared that it would waive its claim to former German property that had been nationalized by Russia. The Western powers reacted with concern to the treaty, as they feared that the postwar order established by the Treaty of Versailles could be called into question. Specifically, they feared that Germany and Russia might plan another division of Poland, which had been re-established as a state in the Treaty of Versailles.

Source

The German Government, represented by Dr. Walther Rathenau, Minister of State, and the Government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, represented by M. Tchitcherin, People's Commissary, have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article 1

The two Governments are agreed that the arrangements arrived at between the German Reich and the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic, with regard to questions dating from the period of war between Germany and Russia, shall be definitely settled upon the following basis:

- a) The German Reich and the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic mutually agree to waive their claims for compensation for expenditure incurred on account of the war, and also for war damages, that is to say, any damages which may have been suffered by them and by their nationals in war zones on account of military measures, including all requisitions in enemy country. Both Parties likewise agree to forego compensation for any civilian damages, which may have been suffered by the nationals of the one Party on account of so-called exceptional war measures or on account of emergency measures carried out by the other Party.
- b) Legal relations in public and private matters arising out of the state of war, including the question of the treatment of trading vessels which have fallen into the hands of either Party, shall be settled on a basis of reciprocity.
- c) Germany and Russia mutually agree to waive their claims for compensation for expenditure incurred by either party on behalf of prisoners of war. Furthermore the German Government agrees to forego compensation within regard to the expenditure incurred by it on behalf of members of the Red Army interned in Germany. The Russian Government agrees to forego the restitution of the proceeds of the sale carried out in Germany of the army stores brought into Germany by the interned members of the Red Army mentioned above.

Article 2

Germany waives all claims against Russia which may have arisen through the application, up to the

present, of the laws and measures of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic to German nationals or their private rights and the rights of the German Reich and states, and also claims which may have arisen owing to any other measures taken by the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic or by their agents against German nationals or the private rights, on condition that the government of the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic does not satisfy claims for compensation of a similar nature made by a third Party.

Article 3

Diplomatic and consular relations between the German Reich and the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic shall be resumed immediately. The conditions for the admission of the Consuls of both Parties shall be determined by means of a special agreement.

Article 4

Both Governments have furthermore agreed that the establishment of the legal status of those nationals of the one Party, which live within the territory of the other Party, and the general regulation of mutual, commercial and economic relations, shall be effected on the principle of the most favored nation. This principle shall, however, not apply to the privileges and facilities which the Russian Socialist Federal Soviet Republic may grant to a Soviet Republic or to any State which in the past formed part of the former Russian Empire.

Article 5

The two Governments shall cooperate in a spirit of mutual goodwill in meeting the economic needs of both countries. In the event of a fundamental settlement of the above question on an international basis, an exchange of opinions shall previously take place between the two Governments. The German Government, having lately been informed of the proposed agreements of private firms, declares its readiness to give all possible support to these arrangements and to facilitate their being carried into effect.

Article 6

Articles 1b and 4 of this Agreement shall come into force on the day of ratification, and the remaining provisions shall come into force immediately.

Original text done in duplicate at Rapallo on April 16, 1922

Signed: Rathenau

Signed: Tchitcherin

Source: German-Russian Treaty of Rapallo (April 16, 1922), in the Avalon Project, Documents in Law, History, and Diplomacy. Available online: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/rapallo_001.asp

Source of German version: *Reichs-Gesetzblatt* 1922 II, no. 18, Berlin, July 28, 1922, pp. 677–79.

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