



american treaty handbook

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list of treaties · excluded from this version	

THE BASICS

Treaties are international agreements concluded between states in written form and governed by international law (Vienna Convention, 1969).

These agreements, such as the one below, serve as the foundation of American diplomacy.

Example: the Oregon treaty

June 15: treaty signed in Washington, DC

June 18: Senate advice and consent to ratification

June 19: ratified by the President of the United States

July 14: ratified by the United Kingdom

July 17: ratifications exchanged at London

July 17: entered into force

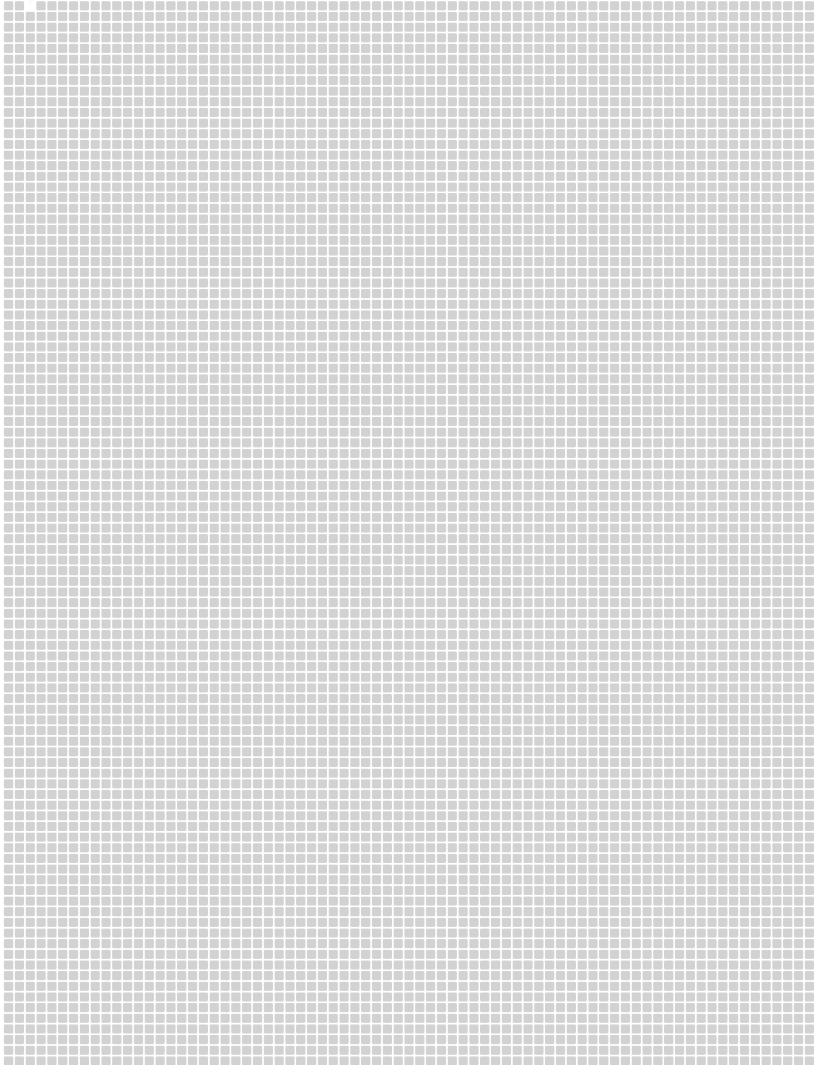
"From the point on the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude ... the line of boundary between the territories of the United States and those of her Britannic Majesty shall be continued westward along the said forty-ninth parallel of north latitude to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca's straits to the Pacific Ocean"
(Library of Congress, 1846)

In other words: the U.S. and U.K. finally agreed on the boundary between Oregon and Canada.

Treaties are a useful gauge of U.S. diplomatic engagement. Many treaties, like the Oregon treaty, are well understood on an individual basis. However, there are roughly 8,000 U.S. treaties in force.

To understand American diplomacy, we need to look at the whole.

■ the Oregon treaty



SOURCE

This handbook is based on *Treaties in Force*, a report released each year by the State Department. It contains a comprehensive list of U.S. treaties and other international agreements in force. The most recent release was January 1, 2020.

In the U.S., a ‘treaty’ is an international agreement made by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate (requiring a two-thirds vote). An ‘executive agreement’ is an alternative mechanism, which does not require Senate participation.

However, both are considered treaties based on the Vienna Convention. *Treaties in Force* applies this broader definition.

PURPOSE

This handbook is designed to give you a better understanding of American diplomacy. It will help answer questions such as:

- ◇ How have U.S. relationships evolved?
- ◇ What areas of diplomacy are on the rise?
- ◇ Where should the State Department refocus?

DRAWBACKS

There are some drawbacks to this analysis. Unfortunately, there is no *Treaties no longer in Force* document, which makes it tougher to track trends. Still, the U.S. has exited relatively few treaties over the past few decades. There are also obvious differences in the importance of each treaty. While this analysis does not weight such value on an individual basis, the sheer number of treaties does make it possible to weight U.S. priorities on a collective basis.

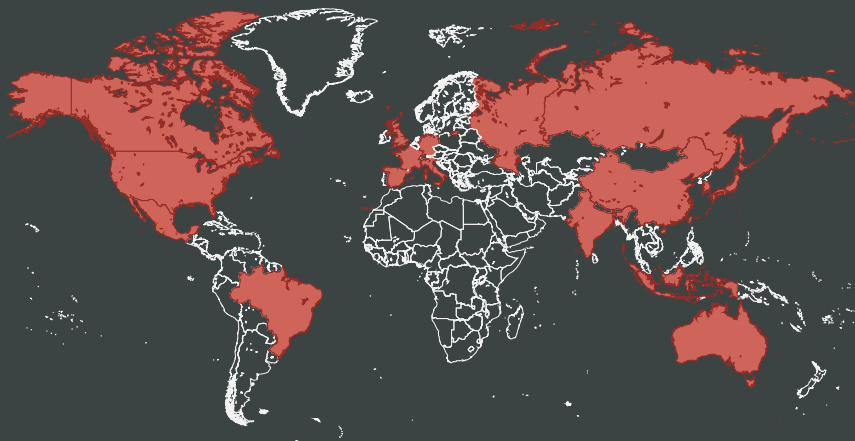
STRUCTURE

There are two main sections: 1) bilateral and 2) multilateral treaties.

- ◇ The first section includes U.S. bilateral treaties with fifteen major powers - all other countries with a GDP over \$1 trillion. Along with the U.S., these countries represent over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the world's economy and well over $\frac{1}{2}$ of the world's population (World Bank, 2020).
- ◇ The multilateral section includes all U.S. multilateral treaties.

This handbook also provides topic and year breakdowns. The ten topics are consolidated from the State Department's topic breakdown in *Treaties in Force*. The year simply represents the year the treaty entered into force.

For more, see the appendix.



THE COUNTRIES

Australia

Brazil

Canada

China

Taiwan | Republic
of China*

China | People's
Republic of China

France

Germany

India

Indonesia

Italy

Japan

Korea

Mexico

Russia

*Soviet Union***

Russian Federation

Spain

United Kingdom

** "On January 1, 1979, the United States recognized the Government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal Government of China. Within this context, the people of the United States maintain cultural, commercial and other unofficial relations with the people on Taiwan. The United States acknowledges the Chinese position that there is but one China and Taiwan is part of China. The United States does not recognize the 'Republic of China' as a state or government."*

*** "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics dissolved December 25, 1991. As stated in the Alma-Ata Declaration of December 21, 1991, "... The States participating in the Commonwealth guarantee in accordance with their constitutional procedures the discharge of the international obligations deriving from treaties and agreements concluded by the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics...."*

(Treaties in Force, 2020)

THE TOPICS

Defense & Security

Economics &
Transportation

Environment &
Maritime

Environment

Maritime

Science, Nuclear
& Space

Science &
Technology

Nuclear

Space

Territorial, Consular
& Social Issues

Territorial Issues &
Disputes

Consular Issues &
Foreign Support

Social Issues & Taxes

KEY FINDINGS

The drop in American diplomacy is not new.

While U.S. diplomatic engagement dropped sharply over the last four years, this trend started decades ago. Since the mid-90s, the U.S. has entered fewer and fewer international agreements. This is a major problem. Debates about what agreements to make and who to make them with, are fair. But there is no question that diplomatic engagement has a positive impact. America's ability to take on global challenges rests on its relationships – backed by a strong treaty system.

Furthermore, the extent of this drop is masked by a remarkable increase in one area: bilateral defense & security treaties.

While other areas fall, defense continues to rise.

It's common to hear about the tradeoff between diplomatic and military power – a choice between tapping the State or Defense Department. However, this line is not so clear. The recent rise of defense & security treaties points less to diplomatic power than to military power. Such agreements are critical to international stability. But alone, this risks a dangerous imbalance. Even from a Defense Department perspective, problems in other areas (such as economic or environmental) have a tendency to boil over into their realm.

This imbalance in U.S. bilateral relations is not offset by changes on the multilateral front.

U.S. multilateral engagement has fallen even lower.

Multilateral institutions receive plenty of flak. The United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank all began near the end of World War Two. Many consider these places outdated. Such sentiments accompany calls for U.S. diplomacy to circumvent institutions altogether. But, U.S. multilateral treaties are similarly outdated. From the 80/90s to 00/10s, these treaties are down 35%. This is just one of many signs that

American diplomacy is in decline. Regardless of its future role in institutions, the U.S. will need to rediscover its ability to bring many countries to the same table.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Substantially increase diplomatic engagement.

- ◇ Return State Department funding to, at least, Obama administration levels.
- ◇ Seek agreements with China, where cooperation is possible.
- ◇ More importantly, reengage with allies and partners on all fronts.

Prioritize non-Defense & Security treaties. Focus on:

- ◇ Economics & Transportation (return to 80/90s levels)
- ◇ Science, Space & Nuclear (sustain growth)
- ◇ Environment & Maritime (do something!)

Seek multilateral agreements over bilateral agreements, where possible.

The following pages support these recommendations. More than that, they will help you draw your own conclusions.

BILATERAL

SECTION

BILATERAL

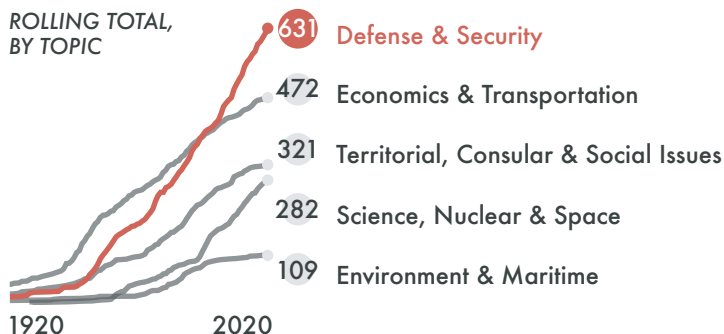
1815

bilateral
treaties in force
with the fifteen
major powers

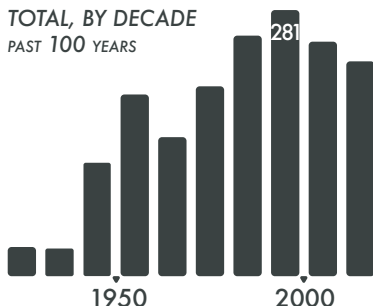
35%

of treaties
focused on
Defense &
Security

ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



DEFENSE & SECURITY

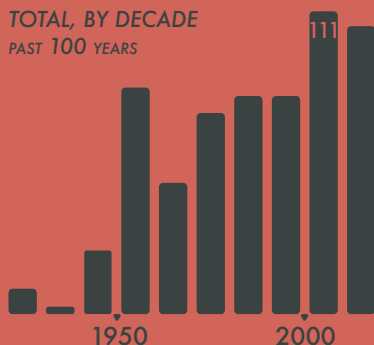
631

bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

+36%

change in total, 80/90s to 00/10s

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



EVERYTHING ELSE

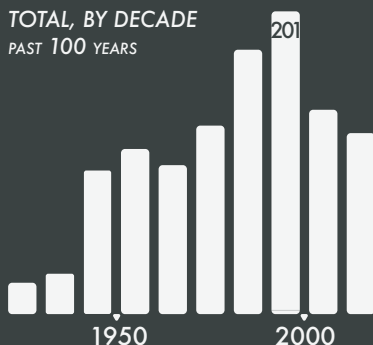
1,184

bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

-32%

change in total, 80/90s to 00/10s

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



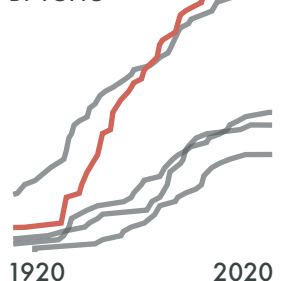
COUNTRY

BREAKDOWN

CANADA

214 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC

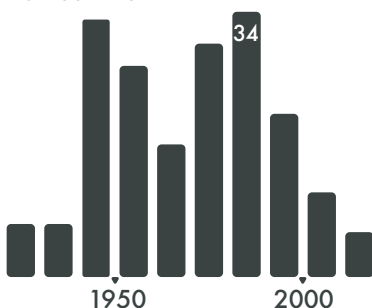


30% of treaties focused on Defense & Security

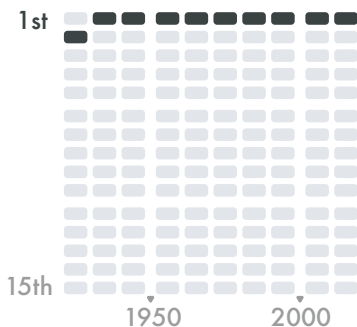
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



MEXICO

197 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC

68

1920

2020

RANK, BY TOPIC

68 ■■■■■■■■■■ Territorial, Consular & Social Issues

41  Defense & Security

38 ■■■■■■■■■■ Science, Nuclear & Space

35 Economics & Transportation

15 Environment & Maritime

1st

15th  tie

 tie

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS

ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

1st

15th

1950

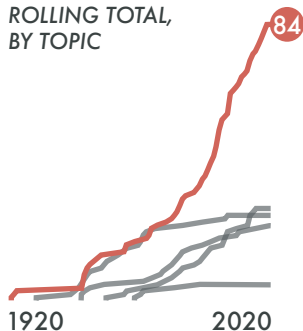
2000

JAPAN

166

bilateral
treaties in force
with the
United States

ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



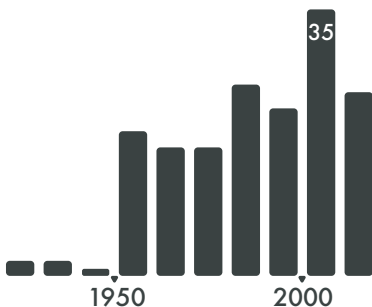
51%

of treaties
focused on
Defense &
Security

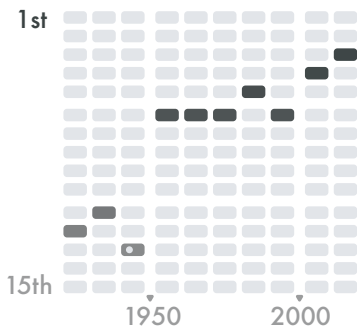
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS

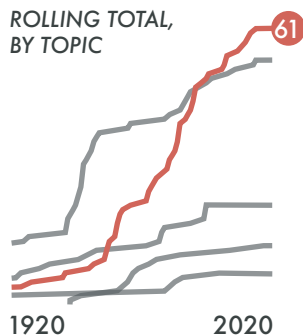


ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



UK

157 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

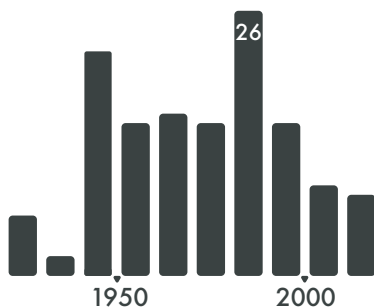


39% of treaties focused on Defense & Security

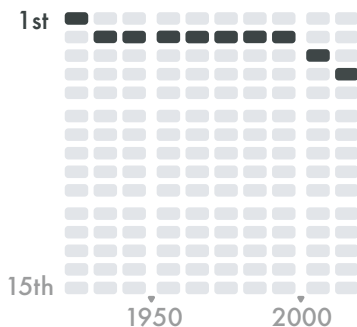
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



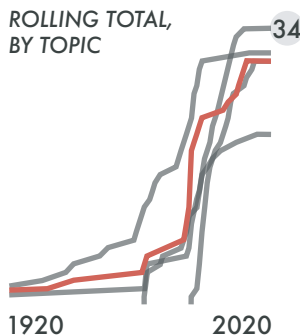
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



RUSSIA

146 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

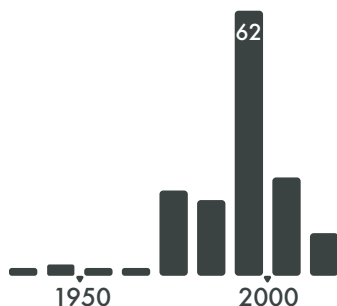
21% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



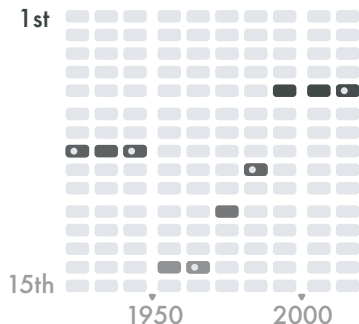
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

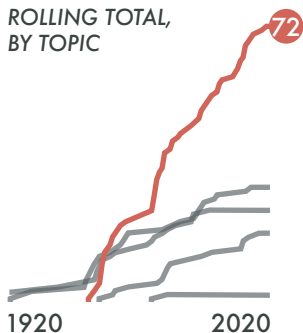


GERMANY

146 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC

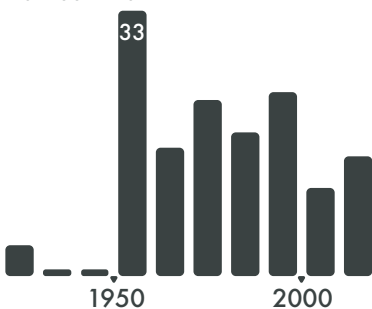
49% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



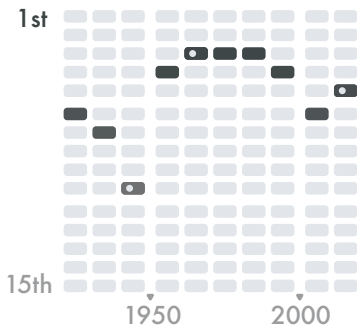
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

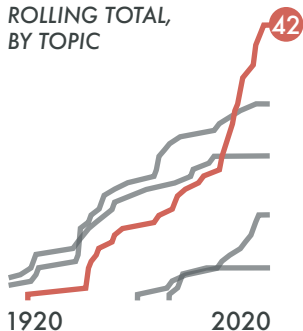


ITALY

112

bilateral
 treaties in force
 with the
 United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



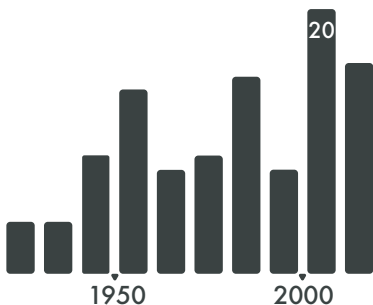
38%

of treaties
focused on
Defense &
Security

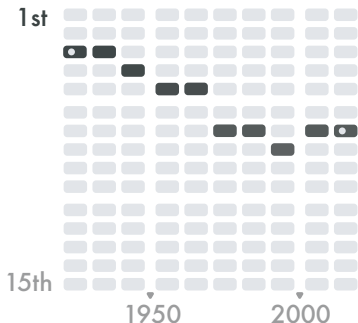
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

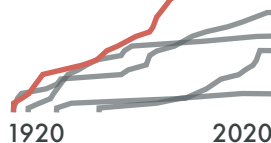


KOREA

112 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC

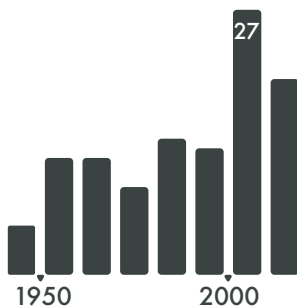
52% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



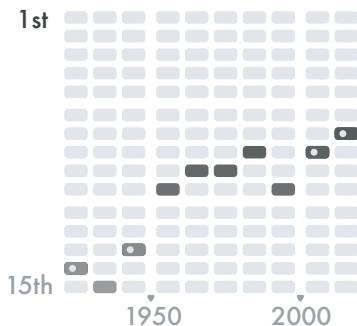
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

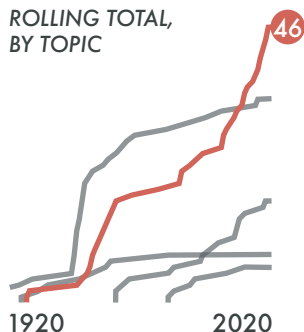


FRANCE

111

bilateral
 treaties in force
 with the
 United States

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



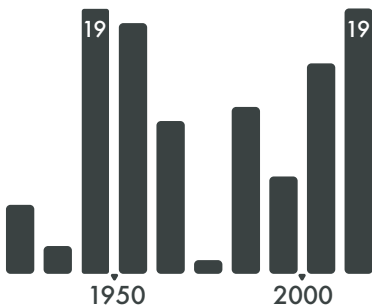
41%

of treaties
focused on
Defense &
Security

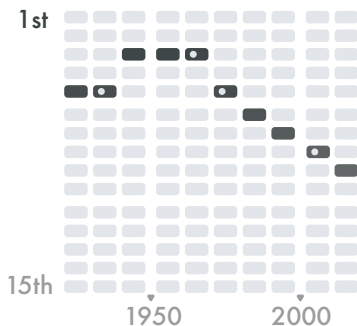
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



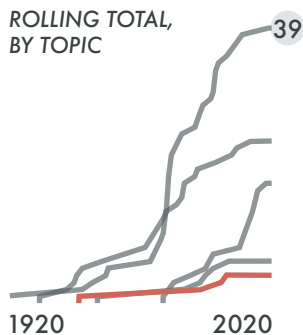
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



CHINA

89 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

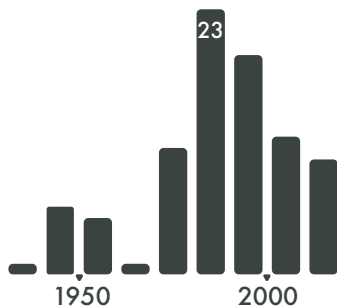
4% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



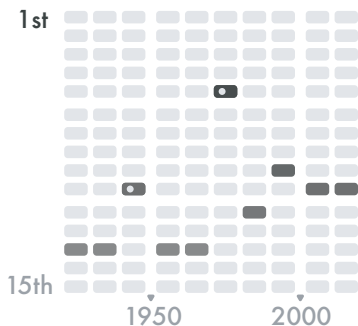
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

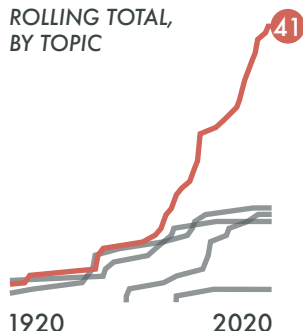


SPAIN

82 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

50% of treaties focused on Defense & Security

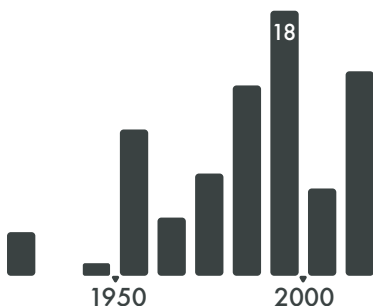
ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



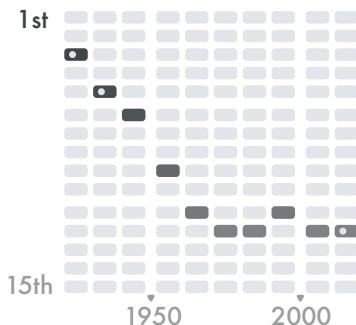
ES RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



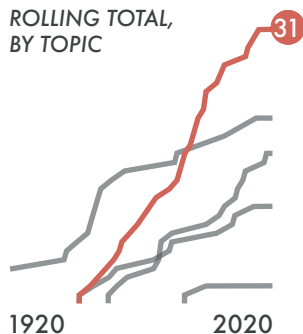
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



AUSTRALIA

82 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

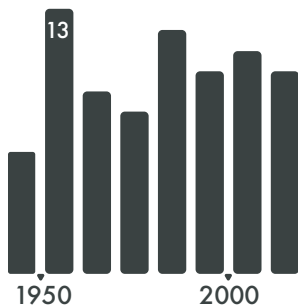
38% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



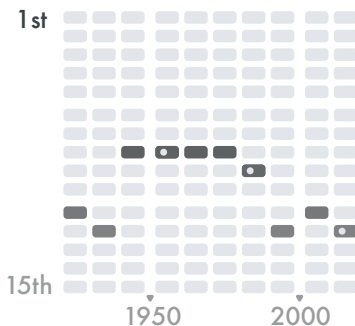
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



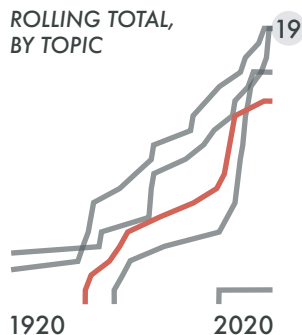
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



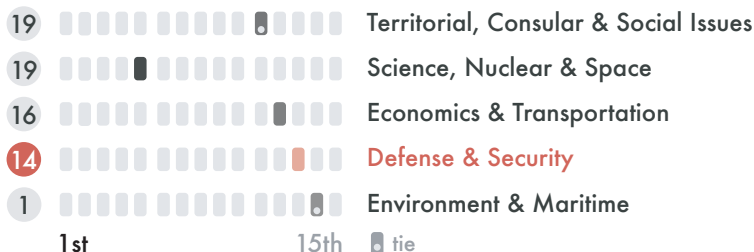
INDIA

69 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

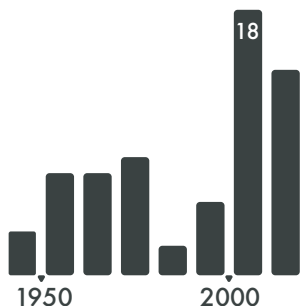
20% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



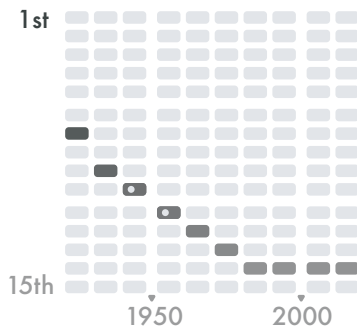
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



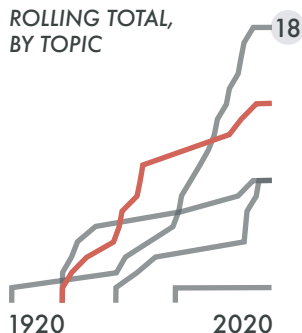
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



INDONESIA

48 bilateral treaties in force with the United States

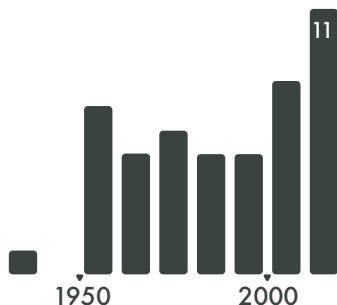
27% of treaties focused on Defense & Security



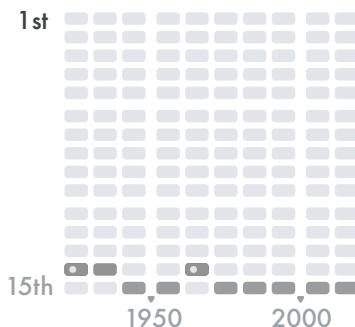
RANK, BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



TOPIC

BREAKDOWN

DEFENSE & SECURITY

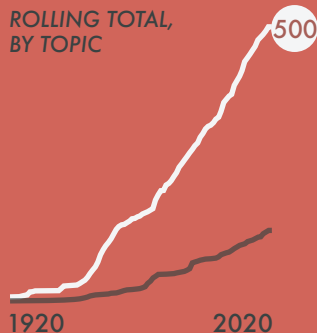
631

bilateral
treaties in force
with the fifteen
major powers

79%

of treaties
signed
with close
allies

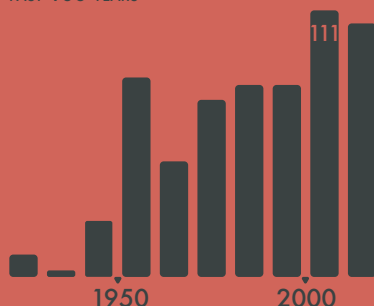
ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



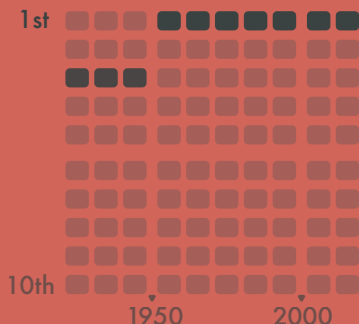
RANK, BY COUNTRY

84 Japan	46 France	30 Russia
72 Germany	42 Italy	29 Brazil
65 Canada	41 Mexico	14 India
61 United Kingdom	41 Spain	13 Indonesia
58 Korea	31 Australia	4 China

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



ECONOMICS & TRANSPORTATION

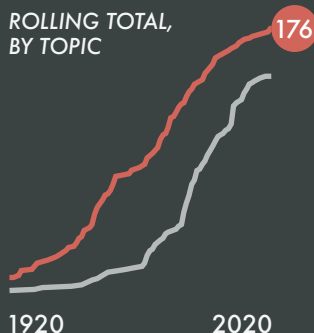
321

bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

55%

of treaties signed with close allies

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



RANK, BY COUNTRY

35 Mexico

23 Japan

18 Indonesia

34 Russia

22 Italy

16 India

33 Canada

22 Korea

12 Spain

24 Germany

21 United Kingdom

11 Australia

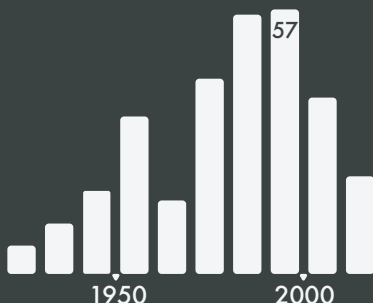
23 China

19 Brazil

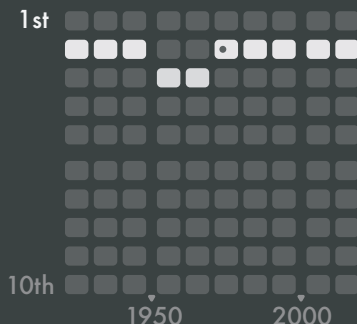
8 France

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



TERRITORIAL ISSUES & DISPUTES

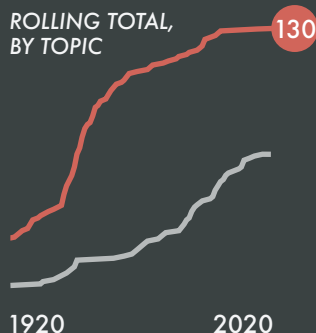
201

bilateral
treaties in force
with the fifteen
major powers

65%

of treaties
signed
with close
allies

ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



RANK, BY COUNTRY

40 Mexico

12 China

4 Brazil

39 Canada

12 Russia

4 Spain

30 United Kingdom

9 Japan

3 India

17 France

8 Italy

1 Korea

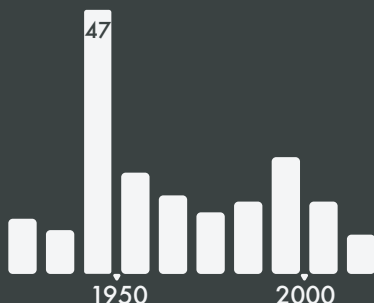
15 Germany

7 Australia

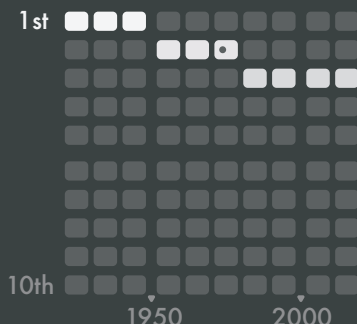
0 Indonesia

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

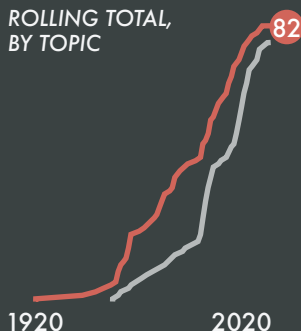


SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

159 bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

52% of treaties signed with close allies

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



RANK, BY COUNTRY

36 Mexico

17 Canada

13 China

11 Australia

11 Germany

11 India

8 France

8 Japan

8 Spain

7 Russia

7 United Kingdom

6 Brazil

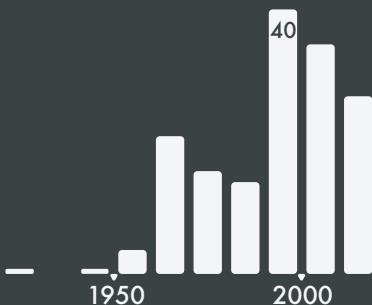
6 Italy

6 Korea

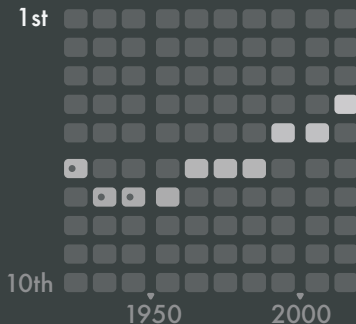
4 Indonesia

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



CONSULAR ISSUES & FOREIGN SUPPORT

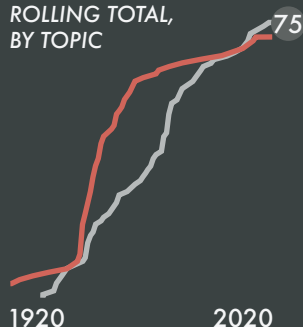
146

bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

49%

of treaties signed with close allies

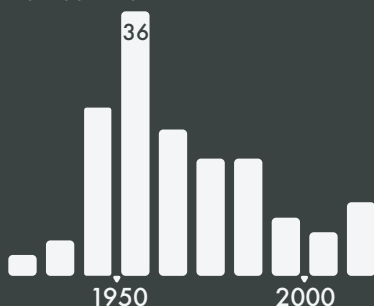
ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



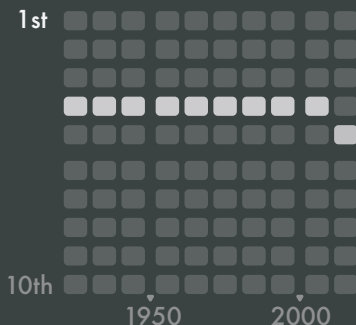
RANK, BY COUNTRY

19 China	10 India	7 Indonesia
16 Mexico	10 Italy	7 Japan
13 Russia	10 Korea	6 Australia
10 Brazil	10 United Kingdom	6 Germany
10 France	8 Canada	4 Spain

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



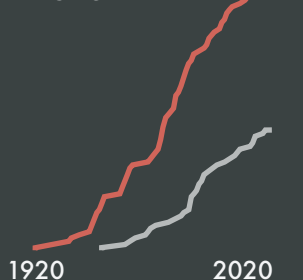
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



SOCIAL ISSUES & TAXES

125 bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC

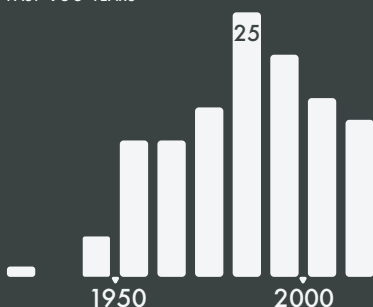


70% of treaties signed with close allies

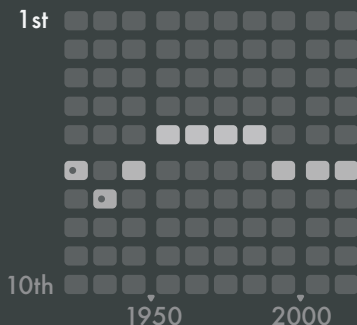
RANK, BY COUNTRY



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



MARITIME

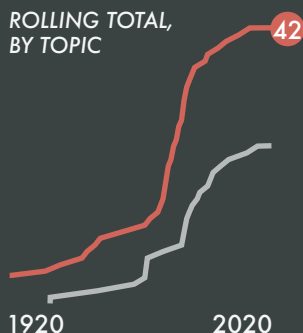
66

bilateral
treaties in force
with the fifteen
major powers

64%

of treaties
signed
with close
allies

ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



RANK, BY COUNTRY

20 Canada

4 Italy

14 Russia

2 Brazil

6 United Kingdom

2 Japan

5 China

2 Korea

5 France

2 Mexico

1 Australia

1 Germany

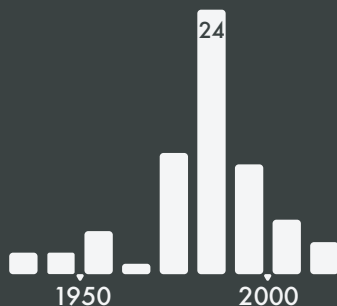
1 Indonesia

1 Spain

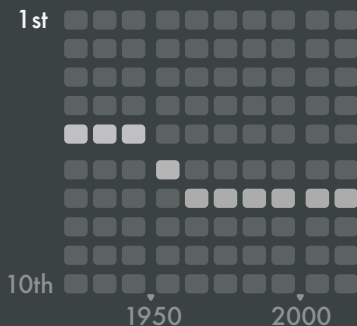
0 India

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE

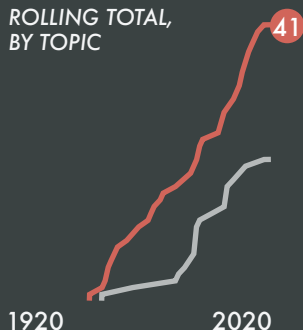


SPACE

62 bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

66% of treaties signed with close allies

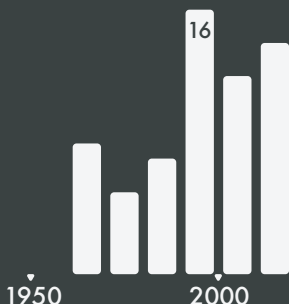
ROLLING TOTAL, BY TOPIC



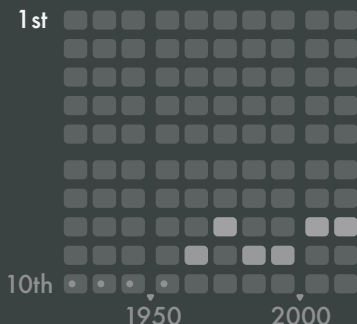
RANK, BY COUNTRY

17 Japan	4 United Kingdom	2 Indonesia
10 Russia	3 Australia	1 China
5 Italy	3 Brazil	1 France
4 India	3 Canada	1 Korea
4 Spain	3 Germany	1 Mexico

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



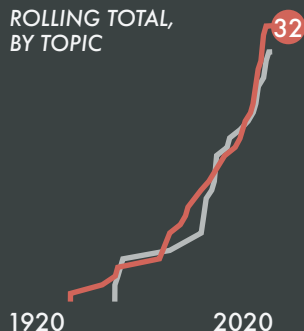
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



NUCLEAR

61 bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

52% of treaties signed with close allies



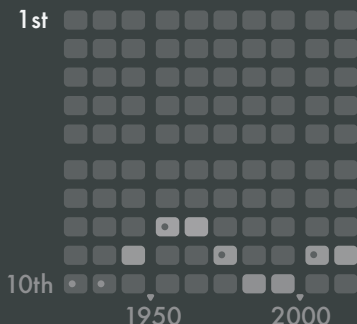
RANK, BY COUNTRY

13 Russia	4 India	2 Indonesia
8 France	3 Australia	2 Italy
6 Brazil	3 Canada	2 United Kingdom
6 Korea	3 China	1 Mexico
4 Germany	3 Japan	1 Spain

TOTAL, BY DECADE PAST 100 YEARS



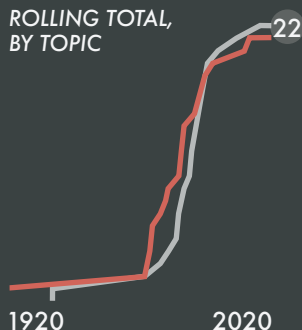
ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



ENVIRONMENT

43 bilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

49% of treaties signed with close allies



RANK, BY COUNTRY

13 Mexico

10 Canada

7 Russia

3 Japan

2 Korea

1 Australia

1 China

1 France

1 Germany

1 India

1 Italy

1 Spain

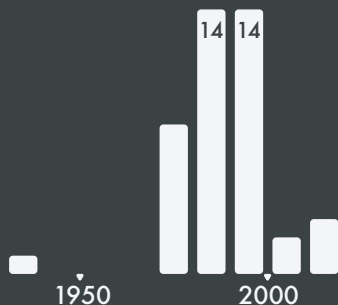
1 United Kingdom

0 Brazil

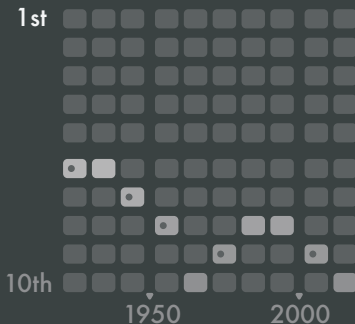
0 Indonesia

TOTAL, BY DECADE

PAST 100 YEARS



ROLLING RANK, BY DECADE



MULTILATERAL

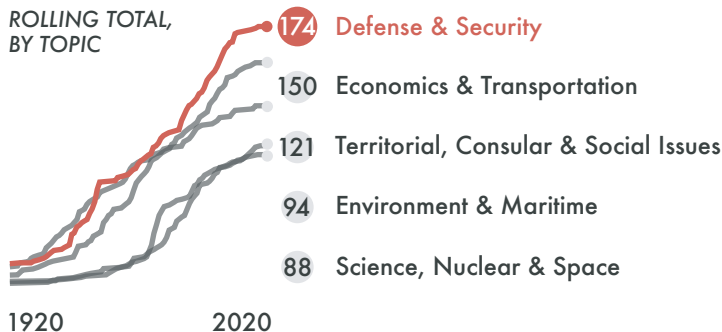
SECTION

MULTILATERAL

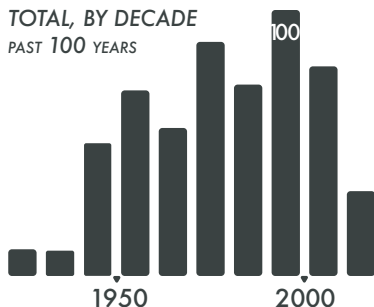
627 multilateral treaties in force with the fifteen major powers

28% of treaties focused on Defense & Security

ROLLING TOTAL,
BY TOPIC



TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



DEFENSE & SECURITY

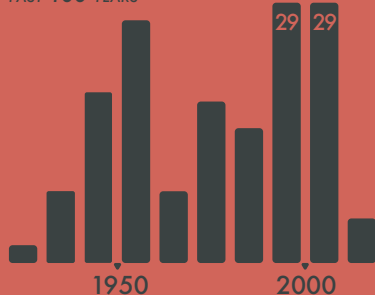
174

multilateral treaties in force
with the fifteen major powers

-23%

change in total, 80/90s to 00/10s

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



EVERYTHING ELSE

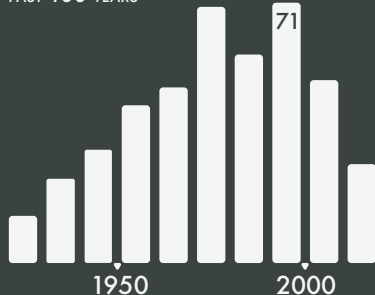
453

multilateral treaties in force
with the fifteen major powers

-40%

change in total, 80/90s to 00/10s

TOTAL, BY DECADE
PAST 100 YEARS



APPENDIX

Topic Key

DEFENSE & SECURITY • ds

Arms Control
Defense
International Criminal Court
Law Enforcement
Nonproliferation
Occupation & Peacekeeping
Peace
Rules of War
Weapons

ECONOMICS & TRANSPORTATION • et

Agriculture
Commodities
Finance
Intellectual Property
Postal Matters
Regulatory Cooperation &
Standardization
Trade & Investment
Transportation

ENVIRONMENT • e

Environment & Conservation
Pollution

MARITIME • m

Antarctica & Arctic
Canals
Fisheries
Maritime Matters

NUCLEAR • n

Nuclear Energy

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY • st

Energy
Scientific & Technical Cooperation
Telecommunication

SPACE • s

Space

CONSULAR ISSUES & FOREIGN SUPPORT • cf

Civil Affairs, Emergencies & Defense
Consular Affairs
Cultural Exchanges, Property
& Cooperation
Diplomatic & Consular Relations
Foreign Assistance
UN & Related Organizations

Country Key

SOCIAL ISSUES & TAXES • si

Education
Employment
Health & Medical Cooperation
Human Rights
Labor
Migration & Refugees
Private International Law
Social Security
Taxation

TERRITORIAL ISSUES & DISPUTES • td

Boundaries & Boundary Waters
Claims & Dispute Resolution
Property
Regional Issues
Territorial Issues

AUSTRALIA • AU

BRAZIL • BZ

CANADA • CA

CHINA • CN

Taiwan | Republic of China

China | People's Republic of China

FRANCE • FR

GERMANY • DE

INDIA • IN

INDONESIA • ID

ITALY • IT

JAPAN • JP

KOREA • KR

MEXICO • MX

RUSSIA • RU

Soviet Union

Russian Federation

SPAIN • ES

UNITED KINGDOM • UK

LIST OF BILATERAL TREATIES

YEAR	C · T	TREATY NAME
1784	UK · ds	Definitive treaty of peace.
1795	CA · ds	Treaty of amity, commerce and navigation between the United States and Great Britain (Jay Treaty).
	UK · et	Treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation (Jay Treaty).
1796	CA · ds	Explanatory article to article 3 of the November 19, 1794, treaty of amity, commerce and navigation between the United States and Great Britain.
1803	FR · td	Treaty for the cession of Louisiana.
1815	AU · cf	Convention to regulate commerce (article IV) between the United States and the United Kingdom.
	CA · cf	Convention to regulate commerce (article IV) between the United States and the United Kingdom.
	CA · ds	Treaty of peace and amity between the United States and Great Britain.
	IN · et	Convention to regulate commerce (article III) between the United States and the United Kingdom.
		Convention to regulate commerce (article IV) between the United States and the United Kingdom.
	UK · ds	Treaty of peace and amity.
	UK · et	Convention to regulate commerce.