

2. The Soviet-German Rapallo Treaty and Chicherin's Speech

CHICHERIN'S OPENING SPEECH AT GENOA

10 APRIL 1922

The Russian delegation, representing a Government which has always supported the cause of peace, welcome with particular satisfaction the declarations of the preceding speakers proclaiming the primary necessity of peace. They specially associate themselves with the declaration of the Italian Prime Minister, that here there are neither victors nor vanquished, and with that of the Prime Minister of Great Britain, assuring us that we are all here on a footing of equality.

In the first place, the Russian delegation wish to state that they have come here in the interests of peace and of the general reconstruction of the economic life of Europe, ruined by prolonged war and by the post-war policy.

Whilst maintaining the standpoint of their communist principles, the Russian delegation recognize that in the present period of history, which permits the parallel existence of the old social order and of the new order now being born, economic collaboration between the States representing these two systems of property is imperatively necessary for the general economic reconstruction.

The Russian Government therefore attributes great importance to the first point of the Cannes resolution dealing with reciprocal recognition of different systems of property and different political and economic forms existing at the present time in different countries. The Russian delegation have come here not with the intention of engaging in propaganda for their own theoretical opinions, but in order to enter into business relations with the Governments and industrial and commercial circles of all countries on the basis of reciprocity, equality, and full and unconditional recognition. The problem of universal economic reconstruction is, in present conditions, so immense and comprehensive that it can only be solved if all countries, both European and non-European, sincerely desire to co-ordinate their efforts, and are prepared if necessary to make temporary sacrifices. The economic reconstruction of Russia, the largest State in Europe, with its incalculable natural resources, is an indispensable condition of universal economic reconstruction. Russia, on its side, declares itself fully prepared to contribute to the solution of the tasks confronting the conference by all the means at its disposal, and these means are not negligible. To meet the needs of world economy, and of the development of its productive forces, the Russian Government is ready to open its frontier, deliberately and voluntarily, for international transit trade; to grant for cultivation millions of acres of most fertile land; to grant rich timber,

coal, and mining concessions, particularly in Siberia, and a number of other concessions throughout the territory of the RSFSR. It aims at economic collaboration between the industry of the West and the agriculture and industry of Russia and Siberia, of such a nature as to enlarge the basis of European industry, in regard to raw materials, grain, and fuel, to a degree far surpassing the pre-war level. A more detailed draft of a plan of general economic reconstruction can if necessary, be presented by the Russian delegation in the course of the conference. That its realization from the financial and economic point of view is perfectly possible is clear from the fact that the capital which would have to be invested annually for this purpose, which would guarantee the future of European production, would be equal to only a small part of the annual expenditure of the countries of Europe and of America on their armies and navies.
(...)

TREATY OF RAPALLO

16 APRIL 1922

The German Government, represented by Reichsminister Dr. Walther Rathenau, and the Government of R.S.F.S.R., represented by People's Commissar Chicherin, have agreed upon the following provisions:

- I. The two Governments agree that all questions resulting from the state of war between Germany and Russia shall be settled in the following manner:
- (a) Both Governments mutually renounce repayment for their war expenses and for damages arising out of the war, that is to say, damages caused to them and their nationals in the zone of war operations by military measures, including all requisitions effected in a hostile country. They renounce in the same way repayment for civil damages inflicted on civilians, that is to say, damages caused to the nationals of the two countries by exceptional war legislation or by violent measures taken by any authority of the state of either side.
 - (b) All legal relations concerning questions of public or private law resulting from the state of war, including the question of the treatment of merchant ships which fell into the hands of the one side or the other during the war, shall be settled on the basis of reciprocity.
 - (c) Germany and Russia mutually renounce repayment of expenses incurred for prisoners of war. The German Government also renounces repayment of expenses for soldiers of the Red Army interned in Germany. The Russian Government, for its part, renounces repayment of the sums Germany has derived from the sale of Russian Army material brought into Germany by these interned troops.

II. Germany renounces all claims resulting from the enforcement of the laws and measures of the Soviet Republic as it has affected German nationals or their private rights or the rights of the German state itself, as well as claims resulting from measures taken by the Soviet Republic or its authorities in any other way against subjects of the German state or their private rights, provided that the Soviet Republic shall not satisfy similar claims made by any third state.

III. Consular and diplomatic relations between Germany and the Federal Soviet Republic shall be resumed immediately. The admission of consuls to both countries shall be arranged by special agreement.

IV. Both Governments agree, further, that the rights of the nationals of either of the two Parties on the other's territory as well as the regulation of commercial relations shall be based on the most favored nation principle. This principle does not include rights and facilities granted by the Soviet Government to another Soviet state or to any state that formerly formed part of the Russian Empire.

V. The two Governments undertake to give each other mutual assistance for the alleviation of their economic difficulties in the most benevolent spirit. In the event of a general settlement of this question on an international basis, they undertake to have a preliminary exchange of views. The German Government declares itself ready to facilitate, as far as possible, the conclusion and the execution of economic contracts between private enterprises in the two countries.

VI. Article 1, Paragraph (b), and Article IV of this Agreement will come into force after the ratification of this document. The other Articles will come into force immediately.
