

International Law Studies – Volume 43

International Law Documents

U.S. Naval War College (Editor)

The thoughts and opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily of the U.S. government, the U.S. Department of the Navy or the Naval War College.

## **XVIII. Granting of Plenipotentiary Powers in the Field of Foreign Relations to Each of the Soviet Socialist Republics**

(The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. X, No. 254, May 6, 1944)

Under provisions of the law adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on February 1, 1944, each Soviet Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements with them.

A translation of the law and a translation of a circular note of February 11, 1944 from the Soviet Foreign Office concerning the reorganization of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, with which the law was enclosed, were transmitted to the Department of State with a despatch of February 15, 1944 from the American Embassy at Moscow.

The circular note reads in part as follows (translation):

“With a view to expanding international relations and to strengthening the collaboration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with other states, and in view of the growing need of the Soviet Republics for establishing direct relations with foreign states, the new Law provides that each Soviet Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states, to conclude agreements with them and to exchange diplomatic and consular representatives. The Law of February 1, 1944, introduces appropriate amendments

into the present Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of December 5, 1936.”

A translation of the text of the law follows:

THE LAW FOR THE GRANTING TO THE UNION REPUBLICS OF PLENIPOTENTIARY POWERS IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND FOR THE CORRESPONDING REORGANIZATION OF THE PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS FROM AN ALL-UNION TO A UNION-REPUBLICAN PEOPLE'S COMMISSARIAT.

With a view to extending international relations and to strengthening the collaboration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with other states and in view of the growing need of the Union Republics to establish direct relations with foreign states, the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics resolves:

1. To provide that the Union Republics may enter into direct relations with foreign states and conclude agreements with them.

2. To include in the Constitution of the U. S. S. R. the following amendments:

(a). Add to Article 14 point “a” of the Constitution of the U. S. S. R. after the words “representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties” the words “the establishment of the general form of mutual relations of the Union Republics with foreign states” whereby this point will read as follows:

“(a). Representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other states, and the establishment of the general form of mutual relations of the Union Republics with foreign states.”

(b). Add to the Constitution of the U. S. S. R. Article 18-a with the following content:

“Article 18-a. Each Union Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states, to conclude agreements with them and to exchange diplomatic and consular representatives.”

(c). Add to Article 60 of the Constitution of the U. S. S. R. point “e” with the following content:

“(e). Establishes representation of the Union Republic in international relations.”

3. To reorganize the People’s Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from an All-Union to a Union-Republican People’s Commissariat.

President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., M. KALININ.

Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the U. S. S. R., A. GORKIN.

MOSCOW, KREMLIN *February 1, 1944.*