

International Law Studies – Volume 40

International Law Documents

U.S. Naval War College (Editor)

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XXIX. Declarations of War by Belligerent Countries

(Dept. of State Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 88, March 1, 1941)

The following table sets forth declarations of war, recognitions of the existence of a state of war, etc., in the European war beginning in 1939. In addition to the cases enumerated below of declarations of war or of the names of countries at war mentioned in the President's proclamations, there are some instances of proclamations by governors of the various units of the British Empire and of colonial possessions of The Netherlands of the existence of a state of war with Germany or Italy or both.

Countries	Date	Source	Date of Proclamation of Neutrality by the President of the United States
Germany and France---	<p>“As a consequence of the aggression directed by Germany against Poland, a state of war is found to exist between France and Germany, commencing from September 3, 1939, 5 p. m.”</p>	<p>Note addressed to foreign powers by the French Government on September 3. Printed, in French, in the <i>Journal officiel de la République française. Lois et décrets.</i> September 4, 1939, page 11086.</p>	<p>September 5, 1939</p>
Germany and Poland---	<p>[No record of a formal declaration of war has been found.]</p>		<p>September 5, 1939</p>
Germany and United Kingdom.	<p>“* * * unless not later than 11 a. m., British Summer Time, today 3rd September, satisfactory assurances to the above effect [that the German Government “had suspended all aggressive action against Poland and were prepared promptly to withdraw their forces from Polish territory”] have been given by the German Government and have reached His Majesty’s Government in London, a state of war will exist between the two countries as from that hour.”</p> <p>British Prime Minister Chamberlain declared in his speech of September 3, 1939 in</p>	<p>Telegraphic instruction from the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the British Ambassador to Germany. This and Prime Minister Chamberlain’s speech are printed in British Command Paper 6106, Miscellaneous No. 9 (1939): entitled <i>Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities between Great Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939</i> (a British “Blue Book”), pages 175, 178.</p>	<p>September 5, 1939</p>

Germany and India-----

the House of Commons: "No such undertaking was received by the time stipulated, and, consequently, this country is at war with Germany."

[“I, Victor Alexander John, Marquess of Linlithgow, Governor-General of India and ex-officio Vice-Admiral therein, being satisfied thereof by information received by me, do hereby proclaim that war has broken out between His Majesty and Germany.” (No record has been found of a declaration of war by Great Britain against Germany which includes India by name.)]

Germany and Australia--

“* * * I, Alexander Gore Arkwright, Baron Gowrie, the Governor-General aforesaid, acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council, do hereby proclaim the existence of war.

“Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Commonwealth this third day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand nine-hundred and thirty-nine and in the third year of His Majesty’s reign.”

Proclamation of the Governor-General of India, dated September 3, 1939. Printed in *The Gazette of India Extraordinary*, September 3, 1939.

September 5,
1939

Proclamation issued on September 3, 1939. Printed in *The Commonwealth of Australia Gazette*, September 3, 1939.

September 5,
1939

Countries	Date	Source	Date of Proclamation of Neutrality by the President of the United States
Germany and New Zealand.	<p>“His Excellency the Governor-General has it in command from His Majesty the King to declare that a state of war exists between His Majesty and the Government of the German Reich, and that such state of war has existed from 9:30 p. m., New Zealand standard time, on the third day of September, 1939.”</p>	<p>Statement by Viscount Galway, Governor-General of New Zealand. Printed in <i>The New Zealand Gazette Extraordinary</i>, September 4, 1939.</p>	<p>September 5, 1939</p>
Germany and Union of South Africa.	<p>“* * * I do by this my Proclamation in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King declare and make known that from this the sixth day of September, 1939, the peaceful relations between the Union and the German Reich are severed and that the Union is, for the purposes of all laws, at war with the German Reich as from the aforementioned date.”</p>	<p>Proclamation by Sir Patrick Duncan, Governor-General of the Union of South Africa. Printed in <i>The Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary</i>, September 6, 1939.</p>	<p>September 8, 1939</p>
Germany and Canada--	<p>“Now Therefore We do hereby Declare and Proclaim that a State of War with the German Reich exists and has existed in Our Dominion of Canada as and from the tenth day of September, 1939.”</p>	<p>Proclamation issued by Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King. Printed in <i>The Canada Gazette Extra</i>, September 10, 1939.</p>	<p>September 10, 1939</p>

Germany and Norway--	<p>“The Nygaardsvold [Premier of Norway] Government through its proclamations and conduct as well as the military fighting that is taking place as a result of its will has created a state of war between Norway and the German Reich.” (Translation.)</p>	<p>Decree of the <i>Führer</i> for the Exercising of Governmental Authority in Norway, April 24, 1940, <i>Reichsgesetzblatt</i>, Teil 1, No. 74, p. 677 (April 26, 1940).</p>	April 25, 1940
Germany and Belgium--	<p>[No record of a formal declaration of war has been found.]</p>		May 11, 1940
Germany and Luxemburg.	<p>[No record of a formal declaration of war has been found.]</p>		May 11, 1940
Germany and Netherlands.	<p>“Only one reply could be given [to the German Minister, who informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that “the German Government, therefore, found itself compelled to occupy the Netherlands and hoped that they would offer no resistance, but accept the protection of the German Reich”] * * * 3 hours after the Dutch forces had begun to resist the overwhelmingly powerful invader with all possible means: “The Netherlands considered themselves at war with the German Reich’.” [May 10, 1940.]</p>	<p>The passage cited is to be found on page 2 of the <i>Short Account of Military and Naval Operations in the Netherlands from 10th-14th May, 1940</i>, issued by the Netherlands Ministry of Defense.</p>	May 11, 1940

Countries	Date	Source	Date of Proclamation of Neutrality by the President of the United States
Italy and France-----	<p>“Today at 4:30 P. M. [11:30 A. M., New York Time] Count Ciano, at Chigi Palace, told the Ambassador of France that His Majesty the King and Emperor of Italy declares that Italy considers herself at war with France, beginning tomorrow, June 11.</p>	<p>Communiqué by the Italian Government. Printed in the <i>New York Times</i>, June 11, 1940, p. 2.</p>	<p>June 10, 1940</p>
Italy and United Kingdom.	<p>“At 4:45 P. M. Count Ciano called the Ambassador of Great Britain and handed him a statement couched in identical terms saying that Italy considers she is at a state of war with Great Britain.”</p>		
Italy and Canada-----	<p>“Now, Therefore, we do hereby declare and proclaim that a State of War with Italy exists and has existed in Our Dominion of Canada as and from the tenth day of June, 1940.”</p>	<p>Proclamation issued by Prime Minister W. L. Mackenzie King. Printed in <i>The Canada Gazette Extra</i>, June 11, 1940.</p>	
Italy and New Zealand.	<p>“Prime Minister Peter Fraser stated today that New Zealand was at war with Italy from 10:30 A. M., New Zealand time (7 P. M. Monday, New York Time).”</p>	<p>An Associated Press despatch bearing a New Zealand date line, June 11, 1940. Printed in the <i>New York Times</i>, June 11, 1940, p. 2.</p>	

Italy and Australia	<p>“Therefore a state of war exists between His Majesty the King and the King of Italy as from 9 o’clock in the forenoon, reckoned according to standard time in the Australian Capital Territory, of 11th June, 1940.”</p>	<p>Notification issued by Prime Minister Robert G. Menzies. Printed in <i>The Commonwealth of Australia Gazette, Special</i>, June 11, 1940.</p>	
Italy and Union of South Africa.	<p>“* * * I do by this my Proclamation, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King, declare and make known that from this, the eleventh day of June, 1940, the peaceful relations between the Union and Italy are severed and that the Union is, for the purposes of all laws, at war with Italy as from the aforementioned date.”</p>	<p>Proclamation by Sir Patrick Duncan, Governor-General of the Union of South Africa. Printed in <i>The Union of South Africa Government Gazette Extraordinary</i>, June 12, 1940.</p>	
Italy and Greece	<p>[The Greek Government, in a note to the American Legation in Athens of November 12, 1940, stated that a state of war had existed between Greece and Italy since October 28, 1940, at 5:30 A. M.]</p>	<p>[Files of the Department of State.]</p>	<p>November 15, 1940</p>
Germany and Italy, and Jugoslavia.	<p>No formal declaration of war. Invasion of Jugoslavia began on April 6, 1941.</p>		<p>April 10, 1941</p>
Hungary and Jugoslavia.	<p>No formal declaration of war.</p>		<p>April 15, 1941</p>
Bulgaria, and Jugoslavia and Greece.	<p>No formal declaration of war.</p>		<p>April 24, 1941</p>
Germany and U. S. S. R.	<p>No formal declaration of war. Attack by Germany began on June 22, 1941.</p>		