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International Law Documents

CONFERENCE ON LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT.

PRESIDENT'S INVITATION TO POWERS.

TEXT OF THE FORMAL INVITATION OF THE PRESIDENT, SENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AUGUST 11, 1921, TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, ITALY, AND JAPAN, TO PARTICIPATE IN A CONFERENCE ON THE LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT.

The President is deeply gratified at the cordial response to his suggestion that there should be a Conference on the subject of Limitation of Armament, in connection with which Pacific and Far Eastern questions should also be discussed.

Productive labor is staggering under an economic burden too heavy to be borne unless the present vast public expenditures are greatly reduced. It is idle to look for stability, or the assurance of social justice, or the security of peace, while wasteful and unproductive outlays deprive effort of its just reward and defeat the reasonable expectation of progress. The enormous disbursements in the rivalries of armaments manifestly constitute the greater part of the encumbrance upon enterprise and national prosperity; and avoidable or extravagant expense of this nature is not only without economic justification but is a constant menace to the peace of the world rather than an assurance of its preservation. Yet there would seem to be no ground to expect the halting of these increasing outlays unless the Powers most largely concerned find a satisfactory basis for an agreement to effect their limitation. The time is believed to be opportune for these Powers to approach this subject directly and in conference; and while, in the discussion of limitation of armament, the question of naval armament may naturally have first place, it has been thought best not to exclude questions pertaining to other armament to the end that all practicable measures of relief may have appropriate consideration. It may also be found advisable to formulate proposals by which in the interest of humanity the use of new agencies of warfare may be suitably controlled.

It is, however, quite clear that there can be no final assurance of the peace of the world in the absence of the desire for peace, and the prospect of reduced armaments is not a hopeful one unless this desire finds expression in a practical effort to remove causes of misunderstanding and to seek ground for agreement as to

principles and their application. It is the earnest wish of this Government that, through an interchange of views with the facilities afforded by a conference, it may be possible to find a solution of Pacific and Far Eastern problems, of unquestioned importance at this time; that is, such common understandings with respect to matters which have been and are of international concern as may serve to promote enduring friendship among our peoples.

It is not the purpose of this Government to attempt to define the scope of the discussion in relation to the Pacific and Far East, but rather to leave this to be the subject of suggestions to be exchanged before the meeting of the Conference, in the expectation that the spirit of friendship and a cordial appreciation of the importance of the elimination of sources of controversy will govern the final decision.

Accordingly, in pursuance of the proposal which has been made, and in the light of the gracious indication of its acceptance, the President invites the Government of the French Republic to participate in a Conference on the subject of Limitation of Armament in connection with which Pacific and Far Eastern questions will also be discussed, to be held in Washington on the 11th day of November, 1921.

TEXT OF THE FORMAL INVITATION OF THE PRESIDENT, SENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, AUGUST 11, 1921, TO THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION OF PACIFIC AND FAR EASTERN QUESTIONS, IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONFERENCE ON THE LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT.

The President is deeply gratified at the cordial response to his suggestion that there should be a Conference on the subject of Limitation of Armament, in connection with which Pacific and Far Eastern questions should also be discussed.

It is quite clear that there can be no final assurance of the peace of the world in the absence of the desire for peace, and the prospect of reduced armaments is not a hopeful one unless this desire finds expression in a practical effort to remove causes of misunderstanding and to seek ground for agreement as to principles and their application. It is the earnest wish of this Government that, through an interchange of views with the facilities afforded by a conference, it may be possible to find a solution of Pacific and Far Eastern problems, of unquestioned importance at this time; that is, such common understandings with respect to matters which have been and are of international concern as may serve to promote enduring friendship among our peoples.

It is not the purpose of this Government to attempt to define the scope of the discussion in relation to the Pacific and Far

East, but rather to leave this to be the subject of suggestions to be exchanged before the meeting of the Conference, in the expectation that the spirit of friendship and a cordial appreciation of the importance of the elimination of sources of controversy will govern the final decision.

Accordingly, in pursuance of the proposal which has been made, and in the light of the gracious indication of its acceptance, the President invites the Government of the Republic of China to participate in the discussion of Pacific and Far Eastern questions, in connection with the Conference on the subject of Limitation of Armament, to be held in Washington on the 11th day of November, 1921.

TEXT OF THE FORMAL INVITATION OF THE PRESIDENT, SENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE, OCTOBER 4, 1921, TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS, AND PORTUGAL, TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DISCUSSION OF PACIFIC AND FAR EASTERN QUESTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONFERENCE ON THE LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT.

Acting under telegraphic instructions from my Government I have the honor to inform Your Excellency that the invitation of the President of the United States to the Governments of France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan to send representatives to a Conference to be held in the City of Washington on November 11, 1921, on the subject of Limitation of Armament, in connection with which Pacific and Far Eastern questions will also be discussed, has been graciously accepted. The Government of China has also been pleased to accept the President's invitation to participate in the discussion of Pacific and Far Eastern questions.

It is the earnest wish of this Government that with the facilities afforded by a Conference it may be possible to find a solution of Pacific and Far Eastern problems, by a practical effort to reach such common understandings with respect to matters which have been and are of international concern as may serve to promote enduring friendship among our peoples.

In view of the interest of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Portugal in the Far East the President desires to invite Your Excellency's Government to participate in the discussion of Pacific and Far Eastern questions at the Conference, and I have the honor to enclose herewith the tentative suggestions as to the agenda of the Conference, relating to Pacific and Far Eastern questions, proposed by the Government of the United States.

AGENDA OF THE CONFERENCE.

LIMITATION OF ARMAMENT.

1. Limitation of naval armament, under which shall be discussed—
 - (a) Basis of limitation.
 - (b) Extent.
 - (c) Fulfillment.
2. Rules for control of new agencies of warfare.
3. Limitation of land armament.

PACIFIC AND FAR EASTERN QUESTIONS.

1. Questions relating to China.
 - (1) Principles to be applied.
 - (2) Application.
 - Subjects: (a) Territorial integrity.
 - (b) Administrative integrity.
 - (c) Open door—equality of commercial and industrial opportunity.
 - (d) Concessions, monopolies, or preferential economic privileges.
 - (e) Development of railways, including plans relating to Chinese Eastern Railway.
 - (f) Preferential railroad rates.
 - (g) Status of existing commitments.
2. Siberia (similar headings).
3. Mandated islands (unless questions earlier settled).
Electrical communications in the Pacific.