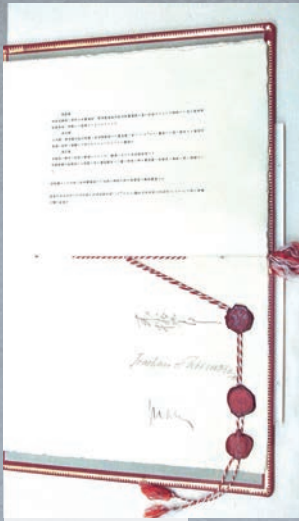


Protocol on Bulgaria's accession to the Tripartite Pact



Japanese specimen of the Tripartite Pact

"The Slovak nation showed that it can support Tripartite Pact principles, when a year ago - with weapons in hand - it sided with German soldiers. The Slovak nation had therefore already acceded to the basic principles of this pact - with the blood of its sons."

Vojtech Tuka
after the signing of Slovakia's accession protocol to the Tripartite Pact

"Three weeks after Mussolini spoke of the Axis, Japan and Germany signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, aimed at Russia but signalling the possibility of groups of totalitarian powers acting in predatory wolf-packs. On 27 September 1937, Mussolini was in Berlin. He found Hitler's admiration irresistible. Hitler called him 'the leading statesman in the world, to whom none may even remotely compare himself'. No longer content with Abyssinia, he began to imitate Hitler in the search for targets of expansion."

Paul Johnson, historian



(Foreign Minister) Molotov, Hitler, and Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs von Ribbentrop met in Berlin to discuss the division of spheres of influence in Europe and Asia. Whilst the Germans wanted to direct Soviet expansion south to the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea, Molotov presented Stalin's demands to Nazi leaders that included annexing territories in Finland and Romania, and building Soviet military bases in Yugoslavia, Greece, Denmark, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Molotov also reminded Hitler several times that Germany had only achieved its victories in Western Europe thanks to Soviet neutrality. The Nazi dictator then understood that the interests of the two powers were incompatible. On 18 December 1940 he issued a secret order to prepare for an attack on the Soviet Union.

TRIPARTITE PACT SIGNATORIES

State	Date of signing
German Reich	27 September 1940
Kingdom of Italy	27 September 1940
Empire of Japan	27 September 1940

Kingdom of Hungary	20 November 1940
Kingdom of Romania	23 November 1940
Slovak Republic	24 November 1940
Bulgarian Empire	1 March 1941
Kingdom of Yugoslavia (accession to the Pact has not ratified)	25 March 1941
Independent State of Croatia	27 June 1941

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?

Recommended websites: www.upn.gov.sk; www.enrs.eu



.tasr.

BERLIN – ROME – TOKYO AXIS (1940 – 1945)

The Berlin – Rome – Tokyo Axis was a military-political grouping of nations that fought in World War II against the Allies (Great Britain, France, the Soviet Union, the United States of America, Poland, China, and other countries). The Axis (also known as a Tripartite Pact) aimed to create a geopolitical "new order" based on the domination of Germany in continental Europe, Italy in the Mediterranean, and Japan in the Asia-Pacific region. However, the composition of the Axis changed when Italy joined the Allies in 1943 – 1944.



Whilst Mussolini and Hitler gave the impression of being strong allies and selfless friends, their relationship was actually defined by on-going rivalry and mutual distrust



Signing of the Axis Tripartite Pact on 27 September 1940



V. V. Molotov and A. Hitler in Berlin, 1940



The foreign ministers of Italy and Germany sign the Pact of Steel in the presence of Adolf Hitler



“Good friends in three countries”. A 1938 propaganda postcard depicting Japanese Prime Minister Fumimaro Konoe alongside Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini



Slovakia's accession to the Tripartite Pact was signed in Berlin on 24 November 1944 by Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Vojtech Tuka

FORMATION OF THE AXIS

In 1935, there was rapprochement between Nazi Germany and a fascist Italy that sought territorial expansion. The cooperation between the two countries deepened after the Spanish civil war started in July 1936, during which they backed a nationalist insurgency against the Republican government.

On 25 October 1936, the two powers signed a friendship treaty. Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini subsequently declared that the German-Italian alliance represented an “axis” around which other European countries could group. A month later, on 25 November 1936, Germany and Japan signed a pact against the Comintern (Communist International), a Moscow-based international communist organization. It included a secret amendment that in the event of an attack on the Soviet Union by one of the pact’s signatories, such aggressor would maintain neutrality and not enter into any treaty with the Soviet Union, which was contrary to the pact’s principles. Italy joined the Anti-Comintern Pact on 6 November 1937.

Germany and Italy's aggressive plans were confirmed on 22 May 1939 with the signing of the Pact of Steel, which was a military-political allied treaty directed against Great Britain and France. Japan did not accede to the Pact of Steel since it considered the Soviet Union as its main enemy rather than

the Western European powers. As such, the Japanese military considered the Molotov-Ribbentrop Non-aggression Pact signed on 23 August 1939 an act of betrayal.

TRIPARTITE PACT

Japan realigned with Germany after the outbreak of World War II as Japan's political and military leadership began preparations to occupy European colonies in Southeast Asia. This was the result of the failed conflict with the Soviet Union in 1938. This situation was strongly supported by the defeat of France as well as Great Britain’s weakened position. The Berlin – Rome – Tokyo Axis was formally signed on 27 September 1940 in Berlin by the representatives of the three powers. Germany, Italy, and Japan thereby agreed to respective spheres of influence and the provision of mutual military, political and economic cooperation. The pact was soon joined by Nazi Germany satellite countries, such as the First Slovak Republic.

Following the pressure from Hitler, on 25 March 1941 Yugoslavia joined the German – Italian – Japanese Axis upon the proviso that the country would not provide military support to any of the pact’s members. Yet this commitment was to prove short-lived, as just two days later a new government seized power in Belgrade that refused to ratify the treaty, and instead began negotiating an alliance with Great Britain

and the Soviet Union. In response, Hitler and Mussolini launched attacks on Yugoslavia. After its break up and defeat, Croatia became an Axis member. Finland held a distinctive position, having fought against the Soviet Union on the Germany side in 1941 – 1944, yet not acceding to the Axis Tripartite Pact.

FALL OF THE AXIS

All the Berlin – Rome – Tokyo Axis countries had ruling totalitarian or authoritarian regimes based on principles of national socialism (Nazism) and fascism. Yet unlike the Allies, Germany, Italy, and Japan lacked joint plans to achieve their goals. The inevitable consequence of this lack of cooperation resulted in military defeats and led to the end of the Axis pact. Italy joined the Allies on 3 September 1943, followed by Romania on 23 August 1944 and Bulgaria on 8 September 1944. Germany capitulated on 8 May 1945, with Japan's surrender on 2 September 1945 marking the end of World War II.

WHY SOVIET UNION DIDNT JOIN TRIPARTITE PACT

VNazi Germany had an influential grouping of diplomats and officers who - since the summer of 1940 - had sought to deepen the alliance with Moscow. Even Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin was not adverse to such an idea. Between 12 – 14 November 1940, the Soviet People's Commissar