

*RUSSIA*

## TREATY OF KIAKHTA (1727)

(Signed October 21, 1727)

Her Majesty the Empress of All the Russias, etc., etc., etc., and His Majesty the Emperor of the Great Ch'ing, for the renewal and further strengthening of the Peace which was formerly concluded between their two Empires at Nerchinsk, have despatched as their Plenipotentiaries, that is to say:

Her Majesty the Empress of all the Russias, etc., etc., etc., the Illyrian Count Ambassador SAVVA VLADISLAVICH;

And His Majesty the Emperor of China, CHA-PI-NA, noble, Privy Councilor, President of the Board of Civil Appointments and Director of the Chamber of Internal Affairs; TE-KU-TE, noble, Privy Councilor, Director of the Lifanyuan, and Commander of the Red Banner; and TU-LI-SHEN, second President of the Board of War;

Who have agreed as follows: —

I. This new Treaty being expressly concluded that the Peace between the two Empires might be even stronger and more enduring, from this day forward each Government must govern and restrain its respective Subjects and, with the utmost respect for the Peace, strictly ensure that they not provoke any hostile acts.

II. Consequent to the renewal of Peace, it being not fitting to dwell on previous issues between the two Empires, Fugitives from either side who may have settled in the other country may remain where they are. But henceforth, those who, being guilty of Criminal acts, take flight, are to be diligently sought out by both sides, apprehended, and handed over to the Frontier Officials.

III. The land lying between the Russian guard post buildings in the Kiakhta river valley and the Chinese stone guard post on the hill Orogoitu is divided equally in two, a beacon has been erected in the middle as a sign of border demarcation, and a place of commerce for both states has been established there. Proceeding from there eastward, the boundary dividing the two sides runs along the summit of the Burgutei mountains to the Kiransky guard post, and from the Kiransky guard post along the Chiktai, Ara Khudara, and Ara Khadain Usu; in the vicinity of these four guard posts or beacons, a part of the river Chikoi serves as the boundary. From Ara Khadain Usu to the Mongolian guard post and beacon of Ubur Khadain Usu, and from Ubur Khadain Usu to the Mongolian guard post and beacon of Tsagan Ola, all empty lands between the lands possessed by Russian subjects and the Chinese [and?] Mongol beacons are divided equally in two. Where mountains, hills and rivers exist near places inhabited by Russian subjects, these are to serve as the boundary;

where mountains, hills and rivers exist near the Mongol guard post beacons, these are [similarly] to serve as the boundary; in flat places without mountains and rivers, the land is divided equally in two, and boundary markers have been erected; from the guard house and beacon of Tsagan Ola up to and beyond the Mongol guard house and beacon on the bank of the Argun river, the various beacons are to serve as the boundary line.

As for the frontier between the two places Kiakhta and Orogoitu, beginning from the beacon and proceeding westward, [the boundary runs] along the Orogoitu mountains, Tymen Koviokhu, Bichiktu Khoshegu, Bulesotu Olo, Kuku Chelotuin, Khongor Obo, Butugu dabaga [i.e., pass], Ekouten shaoi moulou, Doshitu dabaga, Kysynyktu dabaga, Gurbi dabaga, Nukut dabaga, Ergik targak, Kense mada, Khonin dabaga, Kem Kemchik bom, Shabina dabaga; the watersheds of these mountains acting as the boundary. Where there are transverse ranges and rivers, such ranges and rivers are to be equitably divided laterally. From the Shabina dabaga to the banks of the Argun, the northern face will belong to Russia, the southern to China.

If, in the areas under their respective control, there be base subjects who should surreptitiously migrate, take possession of lands and erect houses for dwelling purposes, [after] careful investigation, they shall be returned to their respective localities. And if, among the people of the two countries, there be those who go back and forth, without fixed abode, [after] careful investigation they shall be gathered and settled in their [appropriate] respective dwelling places, thereby bringing tranquility to the frontier area. The Uriankhy, from whom one side or the other has been respectively collecting [tribute of] five sables, will be left as they were under their respective chiefs. Those Uriankhy from whom [tribute of] one sable has been collected by both sides, will henceforth, from the day this boundary treaty is fixed, never again [be subject to the] levy of one sable. Thus has it been decided and finalized, and the written evidences exchanged.

IV. Trade between the two countries will be permitted. As in the current trading, the numbers of merchants shall remain as was originally established — not more than two hundred persons, proceeding to Peking once in every three years. And because they will all be merchants, the provision of foodstuffs and expenses, in accordance with the old rules, shall cease. [But] no duty shall be collected from either sellers or buyers. When the merchants arrive at the frontier, they shall submit a memorial making clear the reason for their coming. After consideration, officials will be despatched to meet them and to oversee their commerce.

If the merchants desire to buy camels, horses and provisions or hire workers en route, they shall be allowed to freely do so. The official or officer managing the merchant caravan shall properly rule those under him, and if any quarrel arises, he shall settle it justly. If that official or officer be of noble rank, he is to be received with respect. Things of every description may be bought and sold, except those that are forbidden by decree by either [side]. If there be those who hope to remain behind secretly, without prior official consent, it will not be permitted. If someone dies of illness, whatever goods remain of his shall be handed over to persons of his country.

In addition to this [caravan] trade between the two countries, suitable spots shall be chosen on the frontier at Nerchinsk and Selenginsk for sporadic trade. Houses shall be built there and those who want to come and trade will be permitted to do so. The houses will be enclosed within a fence or stockade, as seems appropriate, and no taxes will be levied. It is only allowed to go there directly by the officially determined route. If anyone takes a circuitous route, or goes to other places for trade, his merchandise shall be confiscated by the officials. Both sides will despatch officers and an equal number of soldiers, who will cooperate in [providing] guard.

V. The Russian hostel in Peking shall continue to serve as a dwelling for Russians hereafter. In accordance with the wish of the Russian Ambassador Vladislavich for the construction of a church, those high officials responsible for managing Russian affairs are commanded to have it built at the hostel. One priest [lama] is presently in Peking, and he has also asked that a further three priests be sent; [a letter] has been written according to the request. When these three priests arrive, as in the case of the previous priest, provisions shall be given to them, and they shall dwell in that church. As for the Russians praying and reading scriptures according to the custom of their own country, it will not be stopped. In addition, the four students whom the Russian Ambassador Vladislavich left in Peking to study the arts, and the two persons who know the Russian and Latin [written] languages shall also live in that hostel, and provisions shall be given to them at public expense.

VI. In the mutual sending of documents, official seals are of extreme importance. Official documents sent to Russia from China shall, as before, bear the seal of the Lifanyuan and be addressed to the Russian Senate; those sent by the Russian Senate shall bear the seal of the governor of Tobolsk and be addressed to the Lifanyuan. In addition, if documents concerning bandits, deserters and so on are sent from places close to the frontiers, then the Tushiyetu-khan on the Chinese frontier and the commandants of towns on the Russian frontier shall each use signed and sealed documents by way of proof. Couriers who carry documents from the Tushiyetu-khan addressed to Russia, and from Russia addressed to the Tushiyetu-khan, shall travel only by the Kiakhta road. But if there be some really important matter, then it is permissible to use judgement and take a shortcut. If [, however,] anyone should willfully take a shortcut [simply] because the Kiakhta route is longer, then the frontier khans and Russian commandants shall mutually clarify [the matter], and each mete out punishment to his own.

VII. As for the river Ud and places around it, it will temporarily be maintained as a place under the administration of both sides, and it is not permitted to encroach upon it or dwell therein.

VIII. The authorities established on the frontiers shall quickly and impartially decide all matters under their jurisdiction. And if, for selfish reasons, responsibility be shifted onto others or there is corruption or injustice, then each shall punish its own according to its own laws.

IX. When envoys, high or low, despatched by either country arrive at the frontier on official business, they shall explain the matter for which they come and [their] status, and await a letter or a decision on their reception. As soon as the reception documents arrive, they shall be provided with post [services] and provisions and will be attended to [after] their entry. Upon their arrival [in Peking] they will be given lodgings and provisions. If [, however,] it is not a trading year they shall not be permitted to bring in merchandise.

If there be urgent matters and one or two couriers arrive carrying passports, the frontier officials, after verification, will forego their [normal] report, despatch persons to attend them, and provide them with provisions and horses.

As the matter of the movement of documents and despatch of persons is most important, it cannot brook of delay for any reason. If, hereafter, letters or messengers are interfered with or turned back, or responsibility is shifted and they are delayed, [so that] the lack of a reply leads toward a breach of the peace, despatched envoys and merchants will suffer difficulties, temporarily being stopped until the matter is clarified, and only then permitted to trade as before.

X. In the future, if any subject of either country deserts, he shall be executed on the spot where he is caught. If armed men cross the frontier, plundering and killing, they too shall be summarily executed. If armed persons cross the frontier without documents, although they may not have killed or robbed, they shall be punished after deliberation. When a soldier or a person who has taken his master's property flees, if he be Chinese, he will be beheaded on the spot where he is caught or, if he be Russian, he will be hanged; stolen things will be returned to their original owners.

Persons who cross the frontier and steal pack animals or livestock, shall, without exception, be caught and handed over to their superiors for punishment according to law; those criminals for whom it is the first crime shall be fined ten times the value of the items stolen; for the second crime they shall be fined twenty times [the value], and for the third crime shall be beheaded. Those who hunt in the vicinity of the frontier for their own profit, if they hunt in spots [belonging to] others, in addition to having their catch confiscated for the public treasury, shall also be punished for their crime according to law, as the Russian Ambassador suggested.

XI. Thus it is agreed and the written documents exchanged, [copies] in the Russian and Latin languages, signed and sealed by his own hand, being presented by the Russian Ambassador, Savva Vladislavich, to the high Chinese officials for preservation; and [copies] in the Manchu, Russian, and Latin languages, signed and sealed by their own hands, being presented by the Chinese high officials to the Russian Ambassador, Savva Vladislavich, for safekeeping.

Printed copies of this instrument have been distributed to all frontier inhabitants for their information.

Done at Kiakhta, the 7th day, 9th moon of the fifth year of YUNG CHENG. [“The 21st day of October in the year of our Lord 1727, or the first year of the reign of Peter II, Emperor of All the Russias, etc., etc., etc.” Ratifications exchanged at Kiakhta on June 14, 1728.]

[L.S.] (Signed)      CHA-PI-NA,  
*dignitary, Royal Counselor,  
 President of the Board of Civil Office  
 and Director of the Chamber of Internal Affairs.*

[L.S.] (Signed)      TE-KU-TE,  
*dignitary, Royal Counselor,  
 President-Director of the Lifanyuan, and Commander of the Red  
 Banner;*

[L.S.] (SIGNED)      A-SHA-NA-MA NA-EN-TAI,  
*Lifanyuan*  
 (in the absence of TU-LI-SHEN,  
 the Second President of the Board of War)