

Message on the Anniversary of the Ratification of the 1783 Treaty of Paris
January 14, 2026

On January 14, 1784, the Second Continental Congress ratified the decisive Treaty of Paris, the binding accord that ended the Revolutionary War, secured American independence, and triumphantly declared all 13 colonies "to be free sovereign and Independent States." Today we celebrate this monumental milestone, and we pay tribute to the grit, greatness, and unyielding resolve of the patriots of 1776 who pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor for freedom's cause.

The cessation of hostilities with the British Empire, proclaimed on April 11, 1783, ended 8 years of brutal warfare and the most significant struggle for freedom the world had ever seen. After the fighting ended, the difficult and lengthy peace talks required strategic negotiation, moral clarity, and skillful diplomacy. To achieve lasting peace, the Second Continental Congress sent a trio of true American titans—Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and John Adams—who defended American interests and fortified our fledgling Republic. The treaty, signed on September 3, 1783, nearly 2 years after the epic British surrender at Yorktown, resulted in a glorious affirmation of American sovereignty.

Under the Articles of Confederation, then the governing framework of the United States, ratification of the treaty required a quorum of nine States. On this day 242 years ago, the delegates convened in a statehouse in Annapolis, Maryland, and with the final vote from South Carolina, the treaty was unanimously ratified, and our birthright of freedom was finally secured.

This year—our 250th year of glorious American independence—we reaffirm the righteous principles that breathed life into our Republic more than two centuries ago. We renew our resolve to uphold and defend peace through strength, the rule of law, loyalty to our citizens, and faith in Almighty God. Above all, we vow that the timeless truths forged by our forefathers will forever remain a mighty beacon of hope, prosperity, and liberty to the entire world.

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