**Geneva Naval Conference 1932**

The **Second Geneva Naval Conference** was a conference held to discuss naval arms limitation, held in [Geneva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva), [Switzerland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Switzerland), in 1932. This is a separate conference from the previous disarmament conference, the [Geneva Naval Conference](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva_Naval_Conference) of 1927.

Apart from naval disarmaments, a reduction in land forces and limits on weapons were also discussed at the conference. Thirty-one nations, including USA, USSR and Germany, came to the conference wanting a reduction in general arms. Some progress was made, but when Hitler came into power in 1933 he took Germany out of the Geneva Conference and the [League of Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations), which was questionable on the basis of international agreements, but nothing was done about it.

As Gibson had observed not long after the London Conference, the United States had decreased interest in the new conference because treaties already limited its navy, its army was so small that reduction was ludicrous, and the proposed measures of air limitation were so vague that they meant little. Gibson wrote that the conference would "probably meet in February or March 1932 and, discouraging as it may sound, it will probably go on and on." He had come to believe that armaments would never be abolished completely but that treaties could perhaps maintain military balances. Secretary Stimson later wrote that Americans regarded the Geneva Conference as "a European peace conference with European political questions to be settled. The necessary work of settling them must be done by the leaders of Europe." Stimsom realized that Germany's position in European affairs could not be ignored as it had been at Geneva in 1927 or at London in 1930, but he did not know how to reconcile German military ambition with French fear of its neighbor. Stimson therefore hoped the Europeans might find a solution. The secretary also hesitated over further naval disarmament because of the Manchurian crisis; in particular he worried whether the navy possessed enough carriers for possible action in the Far East.

**The World Disarmament Conference**

The **Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments** of 1932–1934 (sometimes **World Disarmament Conference** or **Geneva Disarmament Conference**) was an effort by member states of the [League of Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations), together with the [U.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) and the [United Kingdom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Kingdom), to actualize the [ideology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology) of [disarmament](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disarmament). It took place in the [Swiss](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Switzerland) city of [Geneva](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva), ostensibly between 1930 and 1934, but more correctly until May 1937.

The first effort at international arms limitation was made at the [Hague Conferences](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hague_Conferences) of 1899 and 1907, which had failed in their primary objective. Although many contemporary commentators (and [Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Article_231_of_the_Treaty_of_Versailles)) had blamed the outbreak of the [First World War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_World_War) on the "war guilt" of Germany, historians writing in the 1930s began to emphasize the fast-paced arms race preceding 1914. Further, all the major powers except the [US](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) had committed themselves to disarmament in both the [Treaty of Versailles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles) and the [Covenant of the League of Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covenant_of_the_League_of_Nations). A substantial international non-governmental campaign to promote disarmament also developed in the 1920s and early 1930s.

A preparatory commission was initiated by the League in 1925; by 1931, there was sufficient support to hold a conference, which duly began under the chairmanship of former [British Foreign Secretary](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_State_for_Foreign_and_Commonwealth_Affairs) [Arthur Henderson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Henderson). The motivation behind the talks can be summed up by an extract from the message President [Franklin D. Roosevelt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_D._Roosevelt) sent to the conference: "If all nations will agree wholly to eliminate from possession and use the weapons which make possible a successful attack, defences automatically will become impregnable and the frontiers and independence of every nation will become secure. The talks were beset by a number of difficulties from the outset. Among these were disagreements over what constituted "offensive" and "defensive" weapons, and the polarization of [France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France) and [Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany). The increasingly military-minded German governments could see no reason why their country could not enjoy the same level of armaments as other powers, especially France. The French, for their part, were equally insistent that German military inferiority was their only insurance from future conflict as serious as they had endured in the First World War. As for the British and US governments, they were unprepared to offer the additional security commitments that France requested in exchange for limitation of French armaments.

The talks broke down and [Hitler](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hitler) withdrew [Germany](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Germany) from both the Conference and the [League of Nations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations) in October 1933. The 1930s had proved far too self-interested an international period to accommodate multilateral action in favour of pacifism.