

April 15th, 1891, and May 5th, 1894, the Italo-Franco-British Agreement signed in London on December 13th, 1906, and the Italo-British exchange of notes of December 14th-20th, 1925. These agreements, it says, divide the territory of Ethiopia into several spheres of influence and recognise that the largest share belongs to Italy.

8. The most important of these instruments is the Tripartite Agreement of 1906. The representatives of the signatory Powers of that treaty, who have participated in the drafting of the present report analyse the aforesaid treaty as follows:

The three Powers observe that it is their "common interest" to "maintain intact the integrity of Ethiopia" and accordingly "agree to maintain the political and territorial *status quo* in Ethiopia as determined by the state of affairs at present existing" and by the agreements concluded by those Powers; these agreements are enumerated in Article I, which adds that they "do not in any way infringe the sovereign rights of the Emperor of Abyssinia, and in no respect modify the relations between the three Powers and the Ethiopian Empire as stipulated in the present agreement."

In case any events should disturb the *status quo*—and the events contemplated at the time of the conclusion of the treaty were internal events—the three Powers agree to "make every effort to preserve the integrity of Ethiopia," and add that, "in any case, they shall concert together . . . to safeguard" the interests of Great Britain, Egypt, and France in certain specified zones, and "the interests of Italy in Ethiopia as regards Erythræa and Somaliland (including the Benadir), more especially with reference to the hinterland of her possessions and the territorial connection between them to the west of Addis Ababa." (For text of Agreement see Appendix 1.)

9. As for the exchange of notes of December, 1925, between Italy and the United Kingdom<sup>1</sup>, which the Italian memorandum represents as confirming the Agreement of 1906<sup>2</sup>, it defines the respective spheres of economic influence in Ethiopia. Similarly, the Franco-Italian agreement concluded in Rome on January 7, 1935, defines and limits French economic interests in Ethiopia.

10. The Italian memorandum, which invokes these agreements does not represent them as acts leading up to a partition of Ethiopia. The other signatories agree on this point and in particular invoke in this connection that the Agreement of 1906, while recognising that Italy has important economic interests in Ethiopia, reserves completely the sovereign rights of the Emperor and prescribes the maintenance of the political and territorial *status quo* in Ethiopia as also of its integrity. If such an interpretation were nevertheless put forward, it would conflict with Article 10 of the Covenant, which is binding upon the signatories of the Agreement of 1906,

<sup>1</sup> Regarding this exchange of notes, see below, paragraph 13.

<sup>2</sup> It is recorded in the exchange of letters between Italy and the United Kingdom of December, 1925, that the object of the Agreement of 1906 "is to maintain the *status quo* in Ethiopia on the basis of the international instruments indicated in Article 1 thereof and the co-ordination of the action of the signatory States to protect their respective interests so that they should not suffer prejudice."