

FOREIGN POLICY – AIMS: If we go back to the previous period (before 1914) Italy had three basic aims with their foreign policy:

1. *Anti-Austrian*
2. *Anti-French*
3. *Colonial expansion*

FOREIGN POLICY AFTER 1918:

Italian foreign policy had to account for:

- *Italy's geographical position*
- *Italy's limited economic resources*
- *Italy's frustration over the Paris Peace Settlements*
- *Italy's destiny to become a great power and to have an Empire*
- *Previous foreign policy humiliations*

1919: Fiume crisis – The writer and war-hero D'Annunzio (together with 2600 legionaries) occupied the town of Fiume in September 1919-December 1920 (caused a governmental crisis in Italy). In the Treaty of Rapallo 1922 Fiume became an international city. In 1924 it was acquired by Italy in agreement with Yugoslavia.

1922: Mussolini became Prime Minister. The fascist ideology played an important role in the Italian foreign policy after Mussolini came into power. The fascists:

- *Glorified war* (Italy would be constantly involved in war after 1935)
- *Emphasized the importance of an "imperial expansion"*
- *Moved away from a relatively good relationship with Great Britain* (cooperation and diplomacy) *towards closer ties to the Third Reich under Adolf Hitler* (more aggressive diplomacy with more assertive methods...)

1923: Corfu Incident (Border problems Albania-Greece. Conference of Ambassadors appointed an Italian General to supervise the problem. He and his Italian team were ambushed on the Greek side of the frontier. Italy – Mussolini demanded compensation. When they did not receive it they bombed and occupied Corfu. Italy received compensation and Italy left the island...)

1924: Italy formally recognized the USSR. In the 1920's the relation between the USSR and Italy were fairly good...

1924: Italy backs up Ahmed Zog who took power in Albania – **King Zog I!**

1925: Locarno Pact (France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Poland, Belgium and Czechoslovakia met to discuss Germany's new borders; Germany accepted the new western borders; Germany accepted Rhineland as a demilitarized zone and France-Germany accepted to settle future problems through the League of Nations)

1926: A Treaty of Friendship between Italy and Albania (Albania became an Italian protectorate)

1928: Briand-Kellogg Pact (The signatories' renounced war as an instrument of national policy...)

1928: A Treaty of Friendship between Italy and Abyssinia

1933: Four Power Pact (Quadripartite Pact or Pact of Collaboration) Mussolini tried to arrange some kind of collaboration between Germany, Italy, France and Britain with the aim to preserve peace in Europe for the next coming ten years.

1934: Dolfuss Crisis (After the murder of the Austrian Chancellor Dolfuss, and the attempted coup by the Austrian Nazis Mussolini marched Italian troops to the Brenner Pass – to discourage any attempt of Hitler to intervene in Austrian affairs. Mussolini also sent arms to the regular government...)

1935: Rome Agreements. France and Italy reached an agreement on "*European security and Italian colonial ambitions*"...

1935: Stresa Conference. Italy, France and Britain met to discuss Hitler's recent denunciation of the Versailles clauses on arms limitation. The countries agreed to cooperate against Hitler and they started by issuing a formal protest to the German government. The Stresa Front against Germany was short lived – Great Britain broke it later this year by making a naval agreement with Germany...

1935: Italian invasion of Abyssinia