

## THE PEACE TREATIES OF BUCHAREST

### Peace Treaty concluded in Bucharest on May 28, 1812 between Ottoman Empire and Russia

The Treaty of Bucharest signed on 18/28 May 1812 ended the Russo – Turkish war which started in 1806. The Russo- Turkish war started in 1806, with Tsar Alexander I ordering his troops to cross the Dniester and occupy the Romanian Principalities of Walachia and Moldova. In spite of initial reassurances given by the Russian empire that it “did not seek to gain any territory from Turkey”, the Russian Tsar ultimately obtained the approval of the French sovereign regarding the occupation of the two Romanian Principalities, in case the Russians won the war with the Turks.

After the defeat of the Turkish armies at Ruse and Slobozia, the Russians proposed peace negotiations which foresaw that the entire territories of the Romanian Principalities of Walachia and Moldova along with Bessarabia were to become part of the Russian empire. Further on, as moves on the war front changed, the Tsar’s diplomats demanded also the occupation of the Lower Danube’s Ismail and Cetatea Alba, allowing access to Danube. However, further military confrontations changed to some extent, and the Russians had to settle for Bessarabia’s territory and the occupation of the port Suhumi and returned to the Ottomans the cities of Anapa, Poti and others in the Western Caucasus, captured during the war.

Stratford Canning, a British diplomat and Ambassador at Constantinople (1818 - 1812), has contributed to arranging the Treaty of Bucharest between Turkey and Russia. This allowed Russian troops to focus on resisting a French invasion led by Napoleon I.

The treaty foresaw the annexation of Bessarabia by Russia, while requiring the latter to return Walachia and the rest of Moldavia, which it had occupied. The Russians secured, under the treaty, amnesty and a promise of autonomy for the Serbs. The implementation of the treaty has been forestalled by a series of disputes, while Turkish troops invaded Serbia again the next year.

The treaty also included the annexation of Bessarabia by Russia, while requiring the latter to return Walachia and the rest of Moldavia, which it had occupied. The Russians secured, under the treaty, amnesty and a promise of autonomy for the Serbs. The implementation of the treaty has been forestalled by a series of disputes, while Turkish troops invaded Serbia again the next year.

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## **Peace Treaty concluded in Bucharest on 10 August 1913**

The Treaty of Bucharest, signed on 10 August 1913 ended the Second Balkan War. The troubled regional context of the First and Second Balkan Wars was seen by Romania as an opportunity to have a say in this conflict. While remaining neutral during the first Balkan War, Bucharest viewed in a concerned manner the swift victory of Bulgaria and its allies against Turkey. However, things changed during the Second Balkan War. At the end of the Second Balkan War, Bulgaria was defeated by the combined forces of Serbia, Greece and Romania after having unsuccessfully contested the distribution of the territory seized from the Turks during the First Balkan War.

Through the Bucharest Peace Treaty, Bulgaria was given a small part of Macedonia and a strip of the Aegean coastline containing the port of Dedeğaç (Alexandroupolis). Serbia got northern and central Macedonia while Greece received southern Macedonia and Romania the southern part of Dobruja, the city of Silistra included.

Bulgaria kept only a small portion of eastern Macedonia, the Pirin region, and a part of eastern Thrace. However, these gains were deemed as insufficient compensation for the loss of southern Dobruja and of the Bulgarian exarchate in Macedonia.

Most importantly, the Balkan Wars represented an important and severe test for Romania's alliance with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The period of the First and Second Balkan Wars is characterised by significant political and military turmoil in the region. This turmoil was triggered by the end of the Ottoman Empire but also by the rise of Christian states in South-Eastern Europe and tensions among these as regards the distribution of the territories and the involvement of the Great powers. The Austrians, aware of their vulnerability, were discontent as Germany did not provide them with any assistance, to counter Serbia. Russia, in its turn, decided not to intervene in the conflicts. This left room for states in the Balkan Peninsula to attempt to solve their territorial disputes between themselves as the Ottoman Empire grew weaker and weaker.

Another important consequence of the Second Balkan War is the fact that Bulgaria had maintained the desire to regain what it had lost, this representing the core motivation for Bulgaria's diplomacy and involvement in World War I.

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## Peace Treaty concluded in Bucharest/Buftenă on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1918

The treaty of Bucharest was concluded, on the one side, between Romania and the Central Powers, on the other hand, as a result of the stalemate reached after the campaign of 1916 – 1917 and Romania's isolation on the Eastern front after Russia's unilateral exit from World War I.

The terms of the treaty were highly unfavourable to Romania. Through the treaty, Bucharest had to return Southern Dobruja – also known as the „Cadrilater” – and the southern part of Northern Dobruja to Bulgaria. The rest of the Dobruja province was placed under the joint control of the Central Powers, leaving the Danube Delta to Romania. The commercial road to Constanta was also placed under the control of the Central Powers.

According to the treaty, Romania lost control over the passes of the Carpathian mountains in favour of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The economic provisions were significant, as Romania had to lease the oil wells to Germany for 90 years. German civil servants with the power to veto decisions by the Romanian cabinet members and to fire Romanian civil servants were appointed to oversee all Romanian ministries.

On the other hand, the Central Powers recognised the Union of Bessarabia with Romania. King Ferdinand I of Romania refused to sign the peace treaty. The recognition of Romania's union with Bessarabia put the former in a unique position as the country came out of the war bigger than it was before entering. Romania's de jure independence was respected. The treaty was denounced in October 1918 and nullified by the terms of the Armistice of 11 November 1918 as the advancing Allied forces gained more and more ground in Europe against the Central powers. In 1919 Germany was forced to give up all benefits provided by the Treaty of Bucharest signed in 1918. The territorial transfers to the Austro-Hungarian Empire were annulled by the treaty of Saint – Germain – en – Laye (1919) and the treaty of Neuilly – sur – Seine. Romania's border with Hungary was settled through the Treaty of Trianon (1920).

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