

# ENTENTE CORDIALE (1904) → TRIPLE ENTENTE (1907)

## 1. HOW did the Entente Cordiale come about (1904)

- Britain and France had clashed repeatedly in the 19th century, especially over colonies – in the 1890s, over Africa (e.g. the Fashoda Crisis in 1898, where their armies nearly fought in Sudan).
- But Germany's growing power made Britain and France reconsider – saw Germany as a bigger threat.
- Plus France resented Germany after the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) and feared Germany's 'Triple Alliance' with Austria and Italy  
→ In 1904, Britain and France signed the Entente Cordiale to end colonial disputes & begin friendly cooperation.

## 2. WHY the Entente Cordiale came about

- **Britain's needs:** Britain was used to 'splendid isolation' but now felt threatened by Germany's growing navy and empire. It wanted allies to help it protect its worldwide interests.
- **France's needs:** France had already allied with Russia (1894) but wanted to improve ties with Britain to strengthen its position against Germany.
- **Mutual benefit:** The Entente ended colonial tensions (e.g. Britain recognised French control of Morocco; France accepted British rule in Egypt) and let both focus on European security.

## 3. KEY CHARACTERISTICS of the Entente Cordiale

- It was not a formal military alliance, but an agreement to cooperate and settle disputes peacefully.
- It ended hostility between the two countries and opened the way for military discussions later on.
- It was public – both countries wanted to show improved relations.

## 4. HOW did the Entente Cordiale become the Triple Entente (1907)

- France had already signed a military alliance with Russia in 1894.
- When Japan (which had made a naval agreement with Britain in 1902) sought a loan in Paris in 1907, the French took the opportunity to negotiate a Franco-Russo-Japanese Treaty guaranteeing France's colonies in IndoChina.
- In 1907, Britain signed the Anglo-Russian Convention, settling colonial rivalries in Central Asia.  
→ Britain, France and Russia were now all linked, forming the Triple Entente.

## 5. WHY the Triple Entente came about

- **France's benefit:** It was no longer isolated and now had Germany encircled.
- **Russia's benefit:** It had lost badly in the Russo-Japanese War (1904–5) and needed strong allies in Europe.
- **Britain's benefit:** With Germany's navy still expanding and tensions rising in Europe, Britain wanted reliable partners, especially naval agreements. Now it had links to both major continental powers.
- **Mutual benefit:** Wanted to balance the power of the Triple Alliance (Germany, A-H, Italy).

## 6. KEY CHARACTERISTICS of the Triple Entente

- Looser than the Triple Alliance – not a firm military promise to go to war, but an understanding to support each other and keep in close contact.
- More flexible – esp. for Britain, which had not promised to fight unless its interests were directly threatened.
- Stronger cooperation developed gradually – eg, in 1912 Britain & France had naval talks re war with Germany.

## 7. CONSEQUENCES of the Entente

- Increased tension in Europe. The Triple Entente made Germany feel encircled by enemies on both sides.
- Made war more likely – Europe was now divided into two armed groups (Triple Alliance vs Triple Entente), both suspicious and both preparing for war.
- Encouraged military planning – eg France & Britain naval arrangements; Russia began modernising its army.
- In the First Moroccan Crisis (1905–6), Germany tested the new Entente by challenging France in Morocco. Britain and France stood firm together, increasing Germany's sense of isolation and resentment.
- It encouraged Russia to be more assertive in the Balkans -- eg supporting Serbia in 1914, leading to World War I.
- → The Entente created closer friendship but also more risk: if one country was dragged into conflict, the others might follow – which is what happened in 1914.