

Treaty Research

Basic Resources

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Introduction

This guide covers the most commonly-used sources for finding the text of United States and multilateral treaties and for finding citations to and information about the status of treaties. For more research advice, call the Zief Library reference desk: 415.422.6773.

Finding Information about Treaties — Status & Citations

These sources provide citations to treaties and, often, basic status information, such as whether the treaty is in force, which states are signatories, which states are parties, whether there are any reservations, etc.

United States Treaties (multilateral & bilateral)

- ▶ United States Dept. of State, *Treaties in Force* (U.S. Govt. Printing Office) JX 236 1783 LAW REFERENCE. Official source of status information and citations for bilateral and multilateral treaties. Available in PDF format at <http://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/treaties/>.
- ▶ *Treaty Actions*, United States Dept. of State, Office of the Treaty Advisor (<http://www.state.gov/s/l/treaty/c3428.htm>). Updates *Treaties in Force*.
- ▶ “Treaty Metadata Search” function in the *Treaties & Agreements Library* on HeinOnline (<http://0-www.heinonline.org.ignacio.usfca.edu/HOL/Index?collection=ustreaties>). Exhaustive coverage of U.S. treaties. Leads to information about and full text of treaties. (Access for the USF community only.)
- ▶ Igor I. Kavass & Adolf Sprudz, *A Guide to the United States Treaties in Force*. (W.S. Hein Co., 1982-) JX 236 1783a LAW REFERENCE. Reliable, unofficial expanded and updated version of *Treaties in Force*.
- ▶ Igor I. Kavass, ed., *United States Treaty Index* (W.S. Hein, 2001-) KZ 235 .U58 2001 LAW REFERENCE. Updated by *Current Treaty Index*, KZ 235 .C87 LAW REFERENCE. Good source for citations, especially citations required by citation manuals.

Multilateral Treaties

- ▶ *Frequently-Cited Treaties and Other International Instruments*, University of Minnesota Law Library. (<http://local.law.umn.edu/library/pathfinders/most-cited.html>). Citations to hard-copy sources for over 50 major treaties, with links to reliable online versions.
- ▶ *Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General*, from the United Nations Treaty Collection (<http://treaties.un.org/Pages/Participation.Status.aspx>). Includes signatories, parties, in-force dates, text of reservations, citations to U.N. Treaty Series. More up-to-date than the print version, *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General*.
- ▶ *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General* (United Nations, 1982-) JX 171 .U372 1986 LAW REFERENCE. A slightly less current print version of the web resource *Status of Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General*.
- ▶ Milo Jesse Bowman & D. J. Harris, *Multilateral Treaties: Index and Current Status* (Butterworths, 1984) JX171.M84 1984 LAW REFERENCE. Last updated in 1995. Useful for finding citations to older treaties.
- ▶ Peter H. Rohn, *World Treaty Index*, 2nd ed. (ABC-Clio Information Services, c1983-) JX 171 .R63 1983 LAW REFERENCE. Good for finding citations to older, hard-to-find treaties.

Finding the Text of Treaties

Once you have the name of a treaty, or citation to it, try the following sources to find the full text. (Many of the online sources are commercial databases available by subscription only.)

United States Treaties (multilateral & bilateral) — Online Sources

No one comprehensive free web source exists for U.S. treaties. The commercial sources from HeinOnline, Lexis and Westlaw provide the best coverage.

- ▶ *Thomas, Legislative Information of the Internet, Treaties*, United States Library of Congress. (<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/treaties/treaties.htm>). Text of treaties submitted to the Senate available from 1995 (104th Congress) to the present. Complete status information from 1975 (90th Congress) to the present. Partial status information from 1949 to the present.
- ▶ *Treaties and Agreements Library*, HeinOnline (<http://0-www.heinonline.org.ignacio.usfca.edu/HOL/Index?collection=ustreaties>). Exceptionally thorough coverage from 1776 to the present. (Access for the USF community only.)
- ▶ Lexis: *U.S. Treaties on LEXIS* (short source name: INTLAW;USTRTY) Path in the “Legal” tab of the “Look for a Source” directory: Area of Law - By Topic > International Law > Find Treaties & International Agreements > U.S. Treaties on LEXIS. Coverage: 1776 to the present. (Requires subscription.)
- ▶ Westlaw: *U.S. Treaties and Other International Agreements* (USTREATIES database). Coverage: 1778 to the present. (Requires subscription.)

United States Treaties (multilateral & bilateral) — Print & Microfiche Sources

Major non-digital sources for United States treaties at the Zief Law Library include —

- ▶ *United States Statutes at Large* KF 50.U55 LAW STACKS. Official. Covers 1776 to 1950.
- ▶ *United States Treaties and Other International Agreements* (UST) JX 236 1950 LAW STACKS, updated by *Treaties and Other International Acts Series* (TIAS) JX 236 1950a LAW STACKS. Official. Covers 1950 to the present—but publication is very slow.
- ▶ *Hein’s United States Treaties and Other International Agreements Current Service*. Microfiche, Fiche Cabinet 3, Drawers 1 & 2. Unofficial. Covers 1990 to the present.

Multilateral Treaties — Online Sources

Several good free web sources have (or link to) the full text of multilateral treaties. These include —

- ▶ *EISIL/Electronic Information System for International Law*, American Society for International Law (<http://www.eisil.org/>). Go to “General International Law,” then “Treaty Collections” for links to web-based multilateral and national treaty collections. EISIL also provides links to relevant treaties in each of its topical sections.
- ▶ *Multilaterals Project*, Fletcher School of Diplomacy, Tufts University (<http://fletcher.tufts.edu/multilaterals.html>). Texts of multilateral treaties, organized by topic.
- ▶ *Frequently-Cited Treaties and Other International Instruments*, University of Minnesota Law Library. (<http://local.law.umn.edu/library/pathfinders/most-cited.html>). Citations to hard-copy sources for over 50 major treaties, with links to reliable online versions.
- ▶ *United Nations Treaty Series* and *League of Nations Treaty Series*, from the UN Treaty Collection (<http://treaties.un.org/>) This free site has an extensive collection of multilateral treaties but suffers from a cumbersome search engine.)
- ▶ *United Nations Treaty Series* and *League of Nations Treaty Series*, from HeinOnline’s United Nations Law Collection (<http://0-www.heinonline.org.ignacio.usfca.edu/HOL/Index?collection=unl>). Includes a helpful “Search for a Treaty” function. (Access for the USF community only.)

- ▶ *Lex Mercatoria*, Cameron May, Ltd. (<http://www.lexmercatoria.org/>). Has treaties related to international commercial law.

Multilateral Treaties — Print Sources

Major sources for multilateral treaties at the Zief Law Library include —

- ▶ United Nations. *Treaty Series* (UNTS). JX 170 .U35 LAW STACKS. Covers 1947 to the present.
- ▶ *League of Nations Treaty Series* (LNTS). JX 170.L4 LAW STACKS. Covers 1920 to 1946.
- ▶ *Consolidated Treaty Series*. JX 120.P35 LAW STACKS. Covers 1648 to 1918.

Learning More about Treaty Research

The following web sites and books offer more advice on treaty research.

- ▶ *ASIL Guide to Electronic Resources for International Law: Treaties*, Jill Watson (<http://www.asil.org/treaty1.cfm>) (last updated in 2009). Includes: links to collections of multilateral and bilateral treaties; links to treaty status information; information about commercial online treaty collections; a brief introduction to treaty research.
- ▶ *Treaty Research*, Edward Bennett Williams Law Library, Georgetown (<http://www.ll.georgetown.edu/intl/guides/TreatyResearch.cfm>) (last updated in 2008).
- ▶ *Guide to Treaty Research*, Simon Canick & Beth Williams (http://www.law.columbia.edu/library/Research_Guides/internat_law/treaty_research) (last updated in 2008).
- ▶ *An Introduction to Sources for Treaty Research*, Mark Engsborg (http://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Treaty_Research.htm) (last updated in 2006).
- ▶ *Researching U.S. Treaties and Agreements*, Marci Hoffman (<http://www.llrx.com/features/ustreaty.htm>) (Solid information, but last updated in 2001).
- ▶ Chapter 4, “Treaties & International Agreements,” of Marci B. Hoffman & Robert C. Berring, *International Legal Research in a Nutshell* (Thomson/West, c2008) KZ 1234 .H64 2008 LAW OPEN RESERVE.
- ▶ Chapter 11, “International Law,” of Morris L. Cohen & Kent C. Olson, *Legal Research in a Nutshell*, 9th ed. (Thomson/West, c2007) KF 240 .C54 2007 LAW OPEN RESERVE.