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A reservation is any expression by a State, under whichever form ("reservation", "declaration", "understanding", etc.), made upon joining a treaty, that it will not be bound by one or more of its provisions. By attaching a reservation to its accession instrument, a State generally seeks to preserve certain elements of its domestic legislation or to shield certain of its policies from scrutiny. Reservations allow States to accede to multilateral instruments in situations where, while agreeing with the general objective that such instruments pursue, they entertain doubts about certain, generally relatively minor, aspects. Sometimes, however, such reservations can raise questions about the seriousness of the intent of the reserving State to be bound (for instance where the reservation concerns any supervisory mechanism established under the instrument in question). Or they may threaten the integrity of the instrument, depriving the accession of the reserving from much of its significance.

As an illustration, consider the following reservations (/c4x/LouvainX/Louv2.01x/asset /_Materials_US_Reservation_to_ICCPR_Final_.pdf) accompanying the ratification by the United States of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (full text here (http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/ccpr.pdf)), and then move on to the next unit.



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What are reservations? | [1.4] The question o...

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