

Fourth of July: The Declaration of Independence [B1]

Il 4 luglio del 1776 i rappresentanti delle Tredici Colonie britanniche del Nord America promulgarono la Dichiarazione d'Indipendenza, un documento fondamentale nella storia degli Stati Uniti e un modello per le democrazie di tutto il mondo.

There are many dates associated with the founding of the United States, but the most famous is 4 July. This was the date in 1776 when the Declaration of Independence was [issued](#). Celebrated every year as a federal holiday, Independence Day, or simply the Fourth of July, is considered to be the [birth](#) date of the nation.

A REVOLUTIONARY ACT

The Declaration of Independence was not legally [binding](#), but it is still one of the most powerful documents in US history. It was adopted by the Second Continental Congress, a meeting of delegates from the thirteen British colonies, all located on the east coast of North America. The meeting took place at Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia, America's revolutionary capital at the time; the document formalised the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783), a military conflict in which American forces [eventually](#) defeated the British to secure US independence.

THE FOUNDING FATHERS

The Declaration was the first formal declaration by a nation's [people asserting](#) their right to choose their own government. It announced the separation of the thirteen colonies from Great Britain as independent [sovereign](#) states. It was written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, who became President of the United States in 1801. It was signed by the meeting's fifty-six delegates, who came to be known as the nation's Founding Fathers.

****“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of happiness”.****

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

At the time, the British government did its best to dismiss the Declaration as a meaningless document. It was not until 1783 that American independence was recognised and borders established for the new nation. It was, in fact, Abraham Lincoln, US President from 1861 to 1865, who popularised the Declaration. He made it the centrepiece of his policies, and often quoted from it in his speeches.

THE CHARTERS OF FREEDOM

The US Declaration of Independence stated the principles on which the American government and the American identity are based. It is on display at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC, along with the US Constitution and the Bill of Rights. These three documents, known collectively as the Charters of Freedom, are considered fundamental in shaping the foundation and philosophy of the United States.

Glossary

- **people** = popolo
- **hold** = considerare
- **pursuit of happiness** = ricerca della felicità
- **shaping** = plasmare
- **issued** = emettere, promulgare
- **binding** = vincolante
- **eventually** = infine
- **self-evident** = più che evidenti, ovvie
- **endowed** = dotare
- **on display** = esposta
- **Charters of Freedom** = Carte della Libertà
- **asserting** = affermare, far valere
- **sovereign** = sovrani
- **did its best** = fare del proprio meglio
- **meaningless** = privo di senso
- **centrepiece** = fulcro
- **stated** = dichiarare
- **Bill of Rights** = Carta dei Diritti
- **birth** = nascita
- **to dismiss** = respingere
- **borders** = frontiere
- **policies** = politiche
- **quoted** = citare