France

Represented by Président Jules Grévy

France is the third most powerful economy and military in Europe. You have been trading on the coast of Africa for over 200 years. In 1873, you lost the Franco-Prussian War to Prussia (now Germany), and are looking for way to rebuild your international reputation and strengthen your citizens’ nationalism. You control several colonies in the Caribbean, several Pacific Islands, Lebanon and Syria in the Middle East, and Indochina (now Vietnam and Laos)

You would like to form a large colony called **French West Africa**. You have been controlling the trade on the upper Niger River, all of the Senegal River and throughout the Sahara desert.

Luckily, Italian-French explorer, named Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, has travelled up the Congo River from the Atlantic Ocean in 1880. He convinced King Makoko of the Batekes to cede his kingdom to France. Based on this claim, you believe you could also claim a colony called **French Congo**.

You have also taken over trading from the Portuguese, in an area they named **Gabon**, along the Ogooué River. You also trade in the area east of Cameroon, which you would like to claim as the **French Equatorial Africa**.

In **Madagascar**, King Radma II signed treaty with a French adventurer, Joseph-François Lambert, which you have been enforcing by fighting the Franco-Hova Wars.

Germany

Represented by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck

Bismarck has called this conference for the good of Germany and the German people. Germany is a new country, only thirteen years old. You see this conference as an opportunity to strengthen relations with France, whom Germany defeated in the Franco Prussian War in 1873. However, Bismarck’s primary interest is to strengthen Germany’s position in Europe. Germany has Europe’s second-largest economy and largest, most advanced military.

Although you will lay claim to a few colonies in Africa, you would rather watch Great Britain and France overextend themselves in Africa.

Germany made a loan to Portugal, and in exchange they would like to give Germany southern Angola, which you would like to call **German Southwest Africa**. You have been trading on the coast near Lake Tanganyika, which you’ll call **German East Africa**. You have taken over the Portuguese trade in **Togo** and **Cameroon**, north of the Congo River.

Belgium

Represented by King Léopold II

The King believed that colonies were key to a country’s greatness and had failed in several attempt to acquire colonies in Asia and other areas of Africa. Belgium has only been a nation for fifty years. For a small country (roughly the size of Maryland), there are disputes between Dutch speakers, French speakers, Protestants, and Catholics. An international success, like a large, successful colony, might unite the Belgians.

In 1876, the King formed bogus charity to take over a large area of central Africa bisected by the Congo River. Until 1908, the **Belgian Congo** was King Leopold’s personal colony, from which he profited from the sale of ivory, rubber, and other minerals. The Congo has the some of the richest mineral deposits on the continent; yet, the Congo was incredibly difficult to colonize because of its rainforest and diseases (like malaria and sleeping sickness).

After an international investigation of King Leopold’s cruelty to the Congolese people, the Congo became a colony of the Belgian government.

Portugal

Represented by Prime Minister António de Melo

Although Portugal dominated navigation of the oceans through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and colonized Brazil, until it declared independence in the 1820s, Portugal had fallen on hard times.

Despite its discovering most of the trade routes along Africa’s coast, Portugal had given up most of its colonial possessions. It can still lay claim to the eastern coast between the Limpopo and Zambezi Rivers, known as **Mozambique**. It had controlled the Atlantic coast of central Africa, but gave two of its possessions to Germany, leaving only **Angola**.

Great Britain

Represented by Prime Minister William Gladstone

Great Britain’s factories during the Industrial Revolution and its successful control of India built Europe’s largest economy and second largest military. Britain’s empire is the world’s largest, including India, Australia, New Zealand, islands in the Caribbean, island in the Pacific, Canada, and many countries in the Middle East.

Great Britain desired a Cape-to-Cairo collection of colonies, from **South Afric**a to Egypt. Britain had settled its South African colony, along with the Dutch, in the 1600s. Cecil Rhodes, who had discovered South Africa’s vast diamond resources, had settled **Rhodesia**, north of the Zambezi River, and **Bechuanaland** in between. In order to control trade with Asia, you have long laid claim to Egypt, as part of your larger Middle East empire. As you have tried to control the Nile and the area below, known as the Sudan. You would like to combine these into a large colony of **Anglo-Egyptian-Sudan**. You would like to extend the colony down to Lake Victoria to form colonies in **Uganda** and **Kenya**.

You’ve encouraged Britons to move and buy farms in South Africa, Rhodesia, and Kenya. In times of labor shortages, you’ve imported Indian laborers as well to these countries.

In West Africa, you want to control the **Gambia** River and **Sierra Leone**. You have controlled trade on the Volta River, through the **Gold Coast**. Your most important colony is centered on the lower Niger River, called **Nigeria**, which the French are encroaching upon.