



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

MEMORANDUM OF LAW

The initialling of a treaty or international executive agreement by the negotiators indicates that the negotiators are satisfied with the text. Initialling does not bind the negotiators' governments, which may or may not be satisfied with the text. The purpose of initialling is to freeze the text at the point agreed to by the negotiators, and to give the concerned governments the opportunity to review the text to determine whether or not changes should be made.

Only if the parties clearly intend that initialling should have the same effect as signature would it have that effect. In the absence of such clear intent, initialling does not bind the negotiating governments to the initialled text.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arthur W. Rovine".

Arthur W. Rovine
Assistant Legal Adviser
for Treaty Affairs

December 28, 1979