

1943

The Casablanca Conference

During the eleven-day meeting (January 14–24), American and British officials reached a number of crucial decisions:

First, the German submarine presence in the Atlantic needed to be dealt with.

Second, follow up Operation Torch with **Operation Husky**, a joint invasion of Sicily, limited to a coordinated plan of bombing while

forces continued to be built up in Britain for the eventual invasion of France.

Roosevelt announced the policy of **unconditional surrender** during a press conference on January 24. This policy meant that the Allied nations sought the complete destruction of the power of Germany and Japan through the destruction of their governments and that neither the U.S. nor Britain would attempt to make a separate peace agreement with either nation.

Endgame in North Africa

In the western Atlas Mountains, most notably at **Kasserine Pass**, was the first major engagement between German and American ground forces.

Kasserine Pass was a loss for the American military, but it was a valuable one as it led to a shakeup in the command of the American forces. George Patton was placed in command of the American ground forces and tasked with rebuilding American

combat effectiveness.

By late April, pressure from both British and American forces had forced the Germans into a small pocket, and on May 8 the German Luftwaffe abandoned North Africa all together.



Sicily and Italy

Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily by British and American forces, was formalized in May 1943 during the **Trident Conference** held in Washington. Using a series of amphibious landings, they were able to unhinge the German line.

One of the key outcomes of the conquest of Sicily was that it led to Mussolini's ouster. Mussolini was replaced as prime minister by **Marshal Pietro Badoglio**.

Secretly the Italians were in negotiations with the Allies to surrender.

German Retreat in the East



Beginning on February 20, German forces unleashed a wave of attacks that encircled Soviet forces, capturing a large number of enemy troops and forcing the Soviet lines to pull back.

As the spring rains turned the vast open fields into seas of mud,

the Germans stopped offensive operations. This would be the last successful German offensive on the Eastern Front in World War II.

German planners began to plan for an attack on the Kursk salient, what became known as **Operation Citadel**. The Battle of Kursk was among the largest battles fought in human history. Strategically, the battle was a victory for the Soviets, who managed to hold the line against a possible German breakthrough. By October, the Soviets had forced German troops off Russian soil and into Ukraine.