

Geneva, June 22nd, 1926.

**LEAGUE OF NATIONS**

**DRAFT CONVENTION ON SLAVERY**

**REPORT BY SIR AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.**

*Adopted by the Council, on June 9th, 1926.*

*Note by the Secretary-General:*

The Secretary-General has the honour to circulate to the Members of the League and the Delegates at the Seventh Assembly the following report and resolution adopted by the Council on June 9th, 1926.

On September 26th, 1925, the Sixth Assembly adopted the following resolution on the question of Slavery:

“The Assembly:

“Considering that the Members of the League of Nations have undertaken, in virtue of Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control;

“Having examined the report of the Temporary Slavery Commission (document A. 19. 1925. VI) which has been communicated to all the Members of the League of Nations; and

“Being of opinion that a Convention is the best way of giving effect to the suggestions made in this report and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of slavery;

“Decides to recommend for approval the annexed draft Convention;

“And requests the Council to communicate this draft to all States Members of the League and to such other States as the Council may specify, with a view to the conclusion of a Convention which will be as far as possible in conformity with this draft, and to invite the above-mentioned States:

“(a) To forward to the Secretary-General not later than June 1st, 1926, any observations they may desire to make regarding the provisions of this draft;

“(b) To appoint at a later date plenipotentiaries who will meet at the time of the opening of the Seventh Assembly to re-examine, if necessary, the articles of the draft Convention and to sign immediately the text of the Convention which has been agreed upon;

“(c) To make every effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the draft Convention in question;

“(d) To assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means and, in particular, by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements.”

and on September 28th, 1925, the Council took the action proposed in sub-paragraphs (a), (c) and (d) of this resolution, inviting the Governments of Afghanistan, Ecuador, Egypt, Germany, Mexico, Russia, Sudan, Turkey and the United States of America, as well as the Members of the League, to forward any observations they might desire to make on the provisions of the Draft Convention.

The Council has not yet, however, taken any decision on the question of the procedure to be adopted as regards the conclusion of the proposed Convention (sub-paragraph (b) of the Assembly resolution) as there was no urgency in the matter, and as it was desired to act with as full a knowledge as possible of the views of the various Governments on the proposed Convention. At the meeting of the Council on March 11th, however, I pointed out that this question of procedure must be settled at the present session of the Council, so that the necessary arrangements might be made for the conclusion of the Convention in September, and the Council accordingly instructed the Secretary-General to call the attention of the different Governments to the desira-

bility of despatching their observations to reach Geneva not later than June 1st. Up to the present time nineteen Members of the League (Abyssinia, Australia, Austria, British Empire, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Esthonia, Finland, India, Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, San Salvador, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Switzerland) and three other Governments (Egypt, Sudan and the United States of America), have forwarded their observations on the Convention, or have expressed their views on this question in reply to the letter of the Secretary-General. A memorandum containing suggestions with regard to the Convention has also been received from the Apostolic Nuncio in Switzerland, and I suggest that it be given the same circulation as the communications from the different Governments.

The Assembly has recommended that the Council should invite the Governments to appoint plenipotentiaries for the purpose of agreeing to a final text for the proposed Convention and possessing the necessary powers to sign this instrument with a view to its ultimate ratification. It seems to me that such further discussion as may be necessary with regard to the text of the Convention would most naturally take place in the Assembly and that the Council might now suggest to the Members of the League that they give to one of their delegates to the Seventh Assembly the necessary powers to sign the Convention which may be finally agreed upon, and which will also, I have no doubt, be open to signature by Governments not Members of the League.

I need hardly add that the Secretary-General will, of course, circulate to all the Members of the League the replies concerning the Draft Convention which he has received, or may receive, from the different Governments.

I beg to propose the following resolution:

“(1) The Council decides to add the following question to the agenda of the Seventh Assembly: ‘Conclusion of an International Convention on Slavery and Conditions analogous thereto’.

“(2) The Council instructs the Secretary-General to suggest at once to all Members of the League that powers to sign the Convention which may be agreed upon be given to one of their delegates to this Assembly.”