

Geneva, December 18th, 1936.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SLAVERY

ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

RULES OF PROCEDURE

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1. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE COUNCIL.

Geneva, January 10th, 1934.

In pursuance of the Council's resolution of October 12th, 1933, the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery met at Geneva from January 8th to 10th, 1934, and drew up its Rules of Procedure, the text of which it has the honour to submit herewith to the Council for approval.

All the members of the Committee took part in this first session. M. Gohr and M. Neijtzell de Wilde were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

The Rules were drawn up in strict conformity with the definite indications contained in the resolution by which the Assembly instituted the Committee on October 12th, 1932.<sup>3</sup>

Only Articles 2 and 16 of the Rules of Procedure would appear to call for any comment.

As regards Article 2, the object of these Rules being to lay down the duties of the Committee, the latter considered that it would be useful to provide that its members would be under an obligation to meet in extraordinary session if the Council deemed this necessary.

The Committee ventures, moreover, to suggest to the Council that it be authorised, in case of need, to take the initiative of proposing to the Council the summoning of an extraordinary session.

Furthermore, as regards Article 16, the Committee draws attention to the advantage, from the practical point of view, of the Council's determining in each case, with due regard to any special circumstances, the time to be allowed to the Government concerned to submit any observations it may wish to make on the communications forwarded in virtue of paragraph 2 of the said article.

2. RULES OF PROCEDURE.<sup>4</sup>

*Article 1.*

The Committee is strictly advisory and has no powers of supervision.

The matters covered by Article 5 of the Convention of September 25th, 1926 (forced or compulsory labour), are outside the Committee's province.

*Note by the Secretary-General:*

<sup>1</sup> The Council took note of this report of the Committee on January 19th, 1934.

<sup>2</sup> The Rules of Procedure originally adopted by the Council on January 19th, 1934 (see *Official Journal*, February 1934, pages 150-151 and 222-225), were amended by decision of the Council dated May 13th, 1936 (see *Official Journal*, June 1936, pages 557-560 and 731). See also the Council's decision of September 26th, 1936 (see *Official Journal*, November 1936, page 1174), regarding Article 10, first paragraph, of the Rules of Procedure.

<sup>3</sup> The text is reproduced hereunder.

<sup>4</sup> The amendments to this text are printed in italics.

Subject to the provisions contained in Article 3 of the present Rules, the Committee may not receive depositions or consult international or national organisations, whether public or private, or private persons. These may only send their complaints or observations to the Committee through the intermediary of their respective Governments.

*Article 2.*

The Committee shall assemble in ordinary session once every two years, if necessary, without prejudice to such extraordinary sessions as the Council of the League of Nations may decide to convene.

The sessions shall be held at the seat of the League of Nations unless the Council fixes some other place.

The date of the sessions shall be decided by the Chairman of the Committee and communicated to the members of the Committee through the Secretariat of the League of Nations.

*Article 3.*

The Committee consists of seven members appointed in pursuance of the Assembly resolution of October 12th, 1932, *interpreted by the Council's decision of May 13th, 1936.*

The Committee shall avail itself of the technical assistance of the Secretariat of the League of Nations; it may also, in particular cases, consult native labour experts of the International Labour Organisation.

*Article 4.*

At the beginning of each ordinary session, the Committee shall elect from among its members, by secret ballot, a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman. They shall hold office from the opening of one ordinary session to the opening of the next ordinary session.

*Article 5.*

A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

The Committee shall take its decisions by a majority of the members present at the meeting. In case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

*Article 6.*

The Chairman shall direct the work at the meetings, ensure that the provisions of the Rules of Procedure are observed, and announce the results of ballots. He shall represent the Committee in its relations with the organs of the League.

The Vice-Chairman shall take the place of the Chairman in the latter's absence.

*Article 7.*

The secretariat of the Committee shall be provided by the Secretariat of the League of Nations. It shall be responsible, *inter alia*, for :

(a) Receiving the documents sent to the League of Nations in virtue of Article 7 of the Slavery Convention of September 25th, 1926, and all other documents which the Governments may transmit on subjects concerning slavery, and circulating such documents to the members of the Committee;

(b) Collecting, for the use of the members of the Committee, information and surveys published concerning slavery, and keeping the members of the Committee constantly acquainted with the particulars thus collected;

(c) Making a methodical classification of all documents and information;

(d) Drawing up the Minutes of the Committee's meetings and arranging for their safe keeping.

*Article 8.*

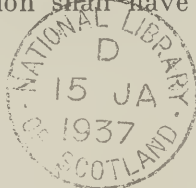
The draft agenda for each session shall be prepared by the secretariat, submitted for approval to the Chairman of the Committee and communicated to the members, together with the notice convening the Committee, not less than six weeks before the date fixed for the session.

The final agenda shall be adopted by a majority vote of the Committee at its first meeting.

The Committee may decide, during the course of a session, by a two-thirds majority of the members present, to add a question to its agenda or to modify the latter after its adoption.

*Article 9.*

During the discussion of any question, any member may move the previous question or the adjournment. Any such motion shall have priority and shall be voted on without discussion.



*Article 10.*

*Notwithstanding Article 8 of the General Regulations*, the Committee's proceedings shall be confidential. Only the personal assistants of the members of the Committee, officials of the latter's secretariat *and the experts invited by the Committee* may be present at meetings.

French and English shall be the official languages of the Committee ; the rules and usages in force in this connection for the various organs of the League shall be observed in so far as they are compatible with the performance of the Committee's task.

*Article 11.*

Each member of the Committee shall communicate to the secretariat, for circulation to the Committee, the observations which a study of all the documents received may have suggested to him.

*Article 12.*

The Committee may at the close of each session appoint Rapporteurs on some of the aspects of its work.

The studies submitted by the Rapporteurs shall be circulated by the secretariat to the members of the Committee.

*Article 13.*

During each ordinary session, the Committee :

(a) Will study and examine the documents supplied or transmitted by the Governments since its last session ;

(b) Will study, on the basis of such documents and of the special knowledge of its members, the facts and institutions mentioned in Article 1 of the Convention of 1926 and their rôle in the social system ;

(c) Will study the means of gradually abolishing these institutions or customs or of causing them to develop in such a way as to deprive them of any objectionable features.

If a country where slavery exists asks for financial assistance from the League of Nations in settling questions relating to the abolition of slavery, the Committee shall, at the request of the Council, examine the objects for which this financial assistance is requested, the minimum amount necessary and the guarantees offered.

*Article 14.*

At the termination of its proceedings, the Committee shall submit a report to the Council. If this report does not represent in whole or in part the unanimous opinion of the members of the Committee, the dissenting members shall be entitled to deliver a separate opinion.

*Article 15.*

The reports and Minutes of the Committee shall be confidential.

*Notwithstanding Article 3 of the General Regulations*, the question of the full or partial publication of the Committee's report is a matter for the decision of the Council of the League of Nations. The same applies as regards the publication of the documents examined by the Committee.

*Article 16.*

The Committee may forward to the Council, with a view to transmission to the Government of the country concerned, suggestions for obtaining such further light as it may deem desirable on points arising in the documents supplied by that Government.

If a communication relating to slavery and concerning any country is submitted by the Government of another State, the Committee shall forward it to the Council with a view to its transmission to the Government of the country concerned, so that the latter may be enabled to submit its observations.

Between the Committee's sessions, the Chairman may send the communications referred to in the first two paragraphs of the present article after having obtained by correspondence the approval of the majority of the members of the Committee.

*Article 17.*

Any proposal for amending the present Rules of Procedure may only be submitted to the Council when it has been approved by at least four members of the Committee. The amendments shall enter into force as soon as they have been approved by the Council.

3. RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF OCTOBER 12<sup>TH</sup>, 1932, INTERPRETED BY THE COUNCIL'S DECISION OF MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>, 1936.

The Assembly :

Notes the report of the Committee of Experts on Slavery which was transmitted to it by the Council's resolution of September 23rd, 1932 ;

Expresses its appreciation of the excellent work done by the Committee of Experts ;

Draws the attention of the Governments of the Members of the League and of the States parties to the 1926 Convention to the opinions and suggestions contained in the report of the Committee of Experts and hopes that the organs of the League will be kept informed of the measures which the Governments continue to take for the total abolition of the slave trade and of slavery in its different forms ;

Decides that an advisory Committee of Experts shall be constituted, whose composition, competence and functions are described in the annex to the present resolution ;

Requests the Secretary-General to include in his draft budget for 1934 the necessary credit for this Committee ; and

Requests the Council to take, in the interval, all measures not requiring budgetary credit and which will conduce to the carrying-out of the proposals which have been made.

ANNEX.

A. The Committee shall consist of seven members chosen solely for their special knowledge of slavery questions, all the members being of different nationalities. They shall be appointed for an undefined term, the Council retaining the right to renew the composition of the Committee every six years.<sup>1</sup> The duties of the Committee, which will meet once every two years, if necessary, will be strictly advisory and it will have no powers of supervision ; its task will be :

(1) To study and examine the documents supplied or transmitted by Governments to the Secretariat ;

(2) To study, on the basis of such documents and of the special knowledge of its members, the facts and institutions mentioned in Article 1 of the 1926 Slavery Convention and to examine their rôle in the social system ;

(3) To study the means of gradually abolishing these institutions or customs, or of causing them to develop in such a way as to deprive them of any objectionable features ;

(4) If a country where slavery exists asks for financial assistance from the League of Nations in settling questions relating to the abolition of slavery, the Committee will, at the request of the Council, examine the objects for which this financial assistance is requested, the minimum amount necessary and the guarantees offered ;

(5) The Committee shall not deal with questions relating to Article 5 of the 1926 Slavery Convention.

The Committee's proceedings will be confidential.

At the termination of each session, the Committee will submit a report to the Council ; and the Council shall decide whether the whole or part of this report should be published.

The Committee will draw up its own rules to regulate its proceedings and these shall be submitted for the approval of the Council.

In carrying out its duties, the Committee is to observe the following rules :

(1) The consultation of organisations or persons on facts concerning slavery is not permitted. These organisations or persons will have to send their complaints or observations through the intermediary of their respective Governments.

(2) If a communication concerning a country is addressed to the Committee by the Government of another State, the Committee shall transmit it, through the intermediary of the Council, to the Government of the country concerned for its observations.

(3) The Committee shall not be competent to hear depositions.

It is understood that, in agreeing to the setting-up of this Committee, the Governments parties to the Slavery Convention of 1926 do not assume any obligation of such a nature as to modify those they have entered into in virtue of that Convention.

B. The Secretariat of the Committee will be provided by the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Its task will be :

(1) To receive the documents sent to the League of Nations in virtue of Article 7 of the Slavery Convention and all other documents which the Governments may transmit on subjects concerning slavery ;

(2) To collect, for the use of the members of the Committee, information and surveys published concerning slavery ;

(3) To make a methodical classification of all documents and information.

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<sup>1</sup> The Council considered on May 13th, 1936, that the rule laid down in Section 10 of the General Regulations, according to which the term of office shall be not more than three years but shall be renewable, is not inconsistent with this provision.