

## INTRODUCTION

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At the end of the present war <sup>1</sup>, the Intergovernmental Committee will have to take all appropriate measures within its power to facilitate the permanent settlement of refugees coming within its mandate. There will be some refugees who are unable or unwilling to return to their respective countries of origin or former residence, and who do not enjoy the protection of any Government. Such persons will be found, when the war ends, in neutral European countries, and in Allied countries which have not been occupied or which have recently been liberated <sup>2</sup>. If these persons have to re-emigrate to countries of final settlement, it will be necessary to provide them with a document which could serve as a substitute for a national passport, which would be recognised by the countries of transit and the country of final destination, and on which the authorities of these countries would be prepared to affix the necessary visas.

The Intergovernmental Committee has not failed to recognise the importance and urgency of this problem and, on 17th August, 1944, during its Fourth Plenary Session, the Committee adopted the following Resolution :

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the greater part of this Preliminary Report was written between January and April 1945.

<sup>2</sup> This problem will not arise in the case of most displaced persons, who have been dispersed throughout various European countries as a result of the war, and who will be able and willing to return to their respective countries of origin or normal residence. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, in co-operation with the Governments concerned, will deal with their repatriation and make all necessary arrangements for the collective transport of persons who have a common destination and whose return has been authorised by the representative of the country concerned. No special travel document will be required by persons coming within this category.

“ The Committee, having examined the Memorandum of the Director and the Assistant Director, and recognising the need of an early examination of the question of the wider provision of internationally recognised identity and travel documents for persons coming within its mandate, whether stateless or not in fact enjoying the protection of any Government,

“ Resolves :

“ 1. that the Director be instructed to invite the Governments of Argentine, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Czechoslovakia, France, Poland, United Kingdom and the United States of America, to appoint experts to a Commission with power to add to its members, to be convened by him for the purpose of examining the question of the adoption and issue of an internationally recognised identity and travel document for stateless persons, or persons not enjoying in fact the protection of any Government ;

“ 2. that this Commission of Experts submit a report on its findings for the consideration of the Executive Committee ;

“ 3. that the Executive Committee be empowered, if it considers it desirable, to make recommendations to various Governments. ”

In conformity with the Resolution thus adopted, the Director of the Intergovernmental Committee has convened, for 28th August, 1945, a meeting of the Commission of Experts set up in the meantime. The present Report is submitted to the Commission in order to facilitate its task. The Report is divided into three sections. Section I provides a historical survey and analysis of the previous international agreements concerning the issue of special identity and travel documents to refugees or to persons without nationality or of doubtful nationality. This section contains, *inter alia*, a table, which has been made as comprehensive as possible and which compares the clauses of the various international agreements governing this subject. Section II is devoted to a study of the various

questions raised by the issue of a special identity and travel document to the refugees referred to in the present Report. This section provides both an explanation and, as it were, an anticipated comment on the various clauses of the Preliminary Draft Arrangement referred to hereafter. Section III consists of a Preliminary Draft Arrangement and a specimen identity and travel document, which are submitted for the consideration of the Commission of Experts. The Commission will note that care has been taken to submit as comprehensive a Draft Arrangement and specimen as possible. Both have been drawn up on the basis of past experience and, at the same time, an endeavour has been made to remedy certain deficiencies found in previous arrangements and conventions.

The attention of the Commission of Experts is drawn, in particular, to Section III, which forms the conclusion of this Report and which might, it seems, be used as a basis, or starting point, for the work of the Commission.

May, 1945.

