

No. 2861

**AFGHANISTAN, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA,
CANADA, CUBA, etc.**

**Slavery Convention, signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926
and amended by the Protocol opened for signature or
acceptance at the Headquarters of the United Nations,
New York, on 7 December 1953**

Official texts: English and French.

Registered ex officio on 7 July 1955.

**AFGHANISTAN, AUSTRALIE, AUTRICHE,
CANADA, CUBA, etc.**

**Convention relative à l'esclavage, signée à Genève le 25 sep-
tembre 1926 et amendée par le Protocole ouvert à la
signature ou à l'acceptation au Siège de l'Organisation
des Nations Unies, New-York, le 7 décembre 1953**

Textes officiels anglais et français.

Enregistrée d'office le 7 juillet 1955.

No. 2861. SLAVERY CONVENTION¹ SIGNED AT GENEVA ON 25 SEPTEMBER 1926² AND AMENDED BY THE PROTOCOL OPENED FOR SIGNATURE OR ACCEPTANCE AT THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, ON 7 DECEMBER 1953³

Article I

For the purpose of the present Convention, the following definitions are agreed upon :

(1) Slavery is the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised.

(2) The slave trade includes all acts involved in the capture, acquisition or disposal of a person with intent to reduce him to slavery; all acts involved in the acquisition of a slave with a view to selling or exchanging him; all acts of disposal by sale or exchange of a slave acquired with a view to being sold or exchanged, and, in general, every act of trade or transport in slaves.

Article 2

The High Contracting Parties undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, so far as they have not already taken the necessary steps :

(a) To prevent and suppress the slave trade;

¹ Came into force on 7 July 1955, the date on which the amendments to the Convention, as set forth in the annex to the Protocol of 7 December 1953 (see Vol. 182, p. 51), entered into force in accordance with paragraph 2 of article III of the Protocol.

States Parties to the Convention as amended by the Protocol :

Afghanistan
Australia
Austria
Canada
Cuba
Denmark
Egypt
Finland
India
Iraq
Italy
Liberia
Mexico

Monaco
Netherlands, for the Kingdom in Europe,
Surinam, the Netherlands Antilles and
Netherlands New Guinea
New Zealand
Sweden
Switzerland
Syria
Turkey
Union of South Africa
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland
Yugoslavia

² League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. LX, p. 253; Vol. LXIX, p. 114; Vol. LXXII, p. 485; Vol. LXXXIII, p. 416; Vol. LXXXVIII, p. 356; Vol. XCVI, p. 192; Vol. C, p. 221; Vol. CIV, p. 511; Vol. CVII, p. 491; Vol. CXXX, p. 444; Vol. CXXXVIII, p. 440; Vol. CLII, p. 296; Vol. CLX, p. 342; Vol. CLXXII, p. 410; Vol. CLXXVII, p. 393; Vol. CLXXXV, p. 387, and Vol. CC, p. 502.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. 182, p. 51; Vol. 183, p. 378; Vol. 185, p. 408; Vol. 187, p. 466; Vol. 191, p. 408; Vol. 196, p. 361; Vol. 198, p. 406; Vol. 199, p. 356; Vol. 201, p. 381; Vol. 202, p. 361; Vol. 207, p. 365; Vol. 210, p. 336, and p. . . . of this Volume.

(b) To bring about, progressively and as soon as possible, the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms.

Article 3

The High Contracting Parties undertake to adopt all appropriate measures with a view to preventing and suppressing the embarkation, disembarkation and transport of slaves in their territorial waters and upon all vessels flying their territorial waters and upon all vessels flying their respective flags.

The High Contracting Parties undertake to negotiate as soon as possible a general Convention with regard to the slave trade which will give them rights and impose upon them duties of the same nature as those provided for in the Convention of June 17th, 1925, relative to the International Trade in Arms (Articles 12, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Section II of Annex II), with the necessary adaptations, it being understood that this general Convention will not place the ships (even of small tonnage) of any High Contracting Parties in a position different from that of the other High Contracting Parties.

It is also understood that, before or after the coming into force of this general Convention, the High Contracting Parties are entirely free to conclude between themselves, without, however, derogating from the principles laid down in the preceding paragraph, such special agreements as, by reason of their peculiar situation, might appear to be suitable in order to bring about as soon as possible the complete disappearance of the slave trade.

Article 4

The High Contracting Parties shall give to one another every assistance with the object of securing the abolition of slavery and the slave trade.

Article 5

The High Contracting Parties recognise that recourse to compulsory or forced labour may have grave consequences and undertake, each in respect of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage, to take all necessary measures to prevent compulsory or forced labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

It is agreed that :

(1) Subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph (2) below, compulsory or forced labour may only be exacted for public purposes.

(2) In territories in which compulsory or forced labour for other than public purposes still survives, the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour progressively and as soon as possible to put an end to the practice. So long as

such forced or compulsory labour exists, this labour shall invariably be of an exceptional character, shall always receive adequate remuneration, and shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence.

(3) In all cases, the responsibility for any recourse to compulsory or forced labour shall rest with the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

Article 6

Those of the High Contracting Parties whose laws do not at present make adequate provision for the punishment of infractions of laws and regulations enacted with a view to giving effect to the purposes of the present Convention undertake to adopt the necessary measures in order that severe penalties may be imposed in respect of such infractions.

Article 7

The High Contracting Parties undertake to communicate to each other and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations any laws and regulations which they may enact with a view to the application of the provisions of the present Convention.

Article 8

The High Contracting Parties agree that disputes arising between them relating to the interpretation or application of this Convention shall, if they cannot be settled by direct negotiation, be referred for decision to the International Court of Justice. In case either or both of the States Parties to such a dispute should not be parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the dispute shall be referred, at the choice of the Parties and in accordance with the constitutional procedure of each State, either to the International Court of Justice or to a court of arbitration constituted in accordance with the Convention of October 18th, 1907,¹ for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, or to some other court of arbitration.

Article 9

At the time of signature or of ratification or of accession, any High Contracting Party may declare that its acceptance of the present Convention does not bind some or all of the territories placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage in respect of all or any provisions of the Convention; it may subsequently accede separately on behalf of any one of them or in respect of any provision to which any one of them is not a party.

¹ De Martens : *Nouveau Recueil général de Traités*, troisième série, tome III, p. 360; League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. LIV, p. 435, and Vol. CXXXIV, p. 453.

Article 10

In the event of a High Contracting Party wishing to denounce the present Convention, the denunciation shall be notified in writing to the Secretary-General of the United Nations who will at once communicate a certified true copy of the notification to all the other High Contracting Parties, informing them of the date on which it was received.

The denunciation shall only have effect in regard to the notifying State, and one year after the notification has reached the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Denunciation may also be made separately in respect of any territory placed under its sovereignty, jurisdiction, protection, suzerainty or tutelage.

Article 11

The present Convention, which will bear this day's date and of which the French and English texts are both authentic, will remain open for signature by the States Members of the League of Nations until April 1st, 1927.

The present Convention shall be open to accession by all States, including States which are not Members of the United Nations, to which the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall have communicated a certified copy of the Convention.

Accession shall be effected by the deposit of a formal instrument with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall give notice thereof to all States Parties to the Convention and to all other States contemplated in the present article, informing them of the date on which each such instrument of accession was received in deposit.

Article 12

The present Convention will be ratified and the instruments of ratification shall be deposited in the office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General will inform all the High Contracting Parties of such deposit.

The Convention will come into operation for each State on the date of the deposit of its ratification or of its accession.
