

CONVENTION ON THE PREVENTION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF GENOCIDE

By resolution 96 (I) of 11 December 1946, the General Assembly, affirming that genocide is a crime under international law which the civilized world condemns, invited Member States to enact the necessary legislation for the prevention and punishment of that crime, recommended that international cooperation be organized to that effect and requested the Economic and Social Council to undertake the necessary studies, with a view to drawing up a draft convention on the crime of genocide. On the instructions of the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary General, with the assistance of the Division of Human Rights and a group of three experts (Henri Donnedieu de Vabres, Raphael Lemkin and Vespasien Pella), prepared a draft convention accompanied by a commentary (E/447, 26 June 1947).

By resolution 77 (V) of 6 August 1947, the Economic and Social Council proposed to proceed as rapidly as possible with the consideration of the question of genocide, subject to any further instructions which it may receive from the General Assembly. States were invited to submit their observations on that draft (A/362, 25 August 1947).

By resolution 180 (II) of 21 November 1947, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council to continue its work on the matter and to proceed with the completion of a convention without awaiting the receipt of observations by all Member States.

On 3 March 1948, the Economic and Social Council, by resolution 117 (VI), established an Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide composed of national representatives (United States of America, Soviet Union, Lebanon, China, France, Poland and Venezuela), which prepared a second draft convention with commentaries (E/794, 5 April-10 May 1948).

The Sixth (legal) Committee considered this draft at its 63rd to 110th meetings and 128th to 134th meetings of the third session of the General Assembly in 1948.

The General Assembly adopted the Genocide Convention by unanimous vote of the 56 participants at its 179th plenary meeting, on 9 December 1948 (resolution 260 (III)).