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E/CONF/PASS/PC/2/Add. 6
14 May 1947
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

MEETING OF EXPERTS TO PREPARE FOR A WORLD CONFERENCE ON PASSPORTS
AND FRONTIER FORMALITIES

PREPARATORY MEMORANDUM

Annex 19

Letter from the Representative of the International
Chamber of Commerce

Office of the Permanent Representative
to the Economic and Social Council and
the Specialized Agencies Affiliated with
the United Nations

International
Headquarters:

38 Cours Albert 1^{er}
Paris

Suite 228, 37 Wall Street, New York 5, N.Y.

Geneva
23 April, 1947

Sir:

1. The Delegation of the International Chamber of Commerce are grateful for the opportunity which has been accorded to them of attending the meetings of the Committee of Experts assembled to make recommendations and prepare for a World Conference on Passports and Frontier Formalities.

2. The Delegation have listened with interest to the discussions and appreciate that the representatives of the different Governments, being responsible for the administrative issue and control of passports and visas, are naturally concerned mainly with making recommendations for simplifications that will not impair that control and that they are at the same time anxious to arrive as far as possible at uniformity and reciprocity. The Delegation recognize and welcome the earnest efforts the Committee have made to simplify the formalities - many of which are, unfortunately, clearly essential in present world conditions.

3. The Delegation is nevertheless convinced that, although the intention was not expressed in the terms of reference for the Committee of Experts, the Economic and Social Council, when calling this meeting of experts, would have welcomed the submission of proposals that would not constitute an improved codification of existing practices, but would rather indicate to the future World Conference such radical changes from the present practice as would be

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calculated to restore to the greatest possible extent freedom of travel even at the cost of some risks and inconvenience to the administrations concerned.

4. The Delegation cannot help feeling that the Committee in their endeavour to find formulas acceptable to all members have, for instance, in the important matter of visas, accepted qualifying clauses which can be interpreted as an implied approval for the survival of the visa system. The International Chamber of Commerce would have preferred that the Committee lay more stress on the views expressed by certain Government Delegations and by all unofficial bodies in favour of the suppression of visas - and visa fees. They had been encouraged in hoping for this by the recent moves of a number of Governments, which the ICC have welcomed, to abolish visas by bilateral agreements.

5. The ICC believe that they are supported by other unofficial organizations represented at the Committee of Experts meeting in expressing the wish that the Committee in forwarding their recommendations, which are admittedly calculated to make less cumbersome the administrative control of international travel, will call the attention of the World Conference to the fact that the unofficial bodies do not feel that these recommendations, if adopted, will correspond with that measure of freedom of travel which is an indispensable condition for the restoration of individual freedom and for the reconstruction of world economy.

6. Finally, the ICC, in common with the unofficial bodies, greatly regret that the terms of reference of the Committee of Experts did not permit them to study the problems of the allocation of foreign exchange to travellers. Restrictions in this field are an even greater impediment than those of passports, visas and frontier formalities. The ICC, therefore, ask that some reference to these limitations may be included in the Committee's report, in such a way that the World Conference may find some means of including this wider question within their terms of reference for their plenary discussion.

The ICC would be grateful if this letter might be circulated to the Members of the present Committee for their information.

Yours faithfully,

For the
International Chamber of Commerce

(Signed) P. Stoppani

Mr. C. D. Carew Robinson, C.B.,
Chairman
Committee of Experts to Prepare
for a World Conference on Passports
and Frontier Formalities.

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MEETING OF EXPERTS TO PREPARE FOR A
WORLD CONFERENCE ON PASSPORTS AND FRONTIER FORMALITIES

UNITED KINGDOM PROPOSALS

The delegates to the Meeting of Experts to Prepare for a World Conference on Passports and Frontier Formalities shall find herewith a letter (Exhibit A) from the United Kingdom Delegation to the United Nations transmitting the United Kingdom proposals regarding the Meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities, together with the documents annexed thereto: (Exhibits B and C).

EXHIBIT A

29th March 1947

Sir,

On instructions from His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom I have the honour to transmit the enclosed questionnaire with short covering memorandum with the request that they be circulated for discussion at the forthcoming conference of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities to be held in Geneva commencing April 14th, 1947.

I have the honour to be

Sir,

your obedient servant,

(s) H.M. Phillips

His Excellency,
M. Trygve Lie,
Secretary-General,
United Nations Secretariat,
New York

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EXHIBIT B

United Kingdom Proposals regarding the Meeting
of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in the course of preparation for the forthcoming meeting of Experts on Passports and Frontier Formalities have been considering the method by which the problems to be discussed can most conveniently be approached.

2. Prior to the Passport Conference held in 1926 there had been circulated a questionnaire drawn up by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit of the League of Nations, and, in the belief that a parallel survey of the present situation would be useful in preparation for the forthcoming discussions, a draft questionnaire on similar lines is appended to this document. It is suggested that at some stage a questionnaire similar to that appended might be forwarded to all member governments of the United Nations so that the necessary information may be available for use in international discussion of these questions.

3. For their part His Majesty's Government, in the United Kingdom will shortly circulate answers to this questionnaire showing the present practice of His Majesty's Government.

EXHIBIT C

Questionnaire

Passports.

1. Has your Government suppressed passports

(a) entirely?

(b) for the nationals of particular countries?

In the case of (b) please name the countries and say whether such action is subject to reciprocity.

In cases where passports have been suppressed, what documents, if any, take their place? (e.g. Identity Cards etc.)

2. Has your Government adopted the type of passport known as the "International"? (Recommended by the Paris Conference, 1920).

3. How many persons can be included in one passport?

4. What period of validity is given to the passport:

(a) on first application?

(b) on renewal?

5. What is the fee charged

(a) for the issue of a passport?

(b) for the renewal of a passport?

(c) for family passports?

6. What documents must be produced in support of an application for a passport? (Specimens of any forms which must be completed should be attached to replies).

7. How much time elapses between the application for and the issue of a passport in normal circumstances?

8. Does your Government issue more than one type of passport to its nationals? If so, how many different types are issued?

Entrance Visas.

9. Has your Government suppressed the visa

(a) entirely?

(b) for the nationals of certain countries?

In the case of (b), please name the countries and say whether such action is subject to reciprocity.

10. (a) Where can visas be obtained?

(b) In the event of an applicant being resident at a place where no visa issuing office exists, can a visa be secured by

mail or must the applicant apply in person?

(c) Is a preliminary endorsement required from the authorities who have issued the passport?

(d) Are the visa or consular officers of your Government empowered to grant visas without reference to their home headquarters?

(e) Does your Government issue more than one type of entrance visa? If so, how many different types are issued?

(f) How long elapses in normal circumstances between the application for and the granting of a visa?

(g) What documents are required in support of an application for a visa?

(Specimens of any forms which must be completed should be attached to replies).

(h) What is the period of validity for the entrance visa?

(i) Is the visa valid at all entrance points on all frontiers?

(j) Do nationals of your own country require an entrance visa?

(k) Does an entrance visa of itself entitle the traveller to enter and/or reside in your country?

(l) If so, does the length of his stay depend on his visa?

(m) If not, what further formality does the traveller require to enter the country?

11. (a) What is the fee charged for the entrance visa?

(b) Is such a charge of universal application?

(c) If reduction in price is granted to nationals of certain States, is this subject to reciprocity?

Transit Visas.

12. (a) What is the fee charged for the transit visa?
- (b) How long may a visitor remain in your country on a transit visa?
- (c) For how many journeys are transit visas issued by your Government valid?
- (d) What documents are required in support of an application for a transit visa?
- (Specimens of any forms which must be completed should be attached to replies).
- (e) Are your visa or consular officers empowered to grant transit visas without reference to their home headquarters?
- (f) How long elapses in normal circumstances between the application for and the granting of a transit visa?

Exit Visas.

13. Is an exit visa required
- (a) by nationals of your own country?
- (b) by nationals of other countries?

Police regulations.

14. (a) How long can an alien remain in your country without registering with the police?
- (b) Having registered does he require a permit from the registration authorities before he moves from one district to another?
- (c) If not, is he required to keep the registration authorities informed of his whereabouts?