

Convention. In doing so, however, the delegation wishes to stress that it considers that the Convention has very worthy objectives, which Canada heartily endorses.

In Canada, the consent to marriage of both parties has always been required. In the provinces a minimum age for marriage, without the consent of the parents or guardians, has been set, usually at 18. In exceptional circumstances, provision is made by the courts for the marriage of minors. Registration of marriages has been compulsory for many years in Canada.

Our Canadian women's groups have been for many years keenly interested in social legislation and are frequently in touch with the government authorities on matters which are of direct concern to them. They have often been responsible for changes in legislation which have improved immeasurably the status of women in Canada. (They were instrumental in obtaining the right of women to vote). I know from my own experience in the Canadian House of Commons that they are very much in sympathy with the splendid objectives which are embodied in this Convention.

It seems to me that what is most important here is the spirit which lies behind the formulation of the Convention. Not so many years ago it would have been inconceivable that a Committee representative of so many nations could have met to consider this subject. The fact that we are able to do so now, is, I suggest, indicative in itself of a very considerable step forward.

I shall not take up the time of the Committee to explain the point of view of my Delegation on the many amendments we have before us today. It is, I am sure, the objective of all of us to do what we can to produce a clear, short and effective document which can be widely accepted. There will obviously be cases in the countries from which we come which are exceptional, and the Convention should be broad enough to provide for their legitimate needs, for I am sure that