

convention based on the principle of equality between the sexes in the matter of nationality, and conceived in the same spirit as the draft resolution submitted to the Hague Conference by the delegation of Chile.

This proposal, which was supported by the delegations of China, Turkey, Cuba and Norway, was explained by its authors, who were not content to repeat the arguments set out in the successive reports of the Committee of Representatives of Women's Organizations. Emphasis was laid on the special significance of the Hague Convention as the first stage in the task of codifying international law undertaken by the League, and consequently on the particular importance of eliminating from that Convention all those Articles that mark the difference between the legal status of men and women.

Some countries absolutely refused to establish equality between men and women in the matter of nationality, arguing that the unity of nationality of husband and wife was one of the best means of securing the unity of legal status of the family. At least an equal number of countries, however, referred to the progress that had already been achieved in their national legislation in the direction of the independence of married women in the matter of nationality, which they did not regard as in any way incompatible with the unity of the legal status of the family. That unity could, they thought, be secured either by applying the national law of the member of the couple in whose country the family lived, or by applying the law of the country of domicile of the family, etc. Several delegates also referred to the resolutions to that effect adopted by the Institute of International Law at Oslo on August 22, 1932.

The differences between national laws influenced the great majority of delegations in believing that it would be useless at present to attempt to revise Articles 8-11 of the Hague Convention. The Convention was in the nature of a compromise, and it could not reasonably be anticipated that all laws on the subject would be made uniform in the near future. Emphasis was also laid on the difficulties of a general nature that might in future be encountered in codifying international law—a sufficiently difficult task already—if an attempt to rewrite the first Convention of its kind, which had been so laboriously prepared in 1930, were made before it had even come into force. Other considerations of a more positive nature, however, induced the great majority to adopt the draft resolution submitted by the Canadian delegation, expressing the hope that the Nationality Convention would shortly be put into force.

In the first place, it was pointed out, the Convention does represent a real improvement in the legal status of married women who are the victims of the differences between nationality laws. Convincing examples were given to show the urgency, in many countries, of putting an end to certain very distressing cases of statelessness, some of which arise when the legislation of the husband's country does not confer its nationality on the wife, while at the same time, according to the law of her country of origin, the wife loses her nationality on marriage. Only the entry into force of the Hague Convention can remedy cases of this kind, despite its recognized inadequacy as a remedy for all cases.

The practical advances thus made have not, moreover, been achieved at the expense of the general principles of justice and equality. It was not the Hague Conference's intention to affirm a principle contrary to the independence of married women in the matter of nationality; the Hague Conference, on the contrary, recommended States to respect the principle of the equality of the sexes in matters of nationality. (Recommendation No. VI).

Such were the main reasons that led the Committee to express the hope that the States which have signed the Nationality Convention would enact the legislation necessary to give effect to that Convention and would deposit their ratifications at an early date.

In the course of discussion, the Belgian delegation put forward an ingenious proposal for a textual alternative in the wording of these articles with a view to