

to live with in principle.

Our delegation, Mr. Chairman, is impressed by the optional character of article 13. Indeed it is hard to see how the article could be any more optional than it already is. Paragraph 1 provides that a party to the convention may recognize the competence of the international committee to receive petitions from nationals. But ~~this~~ is entirely permissive in that the committee can have no competence for the state concerned unless that state agrees thereto. In the absence of consent, that is, of a declaration, a state party will have no significant connection with the committee. Those states therefore which regard the right of petition as inappropriate in the present stage of the development of international relations will in no way be bound against their wishes. Their interests are fully protected by the draft as it now stands.

Paragraphs 2 and 4 provide that a state which recognizes the capacity of the international committee may indicate or appoint a national body, which <sup>shall</sup> ~~should~~ <sup>three</sup> ~~do these~~ things: first, receive petitions from individuals who have already exhausted other local remedies; secondly, seek redress from the state itself, where appropriate; and, thirdly, where redress has not been obtained within a time limit, communicate the matter to the international committee. But all this, like paragraph 1, is <sup>entirely</sup> optional. A party to the convention is not obliged to appoint or elect a national committee. And of course it will not do so if it has not made a declaration under paragraph