

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 it was not the intention of those who designed the convention to work a hardship on any group of people.

The acceptance of social legislation of this kind presents unique problems in many regions of the world today, where age-old customs and traditional ways of life are difficult to alter. For this reason my delegation thinks it particularly important that the convention should be a flexible one - flexible enough to take into account the wide divergence of view which prevails without destroying its effectiveness as a legal instrument to meet the purposes for which it is intended. These are the general considerations which will guide us when we come to consider the various amendments.

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