

in respect to advisory opinions, came into force. This consideration was an important factor in the Committee's conclusion that the Assembly should be invited to request all States which had not yet ratified the Protocol of Amendment to do so as soon as possible.

The recommendations of the Committee were approved by the Assembly which proceeded forthwith to elect the new members of the Permanent Court under authority of the original Statute of 1920 as modified by the Assembly resolutions embodying the recommendations of the First Committee.

#### *The Ratification of Conventions Concluded Under the Auspices of the League of Nations*

The question of ratification of League Conventions was considered by the First Committee in the light of the report of the special committee of jurists appointed to study this question which was first raised at the 10th Assembly by the Danish delegation. After a brief general discussion, which disclosed no great divergence of opinion, the Committee unanimously approved a resolution drafted by the Danish and British delegations which set forth the steps that could be taken to increase the number of ratifications of treaties signed under the auspices of the League, and reduce the delays between the date of signature and that of ratification.

Each year the Secretary-General will request any State that has signed a general Convention, but has not ratified it before the expiry of one year from the date on which the Protocol of Signature is closed, to state its intentions as regards ratification.

At suitable times and intervals the Secretary-General will request Governments of State Members that have neither signed nor ratified a Convention within a period of five years from the date on which it was open for signature to state whether they think it possible to communicate their views regarding the Convention, *i.e.*, whether they see any possibility of acceding thereto, or the reasons for which they feel unable to accept it.

As regards Conventions adopted by an inadequate number of States, the Council of the League will consider whether it is desirable to summon a new Conference to amend the Convention or take other suitable steps to facilitate acceptance of the Convention by a greater number of States.

Supplementing these steps designed to secure the ratification of existing Conventions are a series of recommendations concerning the procedure to be followed before summoning general conferences in future. The procedure proposed is based on the experience gained at recent conferences, some of which, in the opinion of many competent judges, failed to achieve their object because the ground had not been adequately prepared in advance. Henceforward, if the conclusion of a General Convention is recommended by an organ of the League, *i.e.*, by the Economic Committee or the Health Committee or the Organization for Communication and Transit, that organ must prepare a memorandum explaining the objects and advantages to be expected from such a Convention. If the Council of the League approves the proposal in principle, a first draft will be prepared and communicated with the explanatory memorandum to the various Governments which will be invited to inform the Secretary-General whether they consider that the draft merits consideration. The draft Convention and the observations of the various Governments will then be communicated to the Assembly which will have to decide, in the light of this information, whether or not it will ask the Council to convoke the contemplated Conference.

The purpose of this rather elaborate preparatory procedure is to make the position of the various Governments and the possibility of success very clear before the convoking of the Conference is decided. The Council will then be in a position to decide whether, and on what date, the Conference should meet.