

The following information from the Registry of the International Court of Justice has been communicated to the Press:

This morning the oral hearings were opened in the Advisory Case relating to the reservations to the Convention for the prevention and punishment of the crime of Genocide.

After M. Basdevant, the President, had opened the hearing, Mr. E. Hambro, Registrar of the Court, read the Request for an Advisory Opinion transmitted to the Court in virtue of the Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations dated 16th November, 1950.

The questions put to the Court were worded as follows:

"In so far as concerns the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the event of a State ratifying or acceding to the Convention subject to a reservation made either on ratification or on accession, or on signature followed by ratification:

- I. Can the reserving State be regarded as being a party to the Convention while still maintaining its reservation if the reservation is objected to by one or more of the parties to the Convention but not by others?
- II. If the answer to question I is in the affirmative, what is the effect of the reservation as between the reserving State and:
 - (a) The parties which object to the reservation?
 - (b) Those which accept it?
- III. What would be the legal effect as regards the answer to question I if an objection to a reservation is made:
 - (a) By a signatory which has not yet ratified?
 - (b) By a State entitled to sign or accede but which has not yet done so?"

As is known, the Resolution was the consequence of the reservations made by nine States, either to the signature or to the ratification of the Convention, and the validity of these reservations was disputed by other States, signatories or non-signatories of the Convention.

The President added that the necessary notifications had been addressed to the States and international Organisations concerned, and they had been informed of the time-limits appointed for the presentation of written statements. The Court received written observations from the Organisation of American States and the International Labour Organisation, also from the Governments of the U.S.S.R., the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Israel, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, the People's Republic of Romania, the Ukrainian S.S.R., the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Byelo-Russian S.S.R. and the Republic of the Philippines.

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The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland having announced its intention of presenting an oral statement before the Court, is represented for this purpose by the Attorney-General, Sir Hartley Shawcross, assisted by Mr. Fitzmaurice, second legal adviser of the Foreign Office. To the same end, France and Israel are represented by M. Charles Rousseau, Professor of the Faculty of Law at Paris, Assistant Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Shabtai Rosenne, Legal Adviser to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, respectively.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is represented before the Court by Mr. Ivan Kerno, Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Legal Department, assisted by Mr. Wattles.

The President called upon Mr. Ivan Kerno.

Dr. Ivan Kerno first recalled the importance of the case now before the Court, both from the point of view of the application of the Convention on Genocide and from the point of view of Conventions and multilateral treaties in general. Then he defined in turn the functions of the Secretary-General as the depositary of more than sixty conventions prepared or revised by the United Nations and of more than fifty conventions previously deposited with the Secretariat of the League of Nations, the legal problems raised by these functions and the legal rules which had been followed in solving the difficulties which had arisen to date.

The oral statements will continue to-morrow, Wednesday, April 11th.

The Hague, April 10th, 1951.
