

The French Government had intimated that it wished to renounce certain functions which it had previously exercised under the agreements of 1904 and 1910 concerning the suppression of the white-slave traffic and of obscene publications. The Commission recommended that the United Nations should assume these functions, and further requested the Secretary-General to proceed with the preparation of a comprehensive Convention on Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, to include the provisions of the projected convention of 1937 regarding the exploitation of the prostitution of others, and any improvements therein which might have been made desirable by developments since 1937. These recommendations were endorsed by ECOSOC, and protocols concerning the transfer of functions from the French Government were adopted by the General Assembly during the first part of the third session. Work on the comprehensive new convention is also proceeding rapidly.

The Commission also considered reports by the Secretariat on the work being undertaken by various agencies, including the United Nations, in the field of town and country planning, and on the programme of the division of social activities in the field of standards of living. In connection with the problem of crime and treatment of offenders, it recommended that a small meeting of experts should be convened once a year to advise the Secretary-General and the Commission in devising programmes for international study and action in this field.

The position of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission (IPPC) in relation to the United Nations was also discussed. Relations with this body had been suspended in view of the fact that Franco Spain was a member. Spain, however, withdrew from membership in September, 1947, and in August, 1948, the Commission amended its constitution so as to control its membership. The way was therefore open for full consultation between the IPPC and the United Nations. A meeting of all the appropriate international organizations, including the IPPC, interested in the problem of the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders was held under the auspices of the United Nations in October, 1948, and agreement reached for co-operation in the light of their particular fields of competence.

The Commission adopted a work programme for 1948-49 covering projects in six major areas—namely, social welfare, including family, youth, and child welfare; the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders; the suppression of prostitution and traffic in women and children; migration; housing and town and country planning; and standards of living.