

No. 117

BELGIUM
and
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Bilateral agreement concerning the repatriation of their nationals displaced as a result of hostilities. Signed at Brussels, on 13 March 1945

French official text communicated by the Officer in charge of the Permanent Belgian Delegation to the United Nations. The filing and recording took place on 16 November 1948.

BELGIQUE
et
UNION DES REPUBLIQUES SOCIALISTES SOVIETIQUES

Acord bilatéral concernant le rapatriement de leurs ressortissants "personnes déplacées" par fait de guerre. Signé à Bruxelles, le 13 mars 1945

Texte officiel français communiqué par le Chargé de la gestion de la délégation permanente de Belgique auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies. Le classement et l'inscription au répertoire ont eu lieu le 16 novembre 1948.

TRANSLATION — TRADUCTION

No. 117. BILATERAL AGREEMENT¹ BETWEEN BELGIUM AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS CONCERNING THE REPATRIATION OF THEIR NATIONALS DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF HOSTILITIES. SIGNED AT BRUSSELS, ON 13 MARCH 1945

The present agreement is concluded by and between

The Belgian Government, represented by His Excellency Mr. Paul VAN ZEELAND, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Commissioner for Repatriation, of the one part, and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, represented by His Excellency Major-General DRAGUN, Representative of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the repatriation of Soviet citizens in Western Europe, of the other part.

Article 1.—Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes to facilitate and expedite the repatriation of any nationals of the other party displaced as a result of hostilities, including prisoners of war, who, at the time of liberation and subsequently, may be within its territory.

Article 2.—Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes to receive within its territory and to repatriate immediately any nationals of the other party, who, by their own initiative or by organized means, may cross its frontier from an enemy country, a country formerly occupied by the enemy or a neutral country.

Article 3.—(1) All “displaced persons” who are nationals of one or other of the High Contracting Parties, whether released prisoners of war or civilians liberated from the enemy, shall be considered and treated, not as prisoners of war, but as free citizens of an allied Power.

(2) While awaiting repatriation, “displaced persons” shall be treated by each of the High Contracting Parties on a footing of equality with its own nationals, particularly with regard to shelter, food, medical and social services and the application of health restrictions.

¹ Came into force on 13 March 1945, as from the date of signature, in accordance with article 9.

In particular, the authorities of each of the High Contracting Parties shall endeavour to provide liberated citizens, in so far as possible in view of the difficulties resulting from the war, with living conditions resembling those to which they are accustomed.

Pending repatriation, they shall be accommodated at assembly centres or temporary camps.

Members of the armed forces shall, as far as possible, be assigned to military centres where discipline shall be kept by officers appointed by the national delegation. These officers shall be responsible for maintaining military routine, order and discipline in accordance with the regulations in force in their army. It is understood that these provisions do not prejudice the authority of the director of the centre.

Article 4.—Each of the High Contracting Parties shall admit to its territory a national mission of the other party, which shall co-ordinate its activities with the directives issued by the Ministry or Commissariat responsible for repatriation, to which it shall be attached.

The mission shall consist of a head of mission and such staff as the circumstances may require. Its composition shall be subject to the consent of the other party.

It shall be the duty of each mission to assist the Government of the country to which it is accredited in operations for the repatriation of its nationals, within the general framework of national and international repatriation operations.

To this end it shall be afforded full travel facilities and the necessary authorization to visit camps, centres and assembly points in which its nationals are present.

In addition, the mission may import free of duty, and shall be given full facilities for the dispatch of, any packages, provisions, medical supplies and in general all articles, effects and objects destined either for its members or for the persons to be repatriated for whom it is responsible.

It shall be responsible for:

- (a) co-operating in the identification of "displaced persons" who claim the nationality of the High Contracting Party represented by the mission;
- (b) issuing repatriation documents;
- (c) advising and assisting the authorities of the territory, in matters concerning the assistance, maintenance and repatriation of the "displaced persons" for whom it is responsible.

Article 5.—Each of the High Contracting Parties undertakes, as far as possible, to have recourse to the staff of the national mission of the other Party for the purpose of facilitating the repatriation of nationals of the latter.

Article 6.—The nationals of each of the High Contracting Parties may only be put to work with the consent of the diplomatic authorities or the delegation of the other party, and then only in such a manner that normal living and working conditions, particularly as regards food and wage rates in force in the country, are guaranteed to each of them.

They may not be sent to other countries except with the consent of the same national authorities.

The dissemination to their nationals of propaganda hostile to one or other of the High Contracting Parties will not be tolerated.

Citizens of the High Contracting Parties will in no case be permitted to enlist in foreign armed forces.

Article 7.—Each of the High Contracting Parties shall examine with the other Party the possibility of establishing priority lists.

Article 8.—The undertakings provided for in the present convention shall not be construed as preventing any general measure of a domestic nature which the High Contracting Parties may deem it essential to take for reasons of health or security or which may be taken by inter-allied agencies, in accordance with international agreements applicable in the country concerned.

Article 9.—The present agreement is concluded for a period of three months from the date of signature. It shall be renewed by tacit agreement for further periods of three months, unless denounced by either party, one month before the expiry of any such period.

Article 10.—Financial questions arising from the present agreement shall be studied and settled at a later date.

DONE in duplicate, 13 March 1945, one original copy deposited with each of the High Contracting Parties.

(Signed) DRAGUN

(Signed) P. VAN ZEELAND