



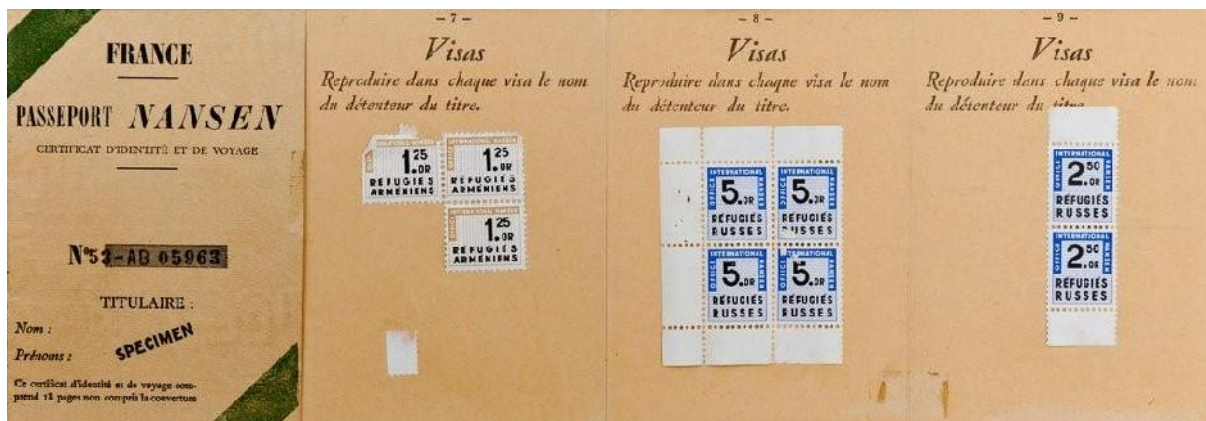
RESOURCE 11

The League of Nations was established in 1919, in the aftermath of World War One. The hope was that this international organisation would maintain world peace by bringing many nations together in cooperation. Although it failed in its objective to prevent global conflict, it did foster international cooperation in many areas, such as aid to refugees.

In 1922 the League of Nations introduced the 'Nansen passport'. You can see an example here, with the stamps or visas that allowed a refugee to travel. This identification and travel document gave official recognition to refugees and stateless people, and allowed them to move freely across national boundaries. The passport – named after Fridtjof Nansen, the League's High Commissioner for Refugees – was issued by 52 governments.

Today, the successors of the Nansen passports are the travel documents for refugees that are issued independently by different countries.

Have your students discuss whether an international document such as the Nansen passport could be re-introduced today. Would it be a good idea? Why, or why not?



Source: League of Nations Archives, Office of the United Nations, Geneva