

Forum: Special Conference

Question of: Ensuring a Life Worth Living through Protecting the Human Rights of Stateless People



Submitted by: St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Co-submitted by: The Bahamas, Botswana, Eritrea, Mexico, Panama, Portugal, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

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The Special Conference,

Guided by the UNHCR Special “Ending Statelessness Within 10 Years” Report and the “Global Action Plan to End Statelessness”,

Alarmed by the fact, that there are approximately around 12 million stateless individuals,

Recognizing the importance of providing health, education, social and economic laws, policies and administrative reforms to ensure the well-being of stateless individuals,

Having examined the lack of adequate data on many stateless populations, as out of 142 national population censuses undertaken since 2005, for which the United Nations possesses detailed information, only 112 included a question on nationality,

Deeply concerned by the fact, that there are 27 countries that deny women the right to pass on their citizenship to their children independently,

Aware of the need for the 1954 “Convention on the status of stateless persons” and 1961 “Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness” ratification as these treaties are supported by other legal instruments such as the 1948 “Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and remain the primary institutional instruments, which help all member states to regulate the status of non-refugee stateless persons,

Aware of the issue that the protection of human rights is already a challenge for itself, and that the protection of the human rights of stateless people is an even bigger challenge,

Believing that leader roles, which take responsibility, are fundamental for bringing progress,

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1. **Endorses** the identification of factors that may contribute to new cases of statelessness, or which prevent resolution of existing situations. Factors that are already known, for instance, are:
 - a. the problem that the United Nations cannot control whether individual countries are protecting the human rights of their own people and that it is improbable to control whether they are protecting the human rights of stateless people,
 - b. the problem that only a few countries take over a leading role in terms of protecting the human rights of stateless people and persuading other countries to do so;
2. **Recommends** the participation in the “Global Action Plan to End Statelessness” of the UNHCR to resolve existing major situations of statelessness, prevent new cases of statelessness from emerging and better identify and protect stateless populations, by implementing one or more of the 10 proposed actions;
3. **Further recommends** all member nations to expand the acquisition of documents confirming nationality, which further will be provided by the United Nations and help expand the data of stateless individuals;
4. **Notes** the need of providing asylum-seekers and refugees with needed protection, by:
 - a. including the issuance of work permits and the possibility to obtain a migrant status in the country,
 - b. establishing National Taskforces, which will focus on and prevent human trafficking,
5. **Further requests** all member states to abandon gender discrimination from nationality laws, which deny women their right to pass their citizenship to their children independently and further supports ideas, measures and organizations which can be helpful in the problem-solving process;
6. **Requests** actions to further minimize statelessness such as, but not limited to:
 - a. endorsing the acceleration of verifying the documents submitted by stateless people to apply for nationality, to ensure that they can be integrated into society as quickly as possible,
 - b. encouraging birth registrations for the prevention of children being born stateless, in order to avoid loopholes of statelessness in families,
 - c. supporting “jus soli” or “right of soli” type of nationality law, in which nationality is acquired through birth on the territory of a state,

- 79 d. suggesting the creation of a non-governmental organization (NGO)
80 that would be responsible for:
81 i providing a safe environment to support stateless people,
82 ii providing humanitarian aid that would help people worldwide,
83 iii creating public campaigns to raise awareness of the
84 problematic procedures to obtain nationality documents,
85 iv mediating between two or more countries in case of conflicts
86 occurring in order to find a compromise,
87 v suggesting that all member states should have the duty to
88 annually integrate a certain number of stateless people,
89 which would be financed by the member states depending
90 on their economic strength;

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92 7. **Further requests** qualitative research about stateless people to be made
93 by all member states:
94 a. regarding the economic situations and the general quality of life in
95 the stateless communities,
96 b. on the matter of the growth of the stateless communities and their
97 stances regarding the governments,
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- 99 8. **Recommends** special arrangements for foreign children with the
100 involvement of responsible authorities, which:
101 a. provide them, host families, legally in charge of them,
102 b. include improved training for responsible Child Protection Officers,
103 c. ensure the implementations of BID (best interest determination) and
104 BIP procedure,

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106 9. **Decides** to remain actively seized on the matter.