



Inter-Parliamentary Union
For democracy. For everyone.

142nd IPU ASSEMBLY

Virtual session, 24-28 May 2021

Parliamentary action in support of ending statelessness

Statement to mark the 60th anniversary of the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness

*Endorsed by the IPU Governing Council at its 207th session
(Virtual session, 25 May 2021)*

Statelessness, or the lack of possession of any nationality, affects millions of people worldwide, often denying them access to fundamental rights such as education, medical treatment, work and travel, and leaving them vulnerable to extreme forms of exploitation and abuse.

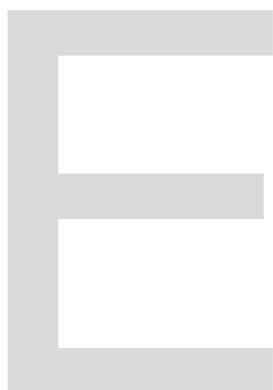
Article 15 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that all people have the right to a nationality, which in turn often serves as a gateway to other fundamental rights. The right to a nationality is also enshrined in numerous widely ratified international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

Recognizing that 2021 marks the 60th anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness (1961 Convention),

Recalling that the problem of statelessness has persisted over the years owing to gaps in nationality laws, weak birth registration systems and discriminatory legislation, including nationality laws that prevent women from conferring their nationality on their children on an equal basis to men,

We, Members of the IPU, call for renewed and urgent parliamentary action to help end the plight of stateless persons by:

- Taking appropriate legislative measures, such as reforms to nationality and related laws to ensure that they conform to the international standards that prevent and reduce statelessness and protect stateless persons, in particular by ensuring that nationality laws are free from discrimination and contain the safeguards that prevent statelessness;
- Encouraging relevant States to accede to and implement treaties that contain these international standards, including the 1961 Convention and the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons; and to support universal adherence to and implementation of these Conventions;
- Considering providing necessary support for the implementation of the 360 pledges to address statelessness made at the 2019 High-Level Segment on Statelessness and the 2019 first Global Forum on Refugees, as many of these require action to be taken by parliaments;



#IPU142

- Speaking out for stateless men, women, boys and girls in our countries and raising awareness of their situation;
- Making use of the tools produced by the IPU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), such as the 2005 IPU-UNHCR handbook for parliamentarians *Nationality and Statelessness* (updated in 2014 and translated into 13 languages) and the 2018 handbook *Good practices in nationality laws for the prevention and reduction of statelessness* (available in eight languages); and
- Systematically upholding the right to a nationality for all and supporting efforts to meet the goals of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024.

With less than four years remaining in the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024, and less than ten years to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and leave no one behind, the time for action is now.