

Committee: Special, Political and Decolonization Committee

Country: United Arab Emirates

Agenda: Establishing a Global Framework for the Protection of Stateless People

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Statelessness, is a very deep topic concerning many people’s desperate need of a sense of belonging and fundamental human rights they are deprived of. To be able to fully explain our policy on statelessness, we believe briefly explaining the term will be the proper way to start.

A stateless person is an individual who is not recognized as a citizen under the laws of any country. Stateless people often cannot benefit from simple things like travelling, going to school getting married, owning a house or a bank account. Stateless people are deprived of their fundamental human rights because they have no document to prove their identity.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) there are nearly 4.4 million of people who are denied a nationality. The UNHCR also estimated that this number only shows the ones that was properly reported. They think the actual number is close to 10 million due to underreporting. Although the exact number isn’t clear the U.S. Department of State estimates the stateless population in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to be between 20,000 and 100,000 individuals called Bidoons who are historically stateless people in the UAE.

Keeping the fact that statelessness is a very important issue that needs to be handled in mind, we cannot ignore that hosting stateless people can be threat to national security of the countries. Statelessness can be a pivotal issue for the countries and communities hosting stateless people. A stateless population may cause the countries to miss opportunities for development and growth. Their presence can cause civil unrest.

The UAE supports the idea that finding balance between this humanitarian issue and the prosperity of the citizens is vital. One thing we should be aware of is that statelessness is all over the world that we are currently living in. And this issue has to come to a solution with our efforts.

As United Arab Emirates we admit that we are cautious about committing to international laws. Although we have not signed neither the 1954 Convention relating to the status of the stateless people nor the 1961 convention on the reduction of statelessness we work with organizations like the UNHCR on related issues and we are committed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which protects the right to a nationality for all children.

We also feel the need to mention our past efforts on naturalization; in 2012 we offered stateless people Comorian passports through a deal we made with the Comoros islands.

We prefer solutions that respect our independence and sovereignty and that may support flexible guidelines rather than strict international rules. As a regional leader we are aware of our responsibility on solving global issues and safeguarding our citizens prosperity at the same time. We figure any small decision we make concerns 9,517 million of people’s welfare. We have to build balance between our citizens and the stateless population.

About establishing a global framework for the protection of stateless people we believe there are some solutions that can be applied.

Firstly, national identity programs that guarantee legal recognition for stateless people can be created. The UAE actually did this before by establishing the Comorian passports.

Secondly, countries which host a large population of stateless people could support UNHCR for providing humanitarian aid to stateless people.

And lastly legal migration facilities for stateless people could be established. This could include allowing stateless people to apply for temporary work permits. This would also fit into the UAE’s immigration policy.

To sum up, the UAE is open to all solutions that emphasize its sovereignty and national security. We are looking forward to work together with other fellow delegates.