**Comittee:** Special Political and Decolonization Comittee(SPECPOL)

**Country:** Dominican Republic

**Topic:** Establishing a Global Framework for he Protection of Stateless People

**Delegate:** Berna Ecrin Sadıklı

The Dominican Republic is located in the Caribbean between Cuba and Puerto Rico. It shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. Migration in the island has been an ongoing issue for centuries, as it was not only invaded by different countries (Spain and France) but also settled by various communities (Lebanese, Cocolos or Chinese, among others) on both sides of the island. The indigenous community of Taínos soon disappeared.From the 1920s on, Haitian migrants moved to the Dominican Republic on a seasonal basis to work as sugarcane cutters for either state ­owned or private companies. Haitian migrants were mainly young or middle ­aged men. Over time, they settled in slums next to sugar plantations called ‘bateyes’, bringing their Haitian families or marrying and having children with Dominican women. They integrated into Dominican communities, becoming the most numerous minority group in the Dominican Republic.The Haitian community in the Dominican Republic was an important source of cheap labour from the 1920s, but migration continued even after the Dominican sugar industry began to decline from the 1980s. Haitian migrants and Dominicans of Haitian descent continued to play a crucial role in Dominican economy in agriculture, tourism and construction. In January 2010, the Haitian side of the island of Hispaniola suffered one of the worst earthquakes the world has seen. Dominican society and government showed their solidarity and opened the border to help affected people, and started to invest in Haiti. However, despite many Dominicans, Dominicans of Haitian descent and Haitians coexisting peacefully for decades, old fears – including of a ‘Haitian invasion’ – have increased in the Dominican Republic. This has caused discrimination against Haitians and Dominicans of Haitian descent. Discrimination occurs based on their skin colour, Haitian ­sounding names, or living conditions, barring them from access to basic education, health care, work, travel and justice, as well as preventing them from getting married or registering their children. However, this discrimination is not recent; in 1937 between 15,000 and 30,000 people were killed by the regime of dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo in the so ­called ‘Parsley Massacre’ by the Dajabón river. Regime officials asked migrants to pronounce the Spanish word for parsley (Perejil): those unable to pronounce the word in the same way as Spanish­ speakers due to their French accents were then killed.

In the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), we presented to the Human Rights Council a report on the right to nationality and the human rights challenges related to statelessness in the Dominican Republic. This report was prepared by Dominicans por Derecho (DxD), the Center for Justice and International Law (CEJIL), Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights (RFKHR) and the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), a group of organizations dedicated to the defense and promotion of human rights.In this document we present updated information on the failure of the Dominican State to comply with the recommendations issued in previous UPR cycles and by United Nations treaty bodies regarding the international obligations of the Dominican Republic with the right to nationality and statelessness. We also highlight that more than 10 years after the Constitutional Court ruling TC/0168/13 depriving thousands of people of Haitian descent of their nationality, the Dominican Republic has not adopted adequate measures to address the situation of mass statelessness generated by said ruling. Law 169-14, which was initially proposed as a solution to the mass statelessness generated by the ruling, has been poorly and inadequately implemented, so thousands of people continue to have no access to their right to Dominican nationality.Among our observations, we highlight the following aspects that we consider should be taken into account in the framework of the UPR for the Dominican Republic: i) the poor implementation of Law 169-14; ii) the impact of immigration restrictions on the rights of people of Haitian descent who are victims of arbitrary expulsions, particularly pregnant women, children and adolescents, and victims of trafficking;iii) restrictions on access to social rights for people of Haitian descent; and iii) the increase in hatred and acts of violence, particularly against migrants and their families.

In light of these challenges, our proposed solutions are;

Restore the citizenship of all persons denationalized by virtue of judgment 168/13, within a reasonable period of time not to exceed two years.

Adopt a law that establishes a quick and simple mechanism for the restoration of nationality to people in Group B2 (who could not or did not want to apply Law 169-14 although with the right to Dominican nationality under the Constitution when they were born), with special attention to children and adolescents.

Immediately end arbitrary detentions for the purpose of possible expulsions of persons of Haitian descent, in particular pregnant or nursing women and children and adolescents, and ensure that State actors are continuously trained and respect the fundamental rights of persons on the move.

**Bibliography**

<https://minorityrights.org/statelessness-in-the-dominican-republic/>

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