

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

**Country:** Egypt

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

**Delegate:** Masal Girgin



The Arab Republic of Egypt was founded in 18th June 1953. The capital of Egypt is Cairo. Its current president is Abdülfettah es-Sisi. Its population is over 115 million. Islam is the official religion of Egypt and Arabic is its official language.

Statelessness is a global issue that affects over 10 million people all over the world. Stateless people do not have a legal nationality, which denies them access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, and employment. Statelessness can result from various causes, including discriminatory nationality laws, conflict, forced displacement, and gaps in international legal frameworks. Stateless people often live in extreme poverty, face exploitation, and are vulnerable to human rights abuses. Despite the 1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, there is still not enough global plan to prevent, reduce, and protect people from statelessness.

Egypt hosts more than 792,783 registered asylum-seekers and refugees from 62 different countries. Starting October 2023, the Sudanese nationality has become the top nationality, followed by Syrians. Other relevant countries of origin include South Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Yemen, Somalia and Iraq.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is committed to protecting people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. The global organization safeguards the rights and well-being of refugees, asylum-seekers and of people displaced within their own country. It also has a mandate to support stateless people. UNHCR has been operational in Egypt since 1954 after the Government of Egypt and UNHCR signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Since then, UNHCR has provided protection services including all aspects of registration, documentation, refugee status determination and resettlement to those who are forcibly displaced. Following the outbreak of armed conflict in Sudan in April 2023, large numbers of civilians have been forced to flee to Egypt and other neighbouring countries in search of safety.

According to UNHCR, there are an estimated 4.4 million stateless persons in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). Within the region, Egypt is host to many stateless communities, including the Palestinian diaspora, nomadic communities, and refugees from conflicts in Syria, Eritrea, and others. It is important to note that Egypt is party to numerous of people vulnerable to violations of their rights agreements that incorporate obligations to protect the right to a nationality.

Egypt sees the protection of stateless people as important and believes in working with other countries to solve this issue. As a country in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, Egypt faces challenges related to refugees and stateless people, so it supports international cooperation.

Egypt has signed agreements like the 1951 Refugee Convention but has not yet joined others, like the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on Statelessness. This shows Egypt is careful about taking on too many obligations. Egypt Works with the Arab League and African Union to find solutions for stateless people. For example:

The Cairo Declaration on Refugees and Displaced Persons in the Arab World encourages Arab countries to share responsibility for helping people who have no nationality.

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights says that everyone has the right to belong to a country.

Egypt has a large population and limited resources. It already hosts millions of refugees from countries like Sudan, Syria, and Libya. This makes it harder for Egypt to provide enough services for everyone, including healthcare, education, and housing. Egypt believes that any global plan to help stateless people should also consider the security of the host countries. For example, governments should make sure that people without nationality are not a danger to the country or its citizens.

Egypt believes that the best way to protect stateless people is to stop them from becoming stateless in the first place. This includes:

Solving the causes of war and violence that force people to flee their homes.

Changing unfair nationality laws, such as laws that prevent women from giving their nationality to their children.

Egypt supports organizations like UNHCR that work to protect the human rights of refugees and stateless people. However, Egypt also believes that countries should have the right to decide how they handle people without nationality, as long as they follow international laws. Egypt often says that protecting refugees and stateless people is a shared responsibility. Countries that host large numbers of displaced people should receive financial and technical support from richer countries or international organizations.

Egypt supports the idea of a global plan to protect stateless people, but it also wants this plan to include:

**A Clear Definition of Statelessness:** Everyone should agree on what it means to be stateless, so that governments can properly identify and help these people.

**Support for Host Countries:** Countries like Egypt, which host many refugees and stateless people, should get help from the international community.

**Fair and Inclusive Laws:** Governments should make sure that their nationality laws do not create stateless people. For example, Children born in a country should be able to get its nationality if they have no other nationality. Mothers should be able to pass their nationality to their children, just like fathers can.

**Pathways to Citizenship:** Stateless people should have opportunities to become citizens of the country where they live if they cannot return to their original home.

Egypt plays an important role in hosting refugees and stateless people but faces many challenges. A global framework should help countries like Egypt by sharing responsibilities

and giving more support. At the same time, Egypt can work on making its policies fairer and more in line with international laws.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- <https://www.statelessmena.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/The-Campaign-to-end-statelessness-in-Egypt.pdf>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/eg/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2020/11/UNHCR-Egypt-at-a-Glance-NOV-S.pdf>
- <https://www.unhcr.org/eg/about-us/refugee-context-in-egypt#:~:text=Egypt%20hosts%20more%20than%20792%2C783,%2C%20Yemen%2C%20Somalia%20and%20Iraq.>