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PARLIAMENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



UNHCR  
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Refugee Agency

## Conference on Ensuring Everyone's Right to Nationality: The Role of Parliaments in Preventing and Ending Statelessness

Cape Town (South Africa), 26-27 November, 2015

Co-organized by the Parliament of South Africa, the Inter-Parliamentary Union  
and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

### AGENDA

Thursday, 26 November 2015	
From 08:30 - 9.45 a.m.	Registration of delegates Complementary tea and coffee
10:00 a.m. 10:30	<b>Opening ceremony</b>
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	<b>Keynote Speech</b>
	<b>Viewing of the video "Nowhere People"</b>
10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	<b>Session 1: Setting the stage: Statelessness in today's world</b> <i>Chair of the session: Ms. F. Chohan, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs of South Africa</i> <i>Election of the Rapporteur.</i> The session will provide an overview of statelessness globally. It will cover the definition of statelessness, review the main causes of statelessness, shed light on the populations that are most concerned by statelessness, and look at recent developments and trends, including UNHCR's Global Campaign to End Statelessness and accompanying Global Action Plan. This session will also examine the nexus between migration and statelessness and discuss statelessness as a potential root cause and consequence of (forced) migration. <i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How might individual Parliamentarians convince colleagues and citizens that statelessness is an important topic?</li><li>• What information is most compelling?</li><li>• Do some MPs have examples of having been able to influence fellow Parliamentarians on this or other topics that could be shared?</li></ul>
12:15 - 1:15 p.m.	<b>Session 2: Preventing and solving statelessness: a question of human rights and development</b> <i>Chair of the session: Hon. R. Bhengu, Member of the National Assembly (South Africa)</i> The session will highlight the impact of statelessness on individuals, communities, and States. It will include a presentation of the new information from UNHCR's report on the impact of statelessness on children and youth. It will also make the link between statelessness and the new sustainable development goals. <i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i>

1:15-1:30 P.M.	<i>Group photo</i>
1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	<i>Hosted lunch break</i>
2:30 - 3:45 pm	<p><b>Session 3: The global and regional legal frameworks to address statelessness</b>  <i>Chair: MP to be determined</i></p> <p>This session will look at the international legal framework relevant to statelessness. It will include a discussion of relevant regional instruments and new regional initiatives globally.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your home country support a regional initiative? How could you convince your home country to support/create a regional initiative or a country-level Plan of Action?</li> <li>• How governments not party to the 1954 and 1961 Conventions on statelessness might be persuaded to accede to them? How difficult would this be in your country? What are the main issues or obstacles?</li> </ul>
3:45 - 4:00 p.m.	<i>Coffee break</i>
4:00 - 5:45 p.m.	<p><b>Session 4: Addressing major situations of statelessness</b>  <i>Chair: MP to be determined</i></p> <p>This session will review major situations of statelessness and discuss efforts to address them. Examples of good practices will be given and will include partnerships involving governments, civil society, and UNHCR.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are protection needs of stateless persons, especially the most vulnerable ones? What are State obligations?</li> <li>• How should MPs communicate to their citizens about stateless persons in their country?</li> <li>• What more can parliamentarians with positive experiences and lessons-learned do to aid Parliaments that may need awareness raising or capacity building on these issues? What action points related to the dissemination of good practices might come out of this conference?</li> </ul>
6:30 p.m.	<i>Hosted dinner</i>
<b>Friday, 27 November 2015</b>	
9:00 -10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Session 5: Preventing statelessness: ensuring that no child is born stateless</b>  <i>Chair: MP to be determined</i></p> <p>This session will review the key legislative safeguards that help prevent childhood statelessness and examine current practice with respect to these safeguards. Birth registration will also be discussed as an important tool to help in preventing statelessness.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other countries whose MPs were/could have been involved in ending childhood statelessness (including through accessions, how initiated?)</li> </ul>
10:30 -10:45 a.m.	<i>Coffee break</i>

10:45 - 1:00 p.m.	<p><b>Session 6: Preventing statelessness: addressing gender discrimination in nationality laws</b></p> <p><i>Chair: MP to be determined</i></p> <p>This session will take a close look at how laws that limit mothers' ability to transmit nationality to their children contribute to statelessness and how this problem can be avoided. Parliamentarians from governments that have eliminated gender discrimination from their nationality laws in recent years will be encouraged to present.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe challenges in your country and how these have been addressed where applicable OR what type of assistance needed.</li> <li>• Any plans for amendments that could be highlighted as good/best practice?</li> <li>• Potential for MP involvement.</li> </ul>
1:00 - 2:30 p.m.	<i>Hosted lunch break</i>
2:30 - 3:30 p.m.	<p><b>Session 7: Partnerships: Strengthening partnerships among parliaments regionally and with civil society</b></p> <p><i>Chair: MP to be determined – SG of the IPU?</i></p> <p>During this session parliamentarians will look at present partnership initiatives that are relevant for ending Statelessness.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p>
3:30- 3:45 p.m.	<i>Coffee break</i>
3.45 - 5:00 p.m.	<p><b>Session 8: Innovative strategies to lead progress – social media</b></p> <p><i>Chair: MP to be determined</i></p> <p>How can social media help? A look at the social media side of UNHCR's #IBelong Campaign and how parliamentarians can contribute to the social media dialogue.</p> <p><i>The presentations will be followed by a plenary debate.</i></p>
5:00 - 5.30 p.m.	<p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p>Presentation of outcome document by the Rapporteur.</p> <p>Closing remarks by: Hon. L. Tsenoli, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of South Africa</p>