



31.1.2017

OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on Foreign Affairs

on statelessness in South and South East Asia
(2016/2220(INI))

Rapporteur: Maria Heubuch

PA_NonLeg

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on Foreign Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas stateless persons – of whom there are an estimated 10-15 million but only 3.5 million are reported in UNHCR statistics – are distributed unevenly across the world; whereas 5 of the 20 states hosting more than 10 000 reported stateless persons are located in South and South-East Asia;
- B. whereas statelessness has staggering consequences for human rights – including civil, political and economic rights –, development and international stability, as well as an important impact on civil duties, access to land and property, social security and services, such as healthcare and education, and also weakens people’s social status; whereas statelessness undermines the development prospects of affected populations and the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- C. whereas the complex problem of statelessness remains on the outermost boundaries of international law and policy, although it is not a marginal issue;
 1. Emphasises the connections between statelessness and social and economic vulnerability; urges governments in developing countries to prevent denial, loss or deprivation of nationality on discriminatory grounds, to adopt equitable nationality laws and to implement accessible, affordable and non-discriminatory nationality documentation procedures;
 2. Welcomes the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 16.9, which foresees that legal identity and birth registration should be provided for all; regrets, however, that statelessness is not explicitly mentioned in the 2030 Agenda either as a ground for discrimination or as a poverty reduction target; calls for the EU and its Member States to consider including statelessness indicators in their monitoring and reporting mechanisms while implementing the SDGs;
 3. Calls on the Governments of Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Nepal to combat the forms of gender discrimination present in their nationality laws and to promote children’s right to a nationality;
 4. Notes the link between statelessness and forced displacement, in particular in conflict-affected regions; recalls that at least 1.5 million stateless persons in the world are refugees or former refugees, including many young women and girls;
 5. Recalls that statelessness in the world is largely unmapped and under-reported, and that existing data is based on different definitions; urges the international community to adopt a unified definition and address the gaps in data collection for measuring statelessness in developing countries, notably by assisting local authorities in putting in place adequate methods to quantify, identify and register stateless persons, and to enhance their statistical capacities;
 6. Invites the Commission to launch exchanges of good practice among Member States, encourages the active coordination of national statelessness contact points, and

welcomes the #IBelong campaign;

7. Invites the Member States to grant protection status to stateless migrants;
8. Welcomes the EU support to stateless persons in South and South East Asia through various instruments and encourages the Union to continue its efforts in order to address the impact of statelessness on development, peace and stability as an integral part of its development cooperation programmes and, more broadly, its external action.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	25.1.2017
Result of final vote	+: 19 -: 0 0: 2
Members present for the final vote	Doru-Claudian Frunzulică, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Heidi Hautala, Maria Heubuch, György Hölvényi, Stelios Kouloglou, Arne Lietz, Linda McAvan, Norbert Neuser, Maurice Ponga, Cristian Dan Preda, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Elly Schlein, Eleni Theoharous, Paavo Väyrynen, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Anna Záborská, Joachim Zeller
Substitutes present for the final vote	Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, Adam Szejnfeld, Jan Zahradil