

Regional Conference
on the Right to Legal Identity and Prevention of Statelessness
“Leaving No One Behind at Birth”
7-8 June 2018
Hotel Intercontinental, Almaty, Kazakhstan

*Joint conclusions to prevent statelessness by birth registration of
all children born in the countries of Central Asia*

1. *Acknowledging* the significant progress made by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan in addressing statelessness including through confirmation of citizenship of more than 40,000 people between 2014 and 2017; granting rights to stateless persons residing on their respective territories; and reforming national legislative frameworks on citizenship to improve the level of compliance with international standards;
2. *Noting* the commitments made by the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan under the major human rights instruments, including: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which stipulate that States Parties should register all children immediately after birth without discrimination¹ and the right to acquire nationality, as invoked by the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council every year since 2001²;
3. *Noting* that the UN Sustainable Development Goal for the period until 2030 is the principle ‘leave no one behind’, most notably Target 16.9 aiming to achieve ‘legal identity for all, including birth registration’³;

¹ Turkmenistan acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons on 7/12/2011 and to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness on 29/08/2012. Article 29 of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrants Workers and Members of Their Families, provides that “each child of a migrant worker shall have the right to a name, to registration of birth and to a nationality.” In Central Asia, only the Kyrgyz Republic on 29/09/2005 and Tajikistan on 8/01/2002 ratified this Convention.

² UN Human Rights Council, Birth registration and the right of everyone to recognition everywhere as a person before the law : Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 17 June 2014, A/HRC/27/22, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/53ff324e4.html>

³ UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html>

4. *Expressing* support to the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness launched by UNHCR in 2014 and noting active engagement of the Central Asian States with the Global Action Plan, including Action 7⁴, (on ensuring birth registration for prevention of statelessness);
5. *Expressing* our interest to actively participate in the High Level Event on Statelessness, in Geneva in October 2019, which will mark the mid-point of the #IBelong Campaign to End Statelessness, by showcasing achievements and presenting concrete pledges to help end statelessness by 2024;
6. *Taking into account* the outcomes of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) Ministerial Conference in Asia and Pacific in November 2014, in which Ministers of the Central Asian countries participated, that adopted the Ministerial Declaration ‘Get Everyone in the Picture’ and the accompanying Regional Action Framework endorsing the goal of achieving universal and responsive CRVS system by 2024;⁵
7. *Noting* that a number of children in Central Asia born to parents without identity documents and status remain unregistered at birth and may become stateless in the future;
8. *Noting* that children born in the countries of Central Asia, to parents who are unable to confer nationality will remain stateless;
9. *Noting* that there are at least 109,000 stateless persons or persons with undetermined nationality in Central Asia, who are unable to naturalize, to have their citizenship confirmed, or to obtain identity documentation due to lengthy and onerous procedures;
10. *Recognizing* that national legislation pertaining to the Civil Acts Registration in Central Asian countries could be strengthened to enhance the system for birth registration, to guarantee the right for every child born on the territory to be registered at birth even in the case that their parents are undocumented and/or stateless;
11. *Recognizing* that the quantitative and qualitative data on stateless population, persons with undetermined nationality and birth registration including late birth registration, need improvement in order to assess the scale of statelessness and design measures to respond.

⁴ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Global Action Plan to End Statelessness, 4 November 2014, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/545b47d64.html>

⁵ UNESCAP, Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific (10 December 2014), UN Doc. E/ESCAP/MCCRVS/4, available at <http://undocs.org/en/E/ESCAP/MCCRVS/4>

12. The government representatives from the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan agree to take the following actions by October 2019:

- i. Facilitate confirmation of nationality to those with entitlement to it, including in order to minimize the possibilities of unregistered births of children born to individuals with undetermined nationality;
- ii. Establish a legal mechanism by which all children born on the territory will have access to birth registration and birth certificate free of charge, irrespective of the legal or civil status of their parents;
- iii. Establish a legal mechanism by which children born on the territory to parents who are unable to confer nationality will have the right to acquire nationality of the country of birth.
- iv. Facilitate the birth registration and issuance of birth certificate free of charge for those children who were not registered at birth;
- v. Update national statistics on registered births, including children having difficulties with registration, to facilitate policy and planning;
- vi. Discuss the achievements and plans for provision of birth registration to all children born on the territory at a follow-up regional meeting to be organized by UNHCR and UNICEF in mid-2019;
- vii. Pursue work related to the achievement of the goals included in the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness; notably those related to Action 2 (ensure that no child is born stateless), Action 7 (ensure birth registration for the prevention of statelessness), and Action 9 (accede to the UN Statelessness Conventions);
- viii. Discuss during the regional follow-up meeting in mid-2019 matters related to the preparation for the UNHCR High Level Event on Statelessness in October 2019;
- ix. Continue working with UNHCR and UNICEF to promote birth registration of all children born on the territory as well as to monitor progress, in this regard, to avoid the risk of statelessness at birth;

End

8 June 2018

Almaty, Kazakhstan