Final

The Representation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for Central Asia jointly with the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Central Asian Network on Statelessness (CANS)

announces

the Second Regional Statelessness Competition for Students -

"Impact of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness"

Background and context

Millions of people around the world are denied a nationality and the legal rights endowed with it. They do not exist on paper and most often live on the fringes of society. Without citizenship, stateless people often do not have access to essential services, including healthcare. At such a critical time, in the middle of a global pandemic, they are at great risk of being left behind in the response. Stateless people may be precluded from or face obstacles in accessing coronavirus testing and treatment, others may refrain from accessing services for fear that their legal status can put them at risk of detention or deportation.

Without legal rights and access to services, statelessness leaves many politically and economically marginalized, discriminated against and vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. In many countries across the world, stateless people live in sub-standard and inadequate sanitary conditions which can compound the risk of outbreaks. Limited by their legal status, many work in informal sectors, which can also hamper adherence to public health protocols such as self-isolation and physical distancing.

Although it has long been understood that statelessness should be avoided and that this goal can only be achieved through international cooperation, many States have yet to take action to ensure that everyone enjoys the right to a nationality. Due to the differing approaches taken by States with regard to the acquisition and loss of nationality, some individuals continue to "fall through the cracks" and become stateless. Common rules are therefore essential to address such gaps. The 1961 Convention is the only universal instrument that elaborates clear, detailed and concrete safeguards to ensure a fair and appropriate response to the threat of statelessness.

2021 marks 60 years since the adoption of the 1961 Convention. To mark this date, UNHCR invites secondary school and university students share their essays and research papers on the impact of the 1961 Convention and its relevance today.

Objective of the Research Paper Competition

The main objective of the competition is to stimulate analytical thinking and research of school and university students on matters of nationality, statelessness and impact of the 1961 Statelessness Convention on the evolution of international law and continuing relevance.

Competition Task

Competition is open for two categories of participants:

Essay section: School students (7-11 grades of secondary schools): Participants in this category should provide an essay up to 1,000 words on the topic: “How the 1961 Statelessness Convention was developed and how it helps to resolve the problem of statelessness”.

Research paper section: University students (undergraduate and graduate): Participants in this category should provide a research paper of up to 6,000 words, on topics related to nationality and statelessness, its causes and consequences, the impact of the 1961 Statelessness Convention on the evolution of international law, and its continuing relevance, interconnected socio-economic rights, innovative solutions for streamlining the reduction and prevention of statelessness, protection of stateless persons and achieving the ultimate goal of statelessness eradication by 2024.

Eligibility and Requirements

Participants must be:

For essay category: Students of 7-11 grades of secondary schools in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan at the time of submission.

or

For research paper category: Students enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate degree program at an accredited university in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan or Uzbekistan at the time of submission.

Competition works must be written solely by the candidate, in English or Russian, and may not have been submitted for publication elsewhere.

Submissions must be:

- Essays: up to 1,000 words
- Research papers: up to 6,000 words, including footnotes.

Each candidate is limited to a single submission.

Each submission is limited to a single author.

Persons affiliated with UNHCR staff and partners implementing UNHCR projects cannot participate in this competition.

Deadline, Method of Submission, Competition Procedures and Criteria

The deadline for submissions is **11:59 PM (GMT+6), 22 October 2021**.

Applicants should complete a **registration form** and send it together with the **competition work** in Microsoft Word format attachment to email: kazalres@unhcr.org with the subject line "**Regional Statelessness Paper Competition 2021".** Questions should be directed to the same address.

By submitting papers, candidates represent that they fulfil the eligibility requirements of the Competition. The organizers may request formal proof of eligibility.

No later than 72 hours after the submission deadline, candidates will receive an e-mail confirming that their submissions have been received.

Competition Procedures and Selection Criteria

For anonymity purpose all eligible submissions will be assigned numbers.

Reviewers will refer only to those numbers in their communications.

The Competition will be judged by a reviewing committee made of representatives of UNHCR, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Central Asian Network on Statelessness (CANS).

In assessing essays, reviewers will take into account:

- Demonstrated understanding of the context (30%);
- Innovation and creativity of ideas (30%);
- Proper and articulate analysis (20%);
- Clarity and organization (10%);
- Style and grammar (10%).

In assessing research papers, reviewers will take into account:

- Demonstrated understanding of the context, knowledge of facts and law (30%);
- Extent of research, innovation, and scholarly creativity (30%);
- Proper and articulate analysis, feasibility of the idea (20%);
- Clarity and organization (10%);

- Style, grammar, and proper citation of sources (10%).

Competition Prize and Announcement of the Winners

Essay category

- 1st place - a laptop;
- 2nd place - a tablet;
- 3rd place - a smartphone

Research paper category

- 1st place – enrollment in a world-class international statelessness course and a laptop;
- 2nd place - a tablet;
- 3rd place - a smartphone

A message announcing the name of the winners will be published on UNHCR Central Asia and partners websites and social media accounts. An e-mail with the final outcome will also be sent to all who submitted works.