

1. To build momentum for the High-Level Segment on Statelessness that will be held on 7 October 2019 in Geneva, the UNHCR Regional Bureau for Asia and Pacific, with support of the Royal Thai government, organized a preparatory meeting in Bangkok from 30 to 31 May 2019. The meeting brought together 16 states from South Asia, Southeast Asia, East Asia and the Pacific. It aimed to review progress made in addressing statelessness, share successes and good practices, and identify possible undertakings and concrete commitments that countries could make at the High-Level Segment on Stateless.
2. The two-day meeting consisted of a progress review and brainstorming segment; and a session for states to report on progress made, and reflect on possible pledges they may consider for the High-Level Segment. The meeting was attended by 112 participants from 16 States in the region, UN Agencies, representatives from national human rights commissions, NGOs, academia, members of communities affected by statelessness, and UNHCR staff.
3. The main outcomes of the Meeting are summarised under: (i) summary of key achievements; and (ii) possible commitments/ pledges that could be announced by States at the High-Level Segment on Statelessness.

### **Summary of Achievements**

4. Following presentations and discussions on developments and key issues in statelessness in the region, the following were, in broad terms, some of the achievements identified in the region:
  - a. In line with the Action for Sustainable Development commitment to 'leave no one behind'; the Asia-Pacific 'get everyone in the picture by 2024' project, many states have committed and have taken measures to, among others, achieve universal birth registration, including measures to reach hard to reach populations.
  - b. Ongoing solutions and reduction in countries where identification has been done, and continuing identification in many countries in the region.
  - c. Law reforms and ongoing efforts at law reform, especially with respect to issues that relate to childhood statelessness.

- d. Positive and progressive engagement by regional actors such as ACWC, ESCAP, the Bali Process, and AICHR, as well as by UN actors including UNHCR and UNICEF and in some contexts the entire UN Country Team.
- e. Enactment of measures to protect stateless persons, and to allow them access to fundamental social services in most countries.
- f. Bilateral cross border collaborations to address the situation of undocumented or stateless communities to confirm citizenship.
- g. Mapping studies and other forms of research on stateless person in an effort to identify stateless persons and improve data overall.

**Possible Pledges:**

5. The following possible pledges were identified during the course of the discussions:

- a) With respect to birth registration, pledges to:
  - Extend fee waivers for birth registration;
  - Adopt mobile birth registration, especially in remote areas;
  - Extend late registration and consider waiving attendant fees;
  - Incentivize communities, including those that are hard to reach to go for registration;
  - Enhance utilization of ICT and digitalization for universal birth registration.
- b) Under ensuring that no child is born stateless, to lift reservations to Article 7 of the CRC and consider adopting safeguards in nationality laws for foundlings and children born in the territory who would otherwise be stateless.
- c) Identify and register undocumented persons and those of undetermined nationality with a view to finding solutions for them.
- d) To undertake data collection and research with a view to identifying persons/groups at risk of statelessness and stateless persons.

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- e) To take steps such as enhanced legal and policy framework to ensure access to rights according to the 1954 Convention
  - f) To take necessary measures towards accession to the conventions.
  - g) To set up national action plans to end statelessness.
  - h) To designate national focal points on statelessness.
  - i) To review nationality laws and policies with a view to aligning with international standards.
  - j) To lower evidentiary thresholds and requirements for naturalization.
  - k) To continue and/ or strengthen collaboration with international organizations such as UNHCR towards identifying and addressing issues on statelessness.
  - l) To work within ASEAN to promote a human rights framework that supports states with regard of statelessness.
  - m) To enhance public engagement and awareness on the issue of statelessness.
  - n) To enhance public-private partnership in addressing statelessness related matters.
  - o) To work with UN Country Teams and with such agencies as UNHCR and UNICEF to address childhood statelessness.
  - p) To work with UNHCR on strengthened international cooperation in addressing the situation of refugees at risk of statelessness.
  - q) To work towards establishing statelessness determination process, and documentation for stateless persons.
  - r) To explore possibility of extending the dialogue on statelessness in the Pacific region.

**Outcome of the  
Asia-Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 2019 High-Level  
Segment on Statelessness: Bangkok, 30-31 May 2019**



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- s) To work collaboratively to enhance awareness and capacity building of relevant agencies and officials with respect of statelessness.
6. UNHCR is ready and available to support states refine and work on these and other potential areas for pledges, including so as to help States ensure that their pledges are tailored to their circumstances and are concrete, specific, time-bound, and measurable.
7. UNHCR also commits to support states to implement their campaign pledges and generally work towards the eradication of statelessness.