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A day in the life of... Jawad Fairouz, Ex-MP and Chairman of [Salam for Democracy and Human Rights](#)

"Stripping of nationality does not get enough attention, rarely are there condemnations, and no tangible pressure. We can see why Bahrain started with stripping the nationality of 31 persons in 2012 and now the number is exceeding 470. They face no accountability and no political pressure."

Read the full interview in this month's "A day in the life of..." at the bottom of this bulletin.

Conference & report on statelessness of Roma in the Western Balkans and Ukraine



On 26-27 October the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion, the European Roma Rights Centre and the European Network on Statelessness organised a Conference as part of the #RomaBelong project, launching the report ['Roma Belong – Statelessness, Discrimination and Marginalisation of Roma in the Western Balkans and Ukraine'](#). The report was produced in collaboration with country project partners Tirana Legal Aid Society (TLAS – Albania), Vaša prava BiH Association (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Macedonian Young Lawyers Association (MYLA – Macedonia), Mladi Romi (Montenegro), Praxis (Serbia) and Desyate Kvitnya

(Ukraine) – and sets out the findings of the #RomaBelong project, which explores statelessness, discrimination and marginalisation of Roma in the Western Balkans and Ukraine.

The report looks at the role of discrimination, access to justice and bureaucracy in creating and perpetuating a lack of documentation and a risk of statelessness among the Roma in the Western Balkans and Ukraine. It explains how many of the human rights challenges faced by Roma - such as poverty, access to education and healthcare among other issues - are both a cause and a consequence of discrimination and statelessness. The report outlines key recommendations targeted at civil society, funders, national governments and regional stakeholders.



#LockedinLimbo campaign event at the Council of Europe

On 11 October, the [European Network on Statelessness](#) (ENS) organised a lunchtime event in the Council of Europe to present the #LockedinLimbo statement signed by over 100 organisations and high-profile individuals calling on European states to take action to end the detention of stateless people. New pledges of support for the [#LockedinLimbo campaign](#) were made by key parliamentarians and Council of Europe representatives. Tomas Bocek, the CoE Secretary General's Special Representative on Refugees and Migrants, spoke at the event and also [endorsed ENS's campaign recommendations and committed to work on the issue](#).



Continued spotlight on the Rohingya

As of 28 October 2017, [607,000 Rohingya refugees](#) had fled to Bangladesh to escape the ongoing atrocity crimes against them in Myanmar. There were over 100,000 arrivals in October, fleeing what is increasingly being referred to as “[genocide](#)” by human rights actors. New reports by the [OHCHR](#) and [Amnesty International](#) provide first-hand testimonies of many Rohingya victims and witnesses of rape and sexual violence, torture, murder and massacres, organised village burnings, forced expulsion and other crimes against humanity. Satellite images released by [Human Rights Watch](#) on 17 October show that 288 villages and tens of thousands of structures have been torched to the ground since the indiscriminate violence began. Bangladesh has registered over 325,000 of the newly arrived Rohingya refugees with biometric data, while [significant protection concerns](#) related to the safety and use of such data prevail.

Given the scale and severity of the crimes being committed against the Rohingya, human rights actors have been critical of the International Community's [weak response](#) to-date. News of the UN shelving reports which [warned of this imminent crisis](#), and a [severe food shortage for Rohingya](#) has also emerged.

Humanitarian Actors have signalled an [alarming lack of assistance](#) to Rohingya in Myanmar, and [the UN World Food Programme](#) has now been allowed to resume its work in delivering emergency food to affected people. Those operating in Bangladesh continue to be overwhelmed by the scale of the displacement. UNHCR, IOM, and OCHA issued a [Joint Statement on the Rohingya Refugee Crisis](#). International donors have [pledged](#) 344 million dollars for humanitarian assistance to victims of the Rohingya crisis.

Meanwhile, Myanmar and Bangladesh agreed on 24 October to [cooperate on Rohingya Refugee Repatriation](#). At a meeting in Naypyitaw, the home affairs ministers of the two countries signed two agreements on security and border cooperation. The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion is alarmed by the possible *refoulement* of Rohingya, and issued [7 Conditions to be met for the repatriation of the Rohingya](#). Similar criteria have been put forward by Rohingya individuals interviewed by the [OHCHR](#), while Rohingya refugees [remain sceptical of any possibility of returning to Myanmar](#) in the current climate.

The New York Times has published a resource for [Teaching about the Rohingya crisis](#). The website provides a lesson plan, along with photos, videos, news reports, podcasts, and other online resources.

What's new: Publications, tools, and resources

[ExCom ICVA joint statement](#): The Protection Statement made by NGOs at the 68th Session of UNHCR's Executive Committee, raises various concerns related to the protection of stateless persons. NGOs, reiterated

their support to UNHCR's #ibelong campaign and called for eradicating discrimination in nationality laws, the proper identification of stateless persons and the protection of stateless Rohingya refugees. NGOs also expressed concern that "UNHCR's 2016 Global Trends Statistics, no longer reflect statistical data for the Dominican Republic and Zimbabwe".

[MRG Denial and Denigration: How Racism Feeds Statelessness](#): The new Minority Rights Group report, 'Denial and Denigration: How Racism Feeds Statelessness', was launched on 24 October to coincide with a high-level event at the UN General Assembly in New York. The report includes films, photo stories and case studies and focuses on how statelessness is rooted deeply in discrimination, and how such discrimination can be addressed.

[Conclusion on machine-readable travel documents for refugees and stateless persons](#): UNHCR's Executive Committee Conclusion No 114, is on machine-readable travel documents for refugees and stateless persons, encourages states to adopt machine-readable travel documents to enhance mobility and better protect privacy of these groups.

[Oxford bibliographies: Nationality and Statelessness](#): Laura van Waas and Maria Jose Recalde Vela provide an in-depth review of existing literature on nationality and statelessness under international law.

Also this month...

- [My daughter will be born stateless – in the UK](#): Piece in The Guardian, written by Sayed Alwadaei, a human rights activist from Bahrain whose daughter will be born stateless in the UK.
- [Stateless in America: Stuck between two countries, a citizen of neither](#): Feature article by Wallace McKelvey on statelessness in the United States, focussing on the life story of Karina Clough, a stateless American who lost her Ukrainian citizenship with the collapse of the former Soviet Union.
- [Nowhere people by Greg Constantine at Roosevelt University](#): CBS Chicago has covered the Nowhere People exhibit at Roosevelt University by award-winning photographer Greg Constantine.
- [Eradicating statelessness in the Americas](#): Forced Migration Review article by Juan Ignacio Mondelli, provides an overview of efforts in the Americas towards the eradication of statelessness in the region.
- [Borders of visibility](#): A book by Jennifer L. Shoaff, published by the University of Alabama Press, providing insight into the Dominican Republic's racist treatment of persons of Haitian descent.

What's new: Law and policy

[Luxembourg accedes to statelessness conventions](#): In September, Luxembourg acceded to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, which now has 70 states parties. Luxembourg also acceded to the Council of Europe's Convention on the Avoidance of Statelessness in relation to State Succession.

[Redefining Egyptian Nationality: Denying Political Rights Through Denying Citizenship](#): Egypt approved a bill to amend some of the provisions of its nationality law, increasing the power of the state to revoke the nationality of people convicted in cases related to terrorism or harming state security.

[Scorned and stateless: children of Isis fighters face an uncertain future](#): Over the past four years, approximately 5,000 women gave birth to children fathered by ISIS foreign fighters. Known as "Daeshis" the wives and children of foreign ISIS fighters who have been killed are shunned by the communities in which they live. The mothers have tried to get their children the nationality of their foreign fathers, but to little avail. Various European nations have not yet decided what to do with children born to their ISIS fighter nationals, while France has announced it would receive the children, but not their mothers.

[Malaysia increases penalty for late birth registration](#): Malaysia has drastically increased the penalty for late birth registration from 50 to 1,000 Malaysian Ringgit. This can result in statelessness for those who cannot afford the fee.

[Norway set to allow dual-citizenship](#): A proposal to allow dual-citizenship in Norway will be examined by parliament this autumn. The change is linked to a new approach to dual-citizenship by the country's conservative Progress Party who "noted that allowing immigrants to have two passports will make it easier to revoke the Norwegian citizenship of those convicted of criminal offenses, especially terror charges, if they hold citizenship in another country to which they could be deported." Meanwhile, [in Australia, the High Court ruled that that Australian deputy prime minister, Barnaby Joyce, and four senators are ineligible to sit in parliament because they are dual nationals](#). The court's unanimous decision upholds a strict reading of the constitutional disqualification of foreign citizens from holding Parliamentary office.

[Turkey grants 585 Ahiska Turks citizenship](#): In 1944, the Ahiska Turks were expelled by Stalin from their homeland in the Meskheta region of Georgia. The Interior Ministry of Turkey has now granted citizenship to 585 of the 3,000 Ahisha Turks who arrived in Turkey since December 2015. According to the leader of the Ahiska Turks Association, the number of grantees should increase to 1,000 by the end of the year.

Announcements and events

[UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues to focus on statelessness for March 2018 Report to the Human Rights Council](#): The Special Rapporteur announced that a significant number of the World's stateless belong to minorities, and "we need to mobilize all relevant groups and authorities to address this issue and find solutions for these communities which are affected by the double scourge of discrimination and statelessness".

[Training course on Statelessness and the right to a Nationality for African Portuguese speaking practitioners](#): Focus on the right to a nationality, the prevention and reduction of statelessness, the protection of stateless persons, and the ECOWAS framework related to the eradication of statelessness. Portuguese-speaking professionals from governments, international organisations, lawyers and judges, NGOs and human rights activists working in Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe are encouraged to apply. The 5-days training will be organised in Saly, Mbour region Senegal, from **27 November-1 December**. Interested candidates are invited to submit their CV and a Motivational Letter (in Portuguese or English) by the **2nd November 2017**.

[Call for applications: Arthur C. Helton Fellowship Program](#): The **deadline for applications for the 2018 class of Helton Fellows is 15 January 2018**.

[Call for papers: RLI 3rd Annual Conference: 'Refugee Protection in a Hostile World?'](#): The Refugee Law Initiative Annual Conference, 18-19 July 2018, serves as an annual international arena for the exchange and debate of the latest developments in refugee protection, bringing together academics, practitioners, policy-makers, and students. This year's main theme is 'refugee protection in a hostile world'. **Deadline for proposals for papers, panels and posters: 22 January 2018**.

[Workshop by RLI, 'Revitalising the IDP Field: 20 Years of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement'](#): This special Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) Workshop (20 July 2018) provides a forum for researchers, practitioners, policy-makers, and students to come together to present, debate and reflect on this field and its future. **The deadline for proposals for papers and panels is 22 January 2018**.

[Call for submissions: "Human Rights, Migration, and Global Governance"](#): The Academic Council on the UN System has issued a call for submissions for its 28th annual meeting in Rome next year. **Deadline: 5 February 2018**.

[Photo exhibition on statelessness in Nepal](#): A photo exhibition on statelessness, has opened at Nepal Art Council in Kathmandu, Nepal.

A day in the life of...

Jawad Fairouz

Ex-MP and Chairman of Salam for Democracy and Human Rights (Salam DHR), an NGO that endeavours to preserve universal principles of dignity and respect by shielding democracy and human rights.



In 2012, whilst visiting the UK, the former Bahraini MP Jawad Fairouz was informed that he had been rendered stateless after being stripped of his nationality. Having been involved in challenging the states crackdown on protests, he was among the first batch of political opponents in Bahrain to have their nationality stripped. Since 2012, hundreds of Bahrainis have been subject to the same arbitrary procedures as part of a wider response in clamping down on political protest.

“Firstly, being a victim of statelessness, I can feel how the decision is affecting our daily life and our families’ lives. Our legal situation in being away from our country. Because of these feelings, I decided to dedicate my work to the cases of other individuals who have got their nationality stripped. What I focus on is how to find legal advisory support for stateless people and those whose nationality was stripped. But the work we do is much broader than that, we look to find donors to support these stateless families financially as they lack funds due to their ineligibility in Bahrain to get a job – whether that is in the private or public sector. We also document the regular harassment that they face. We submit reports on the situation to the international human rights bodies. We frequently organise events to focus on this issue – for example at the Human Rights Council or in co-ordination with international NGOs. We are also trying to convince the UN bodies to assign a special rapporteur for individuals who are having their nationality stripped off them.

One particular thing we work on is when those who have been stripped of nationality are deported from Bahrain. They will take the victim from his house, or wherever they can find him, to the airport, give him a one-year valid passport, and then deport him to any country which does not require a prior visa for those with a Bahraini nationality, such as Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey. The immigration authorities of those countries will allow him in because no visa is required. After several months, however, when the tourist visa has expired, they will be in an irregular situation in that country and within a year their passport will expire. They will not be able to leave the country but their situation will also be irregular. I know just under 10 cases where this has happened, the latest one being someone who was deported a year ago and is currently living irregularly in Lebanon. We helped him get in touch with UNHCR there, but he is yet to resolve his problem. We try and provide legal, emotional and financial support to these persons, and to give guidance to those living in Bahrain who fear this will happen to them. We also provide them with support letters from international NGOs to help with their asylum claim wherever they end up.

Salam was established November 2013, by a group of human rights activists who were all themselves victims of violations and understood the need for mobilisation. We focus specifically on Bahrain but also on the Gulf in general. As well as statelessness, we work on a broad range of issues including prisoners, how to train victims of human rights violations to get by these times, we document abuses, we issue different reports. Mostly we work with human rights defenders and try and engage with stakeholders like UNHCR, NGOs, the media, create campaigns like the ‘Save the Bahrain prisoners’, which led to the King issuing a royal decree assigning a commissioner for prisoners’ rights in Bahrain.

The biggest challenge we face are the threats by these regimes, of them damaging your reputation, of creating hate speech about you through media and of fabricating stories. But there are other challenges, such as getting funding to support our activities. Bahrain depends on international alliances and has many political and economic ties with many countries, which makes our work harder. There is also little knowledge on the issue, the UNHCR #ibelong campaign was launched but I have not been able to find any activities they do that we can be a part of. Stripping of nationality does not get enough attention, rarely are there condemnations,

and no tangible pressure. We can see why Bahrain started with stripping the nationality of 31 persons in 2012 and now the number is exceeding 470. They face no accountability and no political pressure.

I don't have a nationality. All my belongings, my financial rights in the country, bank account closed, my property has been frozen. I cannot travel to my country which has a serious effect on my family. But mostly the most emotional issue is where I can be buried. That makes me and my family feel very bad, that I might not be able to be buried in my homeland where I was born."

Contribute to the Statelessness Monthly Bulletin via
news@InstituteSI.org or visit www.InstituteSI.org