

# People without nationality face 'stark realities' of discrimination and persecution – UN report

3 November 2017 – Discrimination, exclusion and persecution are stark realities for many of the world's stateless minorities, the United Nations refugee agency warned in a new report, calling for immediate action to secure equal nationality rights for all.

"Stateless people are just seeking the same basic rights that all citizens enjoy. But stateless minorities, like the Rohingya, often suffer from [entrenched discrimination](#) and a systematic denial of their rights," UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said Friday on the launch of the report, [This Is Our Home: Stateless minorities and their search for citizenship](#).

The report notes that more than 75 per cent of the world's known stateless populations belong to minority groups. Left unaddressed, their protracted marginalization can build resentment, increase fear and, in the most extreme cases, lead to instability, insecurity and displacement.

A press release said that although the report is based on research prior to late August when hundreds of thousands of Rohingya – the world's biggest stateless minority – began fleeing Myanmar to Bangladesh, their situation is nonetheless illustrative of the problems that years of discrimination, protracted exclusion and their impact on citizenship status can lead to.

"In recent years, important steps have been taken to address statelessness worldwide. However new challenges, like growing forced displacement and arbitrary deprivation of nationality, threaten this progress. States must act now and they must act decisively to end statelessness," Mr. Grandi stressed.

The report shows that, for many minority groups, the cause of statelessness is difference itself: their histories, their looks, their language, their faith. At the same time, statelessness often exacerbates the exclusion that minority groups face, profoundly affecting all aspects of their life – from freedom of movement to development opportunities, and from access to services to the right to vote.

The report is based on consultations conducted in May and June 2017 with members of stateless, formerly stateless or at risk minority groups in Madagascar, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kenya, which were selected as examples to highlight the issues faced by stateless minorities worldwide.

The report is released on the third anniversary of UNHCR's #Ibelong Campaign, which urges all States to implement measures, such as facilitating the naturalization or confirmation of nationality for stateless minority groups,

allowing children to gain the nationality of the country in which they were born; and ensure universal birth registration.

---

## [UN concerned over 'unfolding humanitarian emergency' at Australia's offshore processing centre](#)

3 November 2017 – The United Nations human rights office on Friday expressed its concern over “an unfolding humanitarian emergency” at Australia’s offshore detention centre, where refugees and asylum seekers are holding out after the Australian Government’s decision to close the facility and pull out its support staff.

“We [share the concerns](#) of other UN agencies... about what is an unfolding humanitarian emergency,” said Rupert Colville, a spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at a press briefing in Geneva, explaining that food, water and other basic services have been cut off since the Australian Government shuttered the Regional Processing Centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea on 31 October.

Repeating its overall concerns about Australia’s offshore processing centres, which “are unsustainable, inhumane and contrary to its human rights obligations,” OHCHR urged Australia to transfer the 600 men to its mainland where their claims can be processed.

“We have serious concerns about the welfare, safety and well-being of the roughly 600 men who remain in the accommodation compound, who are too frightened to leave,” the spokesperson said, noting that the men have said they fear violence at the hands of locals if they leave the compound, given there have been violent incidents in the past.

“All migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, are human beings. Like all of us, they have a right to a safe and secure environment, a right to an adequate standard of living and to participate in the decision-making process that is affecting their future,” Mr. Colville said.

---

## [Suspected cholera cases in crisis-torn](#)

## Yemen near 900,000 – UN

2 November 2017 – Already struggling to cope with a dire humanitarian crisis, war-torn Yemen is now facing the fastest-growing cholera epidemic ever recorded, with some 895,000 suspected cases as of 1 November, the United Nations relief wing reported Thursday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) said that nearly half the suspected cases are children. Overall, there have been nearly 2,200 associated deaths since 27 April.

The [outbreak is affecting over 90 per cent of districts](#) across 21 of the country's 22 governorates. Despite the enormous challenges, humanitarian partners have established 234 Diarrhoea Treatment Centres and 1,084 Oral Rehydration Corners in 225 affected districts in 20 governorates, according to OCHA.

Some 3.6 million people have been connected to disinfected water supply networks in 12 governorates. Over 17 million people in all governorates were reached with cholera prevention messages.

OCHA warned today that Yemen is also facing the world's largest food emergency and widespread population displacement. After more than [two years of war](#), nearly 21 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance, seven million of whom are severely food insecure, staving off the threat of famine.

Despite challenging conditions and limited funding, the UN and its humanitarian partners provided direct assistance to more than seven million people this year.

"The humanitarian response to the world's worst hunger crisis and its worst cholera outbreak must be fully resourced", said UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock during his recent mission to Yemen. "With only two months left in the year, the UN [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is only 56 per cent funded. I know that we can do more."

Against that background, he called on donors to step up their support to the Response Plan to ensure the most effective and coordinated response across the country.

"Across the country, and on both sides of the frontline, Yemenis are being kept alive by brave humanitarian aid workers, working under extremely difficult conditions," said Mr. Lowcock, who is also the UN Under-Secretary-General for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stressing that while relief workers "are able to be effective because we remain impartial, neutral and independent [...] we need to do more – and we need more support."

---

# [Diarrhoea-related diseases claim lives of 26 children each day in Afghanistan – UNICEF](#)

2 November 2017 – Although the number of children under five years dying from diarrhoea each year in Afghanistan has dropped below 10,000 for the first time, the disease still claims the lives of 9,500 children, or 26 each day, the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) said Thursday.

“[Deaths from diarrhoea](#) are particularly tragic because in most cases, they can be easily avoided,” said Adele Khodr, UNICEF Afghanistan Representative. “Using a toilet and washing your hands is literally a matter of life or death.”

Diarrhoea-related deaths account for around 12 per cent of the 80,000 deaths of children under the age of five that occur annually in Afghanistan.

The risks associated with diarrhoeal infections are exacerbated in the country, where some 1.2 million children are already malnourished and 41 per cent of children are stunted. Poor sanitation and hygiene compound malnutrition, leaving children more susceptible to infections that cause diarrhoea, which in turn worsens malnutrition.

Providing access to safe water and improved sanitation facilities in villages and towns across the country is critical, said Ms. Khodr, adding that community-led efforts to improve hygiene practices are the simple and most effective way to save lives.

While insecurity continues to affect humanitarian access to parts of the country and slows development, there is still progress. The district of Nili, in Daykundi province, central Afghanistan, was declared as the country’s first ‘open defecation free district’ at a ceremony on 1 November.

Towns and villages across Nili took on the community-led approach in which families identify areas around their homes that are used as toilets. Through a combination of shock, shame, pride and disgust, families without a toilet decide to build their latrine.

Community-wide commitment and some peer pressure does the rest and typically after three to six months an entire community has given up defecating in the open, contributing to a healthier environment for everyone.

In 2017, UNICEF in Afghanistan has already supported more than 500 Afghan communities to be declared and certified as open-defecation-free.

---

# UN report concludes ISIL committed 'international crimes' during Mosul battle

2 November 2017 – The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) perpetrated serious and systematic violations in Iraq that amount to “international crimes” during the nine-month battle for Mosul between the terrorist group and Iraqi Government forces, a United Nations report has concluded.

“Those responsible must answer for their [heinous crimes](#),” said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, citing the execution-style killing of civilians, the suffering inflicted on families, and the wanton destruction of property, largely during the period from November 2016 to July 2017.

The [report](#), issued on Thursday by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq ([UNAMI](#)) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), documents mass abductions of civilians, the use of thousands as human shields, the intentional shelling of civilian residences, and indiscriminate targeting of civilians trying to flee the city.

In July 2017, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and affiliated armed groups retook the city which had fallen under the control of ISIL in June 2014.

The report finds at least 2,521 civilians were killed during the nine-month military operation, mostly as a result of ISIL attacks, including 741 people who were executed. The report notes that since 2014, at least 74 mass graves had been discovered in areas previously held by ISIL in Iraq. Additionally, as of 26 October 2017, the Civil Defence Corps reported that they had recovered the remains of 1,642 civilians from underneath rubble in Mosul.

The report recounts that early in November 2016, in areas of Mosul under ISIL control, members of the group used loud speakers to announce that residents of areas retaken by the ISF were considered as “legitimate targets” because of their ‘failure’ to fight against Government forces.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, said evidence shows that ISIL committed mass atrocities against civilians and Mosul itself, a city they claimed as their capital, but for which, in reality, they sought its ultimate and deliberate destruction.

“Da'esh's reign of terror has spared no one, inflicting untold suffering on unarmed residents whose only guilt is that they lived in the areas under ISIL's control,” he said.

“Their evil acts did not stop at killing and terrorizing residents, as they wantonly destroyed cultural and religious monuments, including the city's

iconic leaning minaret Al-Hadba, in total disregard of history and Islam, the religion this terrorist organization falsely claimed to represent," Mr. Kubiš added.

The report calls on the international community, including the UN Security Council and the Human Rights Council, to take action to ensure that those responsible for international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes are held accountable.

The report also urges Iraqi authorities to investigate alleged violations and human rights abuses by ISF and associated forces during the military operation. It recorded 461 civilian deaths as a result of airstrikes during the most intensive phase of the ISF-led offensive from 19 February.