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A day in the life of... Mariette Grange, Senior Researcher at the [Global Detention Project](#)

“Do not get discouraged: there never was a golden age for human rights. Work hard to understand what creates statelessness, why stateless people are vulnerable to abuse and what protection and safeguards exist at the international level that should be transposed to the national level.”

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

27th Session of the Universal Periodic Review

The 27th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) took place from 1 – 12 May 2017 and marks the beginning of the third cycle. The following countries were under review by the Human Rights Council during the 27th UPR session: Bahrain, Ecuador, Tunisia, Morocco, Indonesia, Finland, United Kingdom, India, Brazil, Philippines, Algeria, Poland, Netherlands and South Africa.

A total of **54 recommendations relating to nationality and statelessness were made to 14 different countries**. Twelve out of 14 countries received at least one recommendation. South Africa received most recommendations (14), followed by Bahrain (12). Kenya and Slovakia were most active in making recommendations relating to statelessness and nationality to countries under review. The recommendations focused on Civil Registration (especially birth registration), establishing a statelessness determination procedure, avoiding prolonged and unlawful detention for stateless persons, categorising statelessness as a protection status, acceding to and implementing the Statelessness Conventions, refraining from deprivation of nationality and ending gender discrimination in nationality laws.

The Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion has put together a summary document which can be accessed [here](#) and which highlights the nationality and statelessness related recommendations made to the countries under review. The document sets out which countries received and issued recommendations related to statelessness, the main topics that were addressed, and identifies some issues that were not raised during the 27th UPR Session. We hope that this resource will help to further enhance human rights engagement on the issue of statelessness through the UPR and other mechanisms.

Protecting stateless persons from arbitrary detention

On 4-5 May 2017, the European Network on Statelessness (ENS) hosted a regional conference in Budapest, on [Protecting Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention](#). Over 120 participants representing civil society, UN agencies, academia and government, convened around this theme, to discuss the law, policy and human implications of the immigration detention of stateless persons. At the conference, ENS launched its new campaign **#LockedInLimbo** and a [statement](#) signed by NGOs, lawyers and academics from over 30 European countries. The statement highlights that the current use of immigration detention is unsustainable, harmful, and, in many cases, unlawful, and makes recommendations that under the five headings of 1) alternatives to detention; 2) identification of statelessness; 3) addressing vulnerability and protecting against discrimination; 4) integration in the community; and 5) monitoring and implementation.

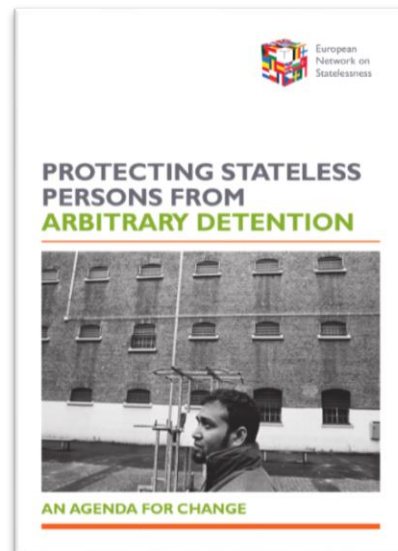
The new report "[Protecting Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention: An Agenda for Change](#)", which warns that stateless people are often detained for months and even years, without any real prospect of their cases being resolved, was also launched at the conference. The report argues that immigration systems do not have appropriate procedures in place to identify those who are left without nationality and to protect stateless people.

The conference and report follow two years of research, capacity building and advocacy on [the arbitrary detention of stateless persons](#) around Europe, during which, ENS, in collaboration with its partners, also produced six country reports ([Bulgaria](#), [Malta](#), the [Netherlands](#), [Poland](#), [Ukraine](#) and the [United Kingdom](#)) as well as a [Regional Toolkit for Practitioners](#). The Institute has served as an expert partner to ENS in this project.

The conference and report were [picked up by EuroNews](#), ENS director Chris Nash also wrote a piece for Open Democracy: [Locked in limbo: the prolonged detention of stateless people in Europe must end now](#).

The Institute's Co-Director, Amal de Chickera, additionally wrote a [blog](#) for ENS, setting out how a culture change and the application of existing norms can reduce arbitrary detention. The blog is part of a recent series on the topic of the detention of stateless persons [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#).

Relevant to the topic is [the release of Kashif Ali](#) - a West African man who had been held in a maximum security prison in Canada for 7 years. In Canada, persons held in detention with a view to expulsion can be held indefinitely since there is no legislative maximum time people can be detained for. Mr. Ali was born in Ghana but never received any documentation, and is currently in 'legal limbo' as neither Ghana nor Nigeria—where his mother is from—recognise him as a national.



West Africa's action plan to end statelessness

West Africa has adopted a [regional Action Plan to end statelessness](#), with the aim of helping over a million people without a nationality gain identity papers through the adoption of new laws and better data. West African State officials, representatives of ECOWAS regional block, and [UNHCR](#), met in Gambia to adopt a plan to end the statelessness of approximately a million persons in West Africa. The six-point [Action Plan](#) seeks to improve laws and policies around statelessness, promote the use of data to track situations, ensure freedom of movement for the stateless in the region, and to guarantee their access to proof of nationality through identity documents. The action plan also aims to reduce the risk of statelessness and protect populations identified as being 'at risk of statelessness'. ECOWAS commissioner for Social Affairs and Gender, Fatimata Dia Sow said that "the subject of statelessness has come a long way on the agenda of our regional goal and now it has been taken away from the shadows, into the spotlight." In relation to this, Mrs. Liz Ahua, UNHCR Regional Representative for West Africa, said at the three-day ministerial meeting for the Adoption of the regional Action Plan that massive [displacement in Nigeria's North-East zone places affected people at risk of statelessness](#).

What's new: Publications, tools and resources

Statelessness in Australia: The Melbourne University Law Review published two articles on statelessness in Australia, titled '[Part One: The Protection of Stateless Persons in Australia— The Rationale for a statelessness Determination Procedure](#)' and '[Part Two: Prevention and Reduction of Statelessness in Australia—an ongoing challenge](#)' written by Michelle Foster, Jane McAdam, and Davina Wadley. The articles provide the first comprehensive assessment of Australian law's compliance with international legal standards for the prevention and reduction of statelessness.

A Comparative Analysis of Statelessness Determination Procedures in 10 EU States: This article by Katia Bianchini, published in the International Journal of Refugee Law, provides an analysis of legislation, case law, and state practice on the identification and recognition of statelessness in 10 EU Member States.

UNHCR #ibelong Campaign Update: UNHCR has shared the latest updates on its Global Campaign to End Statelessness by 2024, headlining the mobilisation of governments and civil society, implementation of the Global Action Plan, and media impact.

[**A Conversation on Statelessness with Kristy A. Belton**](#): For the Ethics & International Affairs podcast interview series, Kristy Belton, director of professional development at the International Studies Association, was interviewed about her research on citizenship, statelessness and migration.

[**Principles on the Role of Judges and Lawyers in relation to Refugees and Migrants**](#): The International Commission of Jurists, following extensive consultations with a wide variety of stakeholders have developed new principles on the role of judges and lawyers in relation to refugees and migrants. The Principles make reference to statelessness status and determination thereof in relation to Principle 3 (on entitlement to a fair and effective process for determination of status for refugees and migrants, and Principle 5 (on the determination of a person's entitlement to international protection). Principle 8, mentions statelessness as a situation in which being undocumented, or lacking required immigration or residence permits cannot by itself constitute grounds for detention. Stateless persons are also explicitly mentioned as persons whose rights must be ensured at all times in line with the principle of non-discrimination before the law (Principle 13).

[**What does it Take to Solve a Statelessness Crisis?**](#): Amnesty International published this piece addressing the ongoing statelessness problems in the Dominican Republic, demonstrating the impacts of discriminatory policies that restrict the rights and freedoms of people and deny them access to nationality. The piece points out that much more work still needs to be done in the Dominican Republic to solve its ongoing crisis, and political leaders in the country have to be part of this effort.

[**Administrative detention of migrants**](#): The European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) is carrying out a codifying exercise on immigration detention rules, based on existing international and regional human rights standards on detention of migrants. So far, a feasibility study has been carried out and written consultation on the draft codifying instrument is now open. Information on how to comment the draft instrument is available on the [website](#).

[**The Contentious Politics of Refugee and Migrant Protest and Solidarity Movements Remaking Citizenship from the Margins**](#): This collection, edited by Ilker Ataç, Kim Rygiel, and Maurice Stierl, brings together contributions that explore political mobilisations in various places around the world. The volume has a particular focus on migration struggles, and connects them to debates within Critical Citizenship Studies and the Autonomy of Migration literature around fundamental rights, political community, and re-defining how the political community is understood.

[**UNHCR and Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights, CEDAW Quick Reference Guide: Statelessness and Human Rights Treaties**](#): This reference guide highlights key international human rights provisions that exist under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, which are relevant to women's nationality rights and individuals affected by gender discrimination in nationality laws, including stateless persons. The guide is addressed to all relevant stakeholders who work towards the advancement of gender equality in nationality rights and towards the improvement of the enjoyment of human rights by affected persons, fundamental for meeting the goals of the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights and the UNHCR #IBelong Campaign.

[**Mixed Movements in South-East Asia 2016**](#): 2016 marked the fifth consecutive year of large-scale displacement of Rohingya refugees fleeing from Rakhine state in Myanmar to other countries by land or sea. The estimated total of displaced Rohingya is 168,500. While mixed movements are almost by definition clandestine, making it difficult to independently verify available data., this UNHCR report presents a year-by-year breakdown of movement of persons on the basis of input from various sources, including governments, implementing partners, media reports, and over 1,000 direct interviews with persons of concern who travelled in mixed movements in South-East Asia.

[**Global Report on Internal Displacement 2017**](#): The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the Norwegian Refugee Council point out in this report that—despite the importance of ensuring that refugee issues are visible and that the international community takes responsibility for the ongoing refugee crisis and ensuring that individuals affected by displacement are protected—there is a real risk that too much focus is placed on international borders and too little at what happens within borders. The report places internal displacement on the spotlight, presenting figures and patterns for conflict and internal displacement, with certain instances of the report of interest for those working on statelessness.

[**Poverty, marginality could perpetuate destructive fishing practices – anthropologist**](#): On the basis of an interview with Helen Brunt, former Sabah coordinator of Semporna Island Project, this piece explores how poverty and marginality can potentially create or perpetuate destructive fishing practices, pointing out that conservation practices sometimes reduce the livelihood options of local communities, sometimes even leading to forced displacement. In Sabah, this has affected stateless persons.

[**Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence**](#): This report by the UN Secretary General to the Security Council on conflict-related sexual violence draws attention to the risk of statelessness in the context of sexual

violence in Syria. In Para 70: “It also remains a challenge to register children whose fathers are missing, including children born to survivors of rape, which places them at heightened risk of statelessness.” In the recommendations, the Secretary General, encouraged member states and regional organisations: “To give consideration to clarifying the legal status of undocumented refugee children, including children conceived as a result of rape, and the right of mothers to confer their nationality upon their children, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, to avoid possible statelessness.”

[Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants on a 2035 agenda for facilitating human mobility:](#)

The present report is submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 26/19. In light of the proposed global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, the Special Rapporteur proposes the development of an agenda within the UN framework, in parallel to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda; this proposed agenda’s suggested name is ‘2035 agenda for facilitating human mobility’. Based on targets 10.7 and 8.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the proposed agenda would include eight human mobility goals—with their respective targets and indicators—aiming to facilitate human mobility over the next 15 years, in a way which ensures the respect and full enjoyment of the human rights of all migrants based on the principles of non-discrimination and equality.

[Iraq’s generation of stateless Isis children is being ‘punished for the crimes of their fathers’:](#) This article, by Bethan McKernan for The Independent, highlights the plight of thousands of babies born under the rule of ISIS in Syria and Iraq. It highlights how the children of Isis fighters are ‘falling through the cracks’ of Iraq’s legal system, rendering them stateless and unable to access aid, education, and freedom of movement, to name a few. While ISIS has issued its versions of marriage and birth certificates, these documents are not recognised by Iraqi authorities. It is furthermore estimated that over 31,000 women across Iraq and Syria have become pregnant under ISIS’ rule while under Iraqi law, the identity of both mother and father must be confirmed before a child’s birth certificate can be issued.

What’s new: Law and policy

[UNHCR and NGOs to \(re-\)document returnees in danger of statelessness in Chad:](#) UNHCR, the National Commission for the Reception and Reintegration of Refugees and Returnees (CNARR), and NGO Acted have started an identification operation to help Chadian returnees at risk of statelessness to get documentation. Chad hosts approximately 400,000 refugees, being one of the main refugee host states in the world. Since 2014, thousands of persons who descended from Chadian migrants, who had been living in Central African Republic (CAR) had to return to Chad due to the ongoing conflict in the CAR, with thousands of them holding no documents to prove who they are, leaving them in a vulnerable situation and at increased risk of statelessness.

[U.N. criticises Myanmar plan to resettle Rohingya in 'camp-like' villages:](#) The United Nations’ refugee agency has criticised a plan by Myanmar’s government to resettle Rohingya Muslims, who have been displaced by recent violence, in “camp-like” villages, following Myanmar’s authorities drafting a plan to relocate approximately 1,152 households into larger and manageable ‘model villages’. The programme is considered to reignite tensions, for creating fear among residents that they would be moved to refugee camps. While plans appear to be at an early drafting stage, Rakhine State government secretary Tin Maung Swe stated that the local administration had started implementing the plan.

[Constitutional court in Russian Federation rules on arbitrary detention of stateless persons:](#) On May 23, 2017, the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation (RF) issued a ruling on the constitutionality of the provisions of articles 31.7 and 31.9 of the RF Code of Administrative Offences. Claimant [Noé Mskhiladze](#) disputed the constitutionality of these norms, which allowed for the extended, and arbitrary detention of a stateless person with a view to expulsion from the Russian Federation, which is impossible in the case of stateless persons as there is no state to receive them. The RF Constitutional Court found that any provisions which prohibit stateless persons from appealing the grounds for their detention under any circumstance are unconstitutional. As a result of the ruling, Courts will be obligated to define specific timeframes within which expulsion has to take place, and those already being held in detention can request a review on the legality of their detention after three months.

[US Supreme Court to consider case on revocation of citizenship on grounds of fraud \(Maslenjak v. United States\):](#)

This case deals with the question of whether a naturalised US Citizen can have their US Citizenship revoked for making a false claim in their naturalisation application. The case concerns [Divna Maslenjak](#) and her family, who immigrated to the United States as refugees during the Bosnian War and claimed they feared persecution because Maslenjak’s husband avoided military conscription during the war. US officials discovered that Maslenjak’s husband served as an officer in the Serbian Bratunac Brigade—a unit that committed war crimes in the Bosnian War—which she did not disclose to US authorities. The Supreme Court’s decision will determine the circumstances under which naturalised citizens can be denaturalised and the government’s burden of proof in denaturalisation proceedings.

[Kazakhstan Considers Revoking Terrorists' Citizenship](#): A controversial bill to deprive Kazaks of their nationality if they are convicted of a number of crimes—including terrorism-related offenses—has passed a first reading after being introduced by Kazakhstan's Justice Minister. If passed, a range of crimes can be grounds for deprivation of nationality.

Announcements and events

[Funding Opportunity for NGO Programs Benefiting Individuals At Risk of Statelessness in the Dominican Republic](#):

The US State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) has funding available for projects which carry out activities to support stateless persons and individuals at risk of statelessness in the Dominican Republic. **Proposal submission deadline is June 13 2017, noon EDT.**

[Open Society Foundations, Civil Society Leadership Awards](#): The Open Society Foundation's Civil Society Leadership Awards (CSLA) provides fully-funded scholarships for master's degree study to individuals who clearly demonstrate academic and professional excellence and a deep commitment to leading positive social change in their communities. **Applications must be submitted by 15 July 2017, EDT.**

[New Journal, 'Migration and Society'](#): A new academic journal, 'Migration and Society' has been recently established. The Journal welcomes articles that reflect on the complexities of both studying and teaching migration, and articles which address the relationship between scholarship and the policies and politics of migration. The journal's Inaugural issue will be published August 2018. **Deadline for submitting articles for the first issue is 30 September 2017.**

[Red ANA webinar series: Statelessness in Costa Rica](#): The Americas Network on Nationality and Statelessness (Red ANA) will be hosting another webinar titled 'Statelessness in Costa Rica', hosting Eugenia Gutiérrez and María Julia Cerdas, who work at the Dirección Jurídica del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto de Costa Rica (Legal branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica). Costa Rica is a country which is characterised for its compromise to eradicate statelessness; it has taken steps in achieving this, including adopting a statelessness determination procedure—making it the second country in the American to do so—and has designed and implemented projects to identify stateless and 'at risk of statelessness' populations and assuring that these populations have access to rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the law and to enable them to access facilitated naturalisation. The webinar (**Spanish only**) will take place on the **6 June at 11:00AM (Washington D.C. Time)**. Please see the website to register.

[SNAP webinar: What is statelessness \(and what it is not\)](#): The Statelessness Network Asia Pacific (SNAP) will be hosting its first webinar with Professor Chowdhury Abrar and Zahra Albarazi of the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion to explore the question of what statelessness is and what it is not. The webinar includes a discussion on the topics of statelessness in international law, statelessness status determination, the links between statelessness and gender discrimination, barriers to civil registration and documentation, migration, and detention. The webinar will take place on the **1 June, 2-3PM (Bangkok time)**. A recording of the webinar will be available on the SNAP website afterward. **You can register for the webinar [here](#).**

A day in the life of...

Mariette Grange, Senior Researcher at the [Global Detention Project](#)

How did you get involved in working on statelessness?

Trained in linguistics and translation I learned the ropes of my second *métier* as I was recruited to help establish the Amnesty International (AI) Office to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva in the late 80s. I later specialized on migration and refugee issues in faith-based NGOs which led me to tackle issues of statelessness and then moved from international human rights advocacy to research.

In the late 80s, AI worked on civil and political rights only with a focus on prisoners of opinion, torture, enforced disappearances and the death penalty. Refugees, migrants (and stateless persons) were not initially part of AI mandate. A decade later, the organisation expanded its mandate to include economic, social and cultural rights and I was invited to brief some 60 AI refugee coordinators meeting in Berlin to help expand AI's mandate to migrants. There was some resistance and hesitations but some sections, for instance New Zealand, explained that they had moved into advocacy for migrants as rejected asylum seekers became undocumented and vulnerable to abuse. Issues of refugees and migration often intersect with statelessness which helped me grasp the dire vulnerability resulting from denial of nationality and citizenship.



AI firmly rooted its research and advocacy approaches in international human rights norms and standards and fed country briefings to UN human rights mechanisms. I thus monitored countless meetings of UN treaty monitoring bodies and many sessions of the Commission on Human Rights (including late night ones to midnight!). This chief UN human rights political body transitioned to the Human Rights Council (HRC) in 2006. I was able to monitor and contribute to the creation of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as I represented Human Rights Watch during the transition years of the HRC.

By the time I left AI to work for faith based NGOs programmes and operations with migrants and refugees as well as internally-displaced and trafficked persons – then collectively dubbed “uprooted people” or “people on the move”- I was well equipped to anchor advocacy and research work in international law. I first came across issues of statelessness when doing advocacy work around the [third] World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia in Durban in 2001. The outcome document for the conference included the “The need for due registration of persons for identity, especially women and children, to reduce incidences of statelessness and trafficking.” I also worked on advocacy for statelessness during the UN High Commissioner for Refugees’ Global Consultations on International Protection which produced the Agenda for Protection. The Agenda recommended that UNHRC “seek information from States on steps they have taken to reduce statelessness and to meet the protection needs of stateless persons.”

Can you give us a short description of the type of work you do?

I capitalize and build on the above knowledge base and experience to do research on immigration detention at the Global Detention Project research centre based in Geneva. I am a transfrontier migrant worker and daily commute into a non-European Union country from my native French Alpine valley.

We analyse policies and practices in relation to detention of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons based on migration status. We seek to bring transparency to a practice for which states across the different world regions often use opaque language. We document states’ international obligations (which international treaties have they ratified, including on statelessness), national legislation (including grounds for and length of detention), access to procedural standards (including access to lawyers, information on reasons of detention, rights in detention), and protection of vulnerable persons (including stateless persons). We also collect statistics on detention, including along age and gender, map out places of immigration detention, and collect information on conditions of detention. All our information is publicly available [on our website](#), including information stored in our extensive database.

Our sources include official information and freedom of information requests, information from country reports to and recommendations from international human rights mechanisms, NGOs and national civil society partners and coalitions, academia, media and regional and international organisations’ jurisprudence and statistical data.

Briefly describe what type of statelessness activities you or your organisation is involved in.

Our research on detention includes national legal frameworks and detention of stateless persons. In our database and country profiles, we highlight when stateless persons are detained and relevant gaps in national legislation, policies and/or practices. When the European Network on Statelessness contacted us for involvement in their project on statelessness and detention, we were very supportive for two reasons. Our findings reveal that stateless persons are often detained for lengthy periods in various world regions. This is due to the fact that, by definition they cannot be sent back to their country of origin and risk being stranded in indefinite detention. Another issue is that when stateless persons are released from detention after exhaustion of the legal limit for immigration detention prior to deportation, they often are exposed to multiple instances of re-detention.

We use our findings to make submissions to relevant UN human rights mechanisms. Including jointly with national partners. As we monitor or are asked for input into international and regional processes and drafting of soft law, we often are in a privileged position to inject references to the plight and specific protection needs of stateless persons.

Could you describe a particular project you are working on right now?

Typical to small size NGOs, I am working on number of projects. I am updating country profiles, and contacting national NGOs to clarify application of legislation and actual practice. After completing Belgium I am working on France and will tackle Bulgaria, India, and Australia making sure to look for statelessness issues. For June, I also have a deadline to make submissions to the UN Committee on Discrimination against Women and will work on Malaysia and maybe Saudi Arabia.

We are also preparing to provide input into two processes. First, in June, into the draft codifying of European Immigration Detention Rules by the European Committee on Legal Co-operation (CDCJ) of the Council of Europe. The draft currently includes no reference to stateless persons, including when it refers to vulnerable persons. Second, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the Human Rights Council has announced plans to revise the document expanding the WGAD’s mandate to cover detention of immigrants and asylum-seekers. We are monitoring information as to when this is going to take place and what are the conditions and timeline for civil society input. As typical of NGO work...I am also involved in drafting fundraising proposals to subsidize our work.

What do you most enjoy about this work?

A long time international advocate, I enjoy being able to focus on issues without constantly attending meetings or responding to daily media requests (although we often do have to respond to requests and participate in conferences).

Having worked for AI and HRW, I love the humbling experience of working for a much smaller and younger NGO! The level of stress is less, even though the workload is daunting. I have come to understand that what I used to enjoy as a translator: i.e. making sense of difficult formulations, understanding the meaning behind the form and figuring out the intent of the authors – in this case law and policy makers – I also find in research work. I began working on detention at Amnesty, on prisoners of conscience, people who had committed no crime and were forgotten and vulnerable. I feel useful giving visibility to immigration detainees, who have not committed a crime against property or persons, but have violated an administrative order and basically are detained for what they are: people fleeing war, violence and persecution, or people simply born by chance in the wrong country. I enjoy transmitting knowledge, experience and hope to interns.

I began working on human rights issues and anti-discrimination because of WWII, because of the woman who came to visit my secondary school when I was 15 years old and showed me the tattoo of her concentration camp prisoner number on the thin skin of her forearm. Amidst populist ideologies on the rise in Europe and elsewhere, and attempts by some main actors in the international community to argue that there is no international human rights framework to protect migrants, or that asylum seekers and children should be detained, it remains more necessary than ever to do this work, including to raise awareness on what it means to become stateless.

What do you find are the biggest challenges you face in your work?

The banalisation of immigration detention as a response to movements of migrants, asylum seekers, refugees and stateless persons. Remaining positive in the face of policy attempts to detain more, and to detain children, including families and unaccompanied minors. Lack of political will to respect international human rights and humanitarian obligations. The dehumanising of the “other” by policy makers who seek to better distance themselves from the plight of fellow human beings. EU forging alliances with brittle states (Libya, Turkey) to hold migrants and asylum-seekers back.

Lack of research on North to South migration: Westerners are dubbed “expats” when they migrate, so that the general public believes migrants only are the poor and destitute who are moving *en masse* to the North. Lack of historical knowledge and perspective by media who miss opportunities to better educate and inform.

Short-term perspective of policy makers: I dream of what the world should look like in 50 years... and their radar screen is often only set on the horizon of the next elections. I have always regretted the lost opportunity that the values of solidarity and reciprocity were not codified into the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to get involved in / others working on statelessness?

Do not get discouraged: there never was a golden age for human rights. Work hard to understand what creates statelessness, why stateless people are vulnerable to abuse and what protection and safeguards exist at the international level that should be transposed to the national level. Read comparative research to stimulate your creativity and advocacy strategies. Remain focused and persistent. Work in partnerships with others. Put yourself in the shoes of those who ignore or are afraid of statelessness issues and persons and patiently lead them to gradually find mutually beneficial solutions.

What do you hope to accomplish through your work?

More transparency, more knowledge, more respect for the relevant human rights and humanitarian legal framework. While governments can legitimately decide who can access or remain on their territories, there are strong international norms to protect foreigners from arbitrary, indefinite detention in humane conditions and to fight against impunity. I hope to witness the day when the “international community” will have the courage to acknowledge that immigration detention is *never* in the best interest of the child and clearly prohibits it as a violation of the rights of the child. More hope and protection for detainees and their relatives; more alternatives to detention – although the presumption of liberty should first and foremost be considered before detention - more justice; more ... humanity in international relations!

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