

Addressing Inadmissible Persons, Deportees, Refugees, and Stateless Persons

ICAO Facilitation Conference

14-17 April 2025

Doha, Qatar

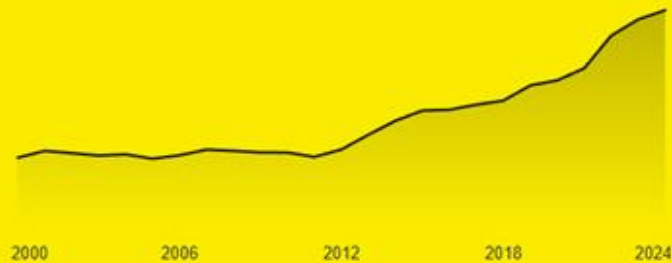
Speaker: Ahmed Mohsen, UNHCR Representative to the State of
Qatar

A Glimpse at Statistics

122.6 MILLION

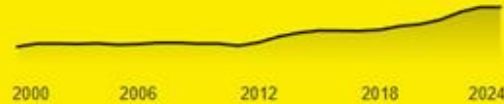
Forcibly displaced people worldwide

at mid-2024 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.



68.3 MILLION

are internally displaced people (Source: IDMC, as of end-2023)



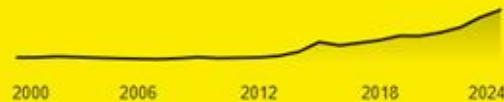
37.9 MILLION

are refugees



8 MILLION

are asylum-seekers



5.8 MILLION

are other people in need of international protection

Who is a Refugee?

A refugee is a person who:

- Has a well-founded fear of persecution due to **race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.**
 - Is **outside their country of nationality** and **unable or unwilling to return** due to this fear.
-
- ❑ **1951 Refugee Convention, Article 1(A)(2)** – Defines a refugee.
 - ❑ **1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees** – Removes geographical and time limits from the 1951 Convention.
 - ❑ **Non-refoulement Principle (Article 33)** – Prohibits returning a refugee to a country where they face persecution.

Who is a Stateless Person?

A stateless person is **someone who is not recognized as a national by any country under its law.**

Convention Clauses:

- ❑ **1954 Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, Article 1** – Defines a stateless person.
- ❑ **1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness** – Seeks to prevent and reduce statelessness by establishing rules for nationality laws.

Why Travel Documents for Refugees and Stateless Persons are important

- Many refugees cannot safely use a national passport; stateless people do not have a passport
- Travel documents enable mobility, integration, protection, and a right to family unity.
- Lack of access to a travel document increases opportunity for exploitation, human trafficking and irregular movements.



Current Status

- **Only 49%** of countries issue **machine-readable travel documents (MRTDs)** to refugees.
- **Even fewer** countries issue MRTDs to Stateless persons.
- **16 million refugees and asylum seekers** live in a country without access to a MRTD for refugees.



Source: an ongoing UNHCR survey

Challenges to Issue MRTDs for refugees and stateless persons

- Absence of a legal framework (or in process of implementation)
- Delays in updating systems (e.g. from manual to machine readable), often related to funding challenges
- Inadequate administrative policies that facilitate inclusion of refugees and stateless persons in passport systems



Moving the needle forward

- **2023** – pledge launched at Global Refugee Forum
- **2024** – working paper to ICAO facilitation panel
- **2025** – ministerial declaration

Making progress requires a multi-actor approach



Key Asks & Recommendations

- All ICAO member states to **issue MRTDs** to refugees and stateless persons
- **Review State polices** to consider improvements
- **Avail funding** for tech and administrative enhancements.
- **Integrate** MRTD issuance into **national frameworks**



Conclusion

- **Access to travel documents is critical** for protection, mobility, and opportunities.
- Addressing challenges will enhance **inclusion and global cooperation**.
- **Call to Action:** Governments, international organizations, and stakeholders must collaborate to ensure **refugees and stateless persons have access to machine-readable travel documents**.

Thank You