

# Convention Travel Documents (CTD) Standards

Implementation challenge for States,  
UNHCR and ICAO  
(WP21)



Implementation and Capacity Building Working Group  
(ICBWG)

TAG/MRTD 20

20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on  
Machine Readable Travel Documents

# Background

- Convention Travel Documents (CTDs) are provided for in two international treaties:
  - 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
  - 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons
- States parties to those Conventions shall issue to refugees and stateless persons travel documents for the purpose of travel abroad (Article 28 of both Conventions).
- Both Conventions provide more detailed provisions on CTDs in respective Schedules, and an Annex with a Specimen.
- Modern CTDs need however to be machine readable and comply with ICAO specifications.



## Background (2)

- Implementation is a serious problem:
  - Out of 148 States parties of the 1951 Refugee Convention, around 30 appear to issue machine readable CTDs.
  - Out of 65 States parties of the 1954 Statelessness Convention, around 10 appear to issue MRCTDs.
- Without MRCTDs, refugees and stateless persons will not be able to travel and exercise freedom of movement rights abroad beyond the 2015 deadline.
- UNHCR used to issue non machine readable CTDs (blank booklets) to States where they would be personalized and issued to refugees (in some 40 States). This practice is now reduced and cannot continue beyond November 2015.



# The Role of the ICBWG

- Cooperation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
  - UNHCR has a mandate to protect and assist refugees and stateless persons and has notably the duty to supervise the application of the 1951 Convention.
  - UNHCR is present in more than 120 country offices all over the world and has expertise in refugee law.
- Cooperation since 2009 including the elaboration of a 2010 information paper upon request of UNHCR and participation of UNHCR at the ICBWG.



## The Role of the ICBWG (2)

- **Information sharing** with UNHCR and other stakeholders for monitoring and advocacy purposes (use of a joined tracking tool).
- **Specification Assistance** by elaborating detailed specification for CTDs combining Doc. 9303, Annex 9 and relevant provisions of the 1951/1954 Conventions.
- Further work as identified by the newly established **Sub group** of the ICBWG on CTDs.



# The Role of the ICBWG (3)

## ➤ Action by the TAG/MRTD

- Approve collaboration with UNHCR in order to bring about ICAO compliance of CTDs
- Endorse specific steps cited in the Working Paper TAG/MRTD/20-WP/21.

