

UNHCR welcomes the mobilization against statelessness in Chad



The signing of the open letter to end statelessness by (from left to right) the UNHCR Representative, the SG of the Ministry of Interior, the Deputy Representative of UNICEF and the Deputy Representative of UNHCR. Photo UNHCR/I Diane

N'Djamena, 03 November 2017 (UNHCR) - Jointly organized by the Government of Chad and the United Nations Refugee Agency, UNHCR, a ceremony rallied, on the morning of 3 October 2017 in N'Djamena, authorities, members of civil society, diplomats, representatives of UN agencies and other international institutions and the media for the prevention and fight against statelessness in Chad.



Held under the theme "In the country of Toumaï, everyone has the right to a nationality", this event, which was attended by dozens of people including refugees, marked the 3rd anniversary of the launch of the global campaign "#IBelong".

It was recalled during the ceremony that this campaign was launched in 2014, by the UNHCR,

to eradicate statelessness by 2024 as well as the fact that 10 million people worldwide are stateless.

Presentations by experts from UNHCR, UNICEF and the Government, which punctuated this anniversary event in N'Djamena, enabled the public to better understand the issue and get a sense of the situation in Chad.



In Chad, where "it is difficult to estimate the number of stateless persons for lack of in-depth investigation and study," the Government undertook actions to prevent and reduce the risk of statelessness with the support of UNHCR and other key actors, said the Secretary General of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Governance. Mr. Tahir Oloy Hassan has also acknowledged that "there are situations that could lead to risks of statelessness".

Those situations were explained in great length by the various speakers, with "figures that are eloquent on this matter," according to the Representative of UNHCR.



Mr. Mbili Ambaoumba regretted that in Chad "only 12% of children under 5 are registered in the civil registry and more than 130,000 refugee children born in Chad are also in the same situation, deprived of this important document".

The UNHCR Representative also drew attention to the fact that "the identity documents available to refugees living in Chad are not recognized by some authorities, financial and banking institutions and social services which are outside the camps".

Like other speakers, Mrs. Hadja Aissata Ba Sidibé, UNICEF Deputy Representative, stressed that "this worrisome situation requires our commitment and our immediate action, especially in Chad". "Thanks to the leadership of the Government in collaboration with UNHCR and UNICEF, we can see today the beginnings of such a dynamic," she said.

UNHCR Deputy Representative said that it was about time to end statelessness. Edward O'Dwyer reiterated UNHCR's commitment in working with the Government of

Chad to fight against statelessness through financial support from institutions such as the European Union. He also stressed that the challenges remain significant.



While inviting everyone to make a commitment to eradicating statelessness, The Secretary-General of MATGL signed the [UNHCR open letter](#) to this effect.

UNHCR Representative, the Permanent Secretary of the Government refugee agency, CNARR, as well as the Deputy Representatives of UNICEF and UNHCR, and other participants did the same.

Two Chadian artists also added their voices to the fight against statelessness in Chad through their performances and messages, which were punctuated by the applause of an enthusiastic audience.