

FORUM: Sustainable Development Commission 2

QUESTION OF: Universal Birth Registration

SUBMITTED BY: Togolese Republic

CO-SUBMITTERS: Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Chile, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Mozambique, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Paraguay, Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, San Marino, Solomon Islands, Syrian Arab Republic, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Vanuatu, Vietnam, World Health Organization (WHO)

THE SECOND COMMISSION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE,

Bearing in mind that 45% of children under the age of 5 do not possess a legal identity,

Emphasizes that the World Health Organization (WHO) estimate that 40 million, or approximately one third of births is not registered each year while the global rate of birth registration grew from approximately 58% to 65% between 2000 and 2010

Highlights the United Nations Children’s Fund’s (UNICEF) estimation that 230 million children under the age of 5 still have not been registered,

Aware of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16.9 which reads “By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration,

Recognizing that the lack of legal identity can impede individuals from fundamental human rights such as education, healthcare, and social security,

Taking note of the previous contributions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), and the United Nations Legal Identity Expert Group (UN LIEG) in solving the issue,

Keeping in mind article 7 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which states that “the child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents”,

Further keeping in mind article 8 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which reads that “States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference”,

1. Recommends member states to attend a biennial conference, led by the UN LIEG starting in January 2021, through which:
 - a) member nations are continuously staying informed on the issue on a global level
 - b) member nations can discuss their efforts and struggles and exchange information regarding providing legal identity for all citizens of their state and are guided by the UN LIEG, if necessary
 - c) member states can discuss universal measures and international contributions which:
 - i. can be put into place immediately as a short term approach to the issue
 - ii. can be taken into account but only officially set in place by member nations at later conferences
 - d) further partnerships with organisations such as the WHO or the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are discussed in which, for example, refugees, stateless individuals, as well as displaced families are assisted in registering their legal

identity;

2. Strongly urges the OHCHR, in partnership with the UN LIEG, to create programs that will inform people about the importance of birth registration and consequences of not registering their children, especially in countries that are having difficulties increasing their birth registration rates, in ways such as, but not limited to:
 - a) aiming to eliminate the lack of awareness by gathering free public seminars, led by members of the aforementioned organisations, which will aim to familiarise people with these issues
 - b) setting up campaigns in rural areas, to inform citizens regarding the benefits of birth registration since birth registration would aid people in better accessing their rights, such as but not limited to:
 - i. medical treatment
 - ii. education
 - iii. property
 - iv. inheritance
 - v. protection from exploitation in the workplace
 - c) encouraging the UN LIEG to promote early birth registration as well as educate the general public on the consequences of lack of legal identity through means such as, but not limited to:
 - i. speaking to government officials on measures to inform the people
 - ii. advertising through ways such as, but not limited to public billboard ads, public service ads and short films/ documentaries on television;
3. Urges all member states to transfer their archives of their registered citizens into Civil Registration and Vital Statistics systems (CRVS) with the assistance of The Health Metrics Network (HMN) and the WHO in order to ease and expedite the process of registering all births, deaths and issuing birth and death certificates by:
 - a) eliminating the written archives' chance to get damaged or even destroyed by any kinds of accidents and natural disasters such as fires, floods, and earthquakes which would do much less harm to the digital archives since they are uploaded into clouds
 - b) maintaining the security of the CRVS systems by establishing a task force consisting of IT specialists that would protect the systems against any kinds of cyber attacks
 - c) partnering with the World Bank in regards to funding for the countries who do not have their own CRVS systems
 - d) urging all nations starting from 2022 to develop an open-source software solution, which will be a collaboration of member states that have the means to contribute, to provide data-enabled Civil registration and vital statistics for low resource settings where it will be a free, standards-based, fully interoperable system with national ID and health systems, and adaptable for different countries and their contexts where it will be overseen and managed by the UNICEF;
4. Encourages member nations to eliminate or at least reduce such factors with the financial assistance of World Bank when necessary (Sudan) that often discourage or prevent parents from registering their children such as:
 - a) factors that are related to financial incapacibilities of the families by keeping the birth registration fees at the minimum value and the determination of a specific number considering the financial status of the country
 - b) factors related to inaccessibility or location of household by:
 - i. increasing accessibility to birth registration centres by opening such centres in rural areas where people are having difficulties reaching them
 - ii. increasing the frequency of the transportation services that reach near the birth registration centres so that people will not be discouraged from the inaccessibility of these centres

- c) language barriers which can be avoided with the help of interpreters in order to allow minorities to communicate fluently and access information regarding the process of birth registration more efficiently;
 - d) factors related to the cultural or societal pressure such as those in many rural communities in Africa which are bred from a distrust of the governments involved
5. Recommends member states to collaborate with UNICEF to create international guidelines, which can be further discussed at the biennial UN LIEG conference that is mentioned in clause 1, for abandoned, orphaned, unaccompanied and separated children, under the age of 18, by:
- a) making sure that the children are getting the proper education required
 - b) providing the children the mental support needed with the assistance of pedagogues and specialist psychologists
 - c) following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to be sure that the children's rights are not abused;
 - d) Ensuring the health of the children by providing free medical check-ups
6. Calls for member nations to remain actively seized of the matter.