

ITEM 4 - LUCA MARIAN - FELLOWSHIP  
ROMANIA

FORUM ON MINORITY ISSUES  
11TH SESSION, 29-30 NOVEMBER 2018  
UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA SWITZERLAND

*Statement on Agenda Item no. 4: Ensuring the right to a nationality for persons belonging to minorities through facilitation of birth registration, naturalization and citizenship for stateless minorities* Luca Marian

Fellow of the OHCHR Minority Fellowship Programme

Madam Chair,

My name is Marian Luca, I am Roma and I am committed to have a constructive dialogue on statelessness. A dialogue which is overdue.

Statelessness in the case of Roma is older than me. In my life I had the privilege of holding two citizenships: one from my mother country, Romania and one from my adoptive country, Germany. A privilege which is in reality a fundamental right, that far too many people continue to be denied.

The lack of comprehensive data about the actual number of stateless Roma is in fact the first barrier in tackling this neglect. This is for two reasons: first, the historical fact of institutionalized racism against Roma which has led not only to a distrust of state institutions, but also contributed to the repressed identity of Roma. Furthermore, many Roma who are forced to live in ghettos and slums are not registered, have no documents or address.

The rising number of slums, cumulated with forced evictions without housing alternatives, reinforce the persisting phenomenon of non-citizenship. Those who have citizenship continue to be deprived of their dignity and basic human rights despite the Roma inclusion programs.

Based on this, I make the following recommendations:

first to tackle the non-citizen status of Roma in the European Union and Balkan countries by delivering comprehensive data on the number of stateless Roma, especially those who live in ghettos.

secondly, to tackle the structural discrimination against Roma concretely by facilitating the registration process providing Roma with legal support.

thirdly, to ensure Roma representation in all aspects of life by creating the International Voluntary Fund.

Thank you, Madame Chair

---