

**United Nations Conference on the Elimination or Reduction of Future
Statelessness**

Geneva, 1959 and New York, 1961

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**Final Act of the United Nations Conference on the Elimination or Reduction of Future
Statelessness**

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
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UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ELIMINATION
OR REDUCTION OF FUTURE STATELESSNESS

FINAL ACT

of the

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ELIMINATION
OR REDUCTION OF FUTURE STATELESSNESS

1. The General Assembly of the United Nations, by resolution 896 (IX) of 4 December 1954, expressed its desire that an international conference of plenipotentiaries be convened to conclude a convention for the reduction or elimination of future statelessness as soon as at least twenty States had communicated to the Secretary-General their willingness to co-operate in such a conference. The Secretary-General was requested to fix the exact time and place for the conference when that condition had been met. The General Assembly noted that the International Law Commission had submitted to it drafts of a Convention on the Elimination of Future Statelessness and a Convention on the Reduction of Future Statelessness in the Report of the International Law Commission covering its sixth session in 1954. The General Assembly requested the Governments of States invited to participate in the conference to give early consideration to the merits of a multilateral convention on the elimination or reduction of future statelessness.
2. Upon the fulfilment of the condition envisaged in the resolution of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General convened a United Nations Conference on the Elimination or Reduction of Future Statelessness at the European Office of the United Nations at Geneva on 24 March 1959. The Conference met at the European Office of the United Nations from 24 March to 18 April 1959.
3. At the time of its adjournment on 18 April 1959 the Conference adopted the following resolution:

"The Conference,

"Being unable to terminate the work entrusted to it within the time provided for its work,

"Proposes to the competent organ of the United Nations to reconvene the Conference at the earliest possible time in order to continue and complete its work".

4. In pursuance of this resolution, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, after ascertaining the views of the participating States, decided that the Conference should be reconvened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 15 August 1961. The Conference met at the United Nations Headquarters from 15 to 28 August 1961.

5. At the first part of the Conference the Governments of the following thirty-five States were represented: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Holy See, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States, Yugoslavia.

6. The Governments of the following States were represented by observers: Finland, Greece.

7. At the second part of the Conference the Governments of the following thirty States were represented: Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Ceylon, China, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, France, Holy See, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States, Yugoslavia.

8. The Governments of the following States were represented by observers: Greece, Iraq.

9. At the first part of the Conference the following inter-governmental organizations were represented by observers:

Council of Europe
Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration
International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
League of Arab States

10. At the second part of the Conference the following inter-governmental organization was represented by an observer:

League of Arab States

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11. At both parts of the Conference the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was represented by an observer.

12. At the first part of the Conference Mr. Knud Larsen (Denmark) was elected as President and Mr. Ichiro Kawasaki (Japan) and Mr. Humberto Calamari (Panama) as Vice-Presidents.

13. At the second part of the Conference none of these Officers of the Conference was present. The Conference accordingly elected Mr. Willem Riphagen (Netherlands) as President and Mr. Gilberto Amada (Brazil) and Mr. G.P. Malalasekera (Ceylon) as Vice-Presidents.

14. At the first part of the Conference the following Committees were set up:
Committee of the Whole

Chairman:	The President of the first part of the Conference
Vice-Chairmen:	The Vice-Presidents of the first part of the Conference

Drafting Committee.

Members:	Representatives of the following States: Argentina, Belgium, France, Israel, Panama, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
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Chairman (first part of the Conference):	Mr. Humberto Calamari (Panama)
(second part of the Conference):	Mr. Enrique Ros (Argentina)

15. At the second part of the Conference the Committee of the Whole did not meet.

16. At both parts of the Conference the President and Vice-Presidents, in accordance with rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure, examined the credentials of representatives and reported thereon to the Conference.

17. At the second part of the Conference a Working Group was set up, consisting of the President, who acted as Chairman, and representatives of Brazil, Canada, France, Israel, Norway, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and of representatives of other States who desired to participate. Mr. Peter Harvey (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) acted as Rapporteur of the Working Group.

18. At the first part of the Conference the Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented by Mr. Yuen-li Liang, Director of the Codification Division of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations, who was also appointed Executive Secretary.

19. At the second part of the Conference the Secretary-General of the United Nations was represented by Mr. C.A. Stavropoulos, the Legal Counsel. Mr. Yuen-li Liang acted as Executive Secretary.

20. At the first part of the Conference it was decided that the Conference would take as the basis for its work the draft Convention on the Reduction of Future Statelessness, prepared by the International Law Commission. The first part of the Conference also had before it observations submitted by Governments on that draft Convention, a Memorandum with a Draft Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness submitted by Denmark, and preparatory documentation prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations.

21. The second part of the Conference had before it, in addition to the documentation referred to above, observations submitted by Governments on deprivation of nationality, observations submitted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and further documentation prepared by the Secretariat of the United Nations.

22. On the basis of the deliberations, as recorded in the records of the Committee of the Whole and of the plenary meetings, the Conference prepared a Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. The Convention, which is subject to ratification, was adopted by the Conference on 28 August 1961, and opened for signature from 30 August 1961 until 31 May 1962 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. This Convention was also opened for accession and will be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

23. In addition the Conference adopted the four resolutions which are annexed to this Final Act.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the representatives have signed this Final Act.

DONE AT NEW YORK this thirtieth day of August, one thousand nine hundred and sixty-one, in a single copy of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic and which shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations, and certified copies of which shall be delivered by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to all Members of the United Nations and all non-member States invited to the Conference.

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RESOLUTIONS

I

The Conference

Recommends that persons who are stateless de facto should as far as possible be treated as stateless de jure to enable them to acquire an effective nationality.

II

The Conference

Resolves that for the purposes of paragraph 4 of Article 7 of the Convention the term "naturalized person" shall be interpreted as referring only to a person who has acquired nationality upon an application which the Contracting State concerned may in its discretion refuse.

III

The Conference

Recommends Contracting States making the retention of nationality by their nationals abroad subject to a declaration or registration to take all possible steps to ensure that such persons are informed in time of the formalities and time-limits to be observed if they are to retain their nationality.

IV

The Conference

Resolves that for the purposes of the Convention the term "convicted" shall mean "convicted by a final judgement of a court of competent jurisdiction".
