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Refugee, Statelessness issues among top discussions at ICAO facilitation Conference



Published on April 15, 2025

Document Date: Wed, Apr 16 2025 09:59:56 am

Category: ,English,Qatar - ,Snippets

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Doha, April 15 (QNA) – Refugees and stateless persons took center stage during the sixth plenary session of the ICAO Facilitation Conference (FALC 2025) in Doha. Delegates addressed challenges surrounding inadmissible individuals and deportees, stressing the need for practical, humane solutions that uphold freedom of movement and human dignity.

The session, chaired by Maria Cristina Liliana Ionita, Romania's Representative to the ICAO Council, emphasized that issuing travel documents to refugees and stateless persons helps regulate legal movement and mitigate risks of human trafficking and transnational crime.

Speakers called for enhanced funding for relief and humanitarian agencies to better support affected populations.

Participants noted that ongoing conflicts continue to force people to flee their countries in search of safety. However, limited access to official documentation and poor coordination between border control systems hinder their movement. The high costs of returning persons denied entry—alongside reputational risks for countries and airlines—were also highlighted.

Brig. Gen. Saad Salem Al Dosari, Assistant Director of the Human Rights Department at Qatar's Ministry of Interior, reaffirmed Qatar's commitment to global cooperation in managing cross-border movement while balancing security and humanitarian considerations. He called for

modern digital information exchange systems and stronger public-private partnerships to address entry denial issues, encouraging innovative, humane policy solutions.

Nelson Goncalves, Head of the Legal Identity Unit at the International Organization for Migration (IOM), pointed out that restrictive nationality laws often prevent identity documentation for stateless persons. He urged governments to improve interstate cooperation and enhance consular efficiency. Goncalves also highlighted the importance of digitization and private sector partnerships in ensuring dignified, accurate, and faster procedures.

The conference's second day included discussions on travel document integrity, border control, human trafficking, irregular migration, and support for victims of aircraft accidents. Capacity building and countries' failure to adhere to ICAO standards were also examined.

Held under the theme "Facilitating the Future of Air Transport: Cooperation, Efficiency, and Inclusivity," the four-day event reflects ICAO's 2024 "Year of Facilitation" initiative, aiming to pave the way for a more inclusive and resilient future for global air travel.