ONE DAY NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON
“STATELESSNESS (REFUGEES AND FORCED MIGRATION)”

LISSTAR

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On Tuesday, 24th February 2015, (LISSTAR), Loyola Institute of Social Science Training and Research, organized a One Day National Symposium on “UN Convention on Statelessness (Refugees and Forced Migration)” at the LICET Auditorium, Loyola College of Engineering Campus, Chennai.

The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness are key legal instruments in the protection of stateless people around the world and in the prevention and reduction of statelessness. UNHCR’s landmark ministerial conference in Geneva from December 7-8, 2011, resulted in 30 national governments (making a total of 110/193) made pledges to accede to one or more of the statelessness conventions in the near future. This momentum - for the reduction of statelessness and for the protection of stateless people around the world – is gathering strength.

The symposium was designed to provide a comprehensive picture on ‘statelessness’ to the students at the global level. The inputs included a historical perspective on ‘statelessness’, its
present manifestations, forced migrations and the Asian and South Asian scenario. Students and Research Scholars from various colleges in Chennai participated in the symposium.

Dr. Bernard D’ Samy, Executive Member of LISSTAR welcomed the gathering followed by the speech of the Chief Guest Prof. Ramu Manivannnan, Professor and Head, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Madras. Rev. Dr. M. Albert William, S.J. Secretary and Correspondent of Loyola College, Chennai felicitated the Chief Guest and the key speaker. Ms. Parikrama Gupta, Protection Assistant, (Training) UNHCR delivered the inaugural address.

After the inaugural function, the symposium was divided into four sessions. The first session was handled by Rev. Fr. Stan Fernandes, S.J., Director, JRS, South Asia. This session was devoted to “JRS Story: Refugees and Forced Migration—Understanding Definitions and Practical Challenges”, the second gave an “Historical Overview of Stateless Persons” by Mr. Ravi Nair, Executive Director, SAHRDC, New Delhi. The third was about the “South Asian Perspective of Refugees and Forced Migration” This session was handled by Dr. Ashik Bonofer and Dr. Lawrence W. Prabhakar faculty members from Madras Christian College, Chennai and the fourth session was “Life in Exile” experience sharing by a panel of six refugees and migrants from different parts of the world. Dr. Paul Newman, HOD, Department of History, MLACW, Karnataka moderated the session.

Later in the evening, the valedictory function commenced with the state song of the Government of Tamilnadu followed by the welcome address Rev. Fr. A.M. Francis Jayapathy, S.J., Director of LISSTAR, Loyola College, Chennai. The chief guest for the occasion was the Honourable Judge, Mr. Rajeshwaran (Retd.) Madras High Court. The principal of Loyola College, Rev. Dr. G. Joseph Antony Samy, S.J. delivered a passionate speech about the plight of Refugees and presided the valedictory function. Dr. M. Gautaman and Prof. D. Anuradha moderated the event. Rev. Fr. Louie Albert, S.J. delivered the vote of thanks. The programme came to a close with the National Anthem.
Ms. Parikrama Gupta, Protection Assistant, (Training) UNHCR
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Honorable Judge, Mr. Rajeshwaran (Retd.), Madras High Court

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