

**Statement by Ms. Beijing Rodgers
Permanent Mission of The Bahamas to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva**

**at the Human Rights Council Intersessional Seminar on Youth and Human Rights
*Statement on The Challenges and discrimination faced by young people in the realization of their rights.***

**12th April, 2021**

Madam Moderator,

Distinguished Panelists

Excellencies, Delegates and Fellow Youth

I am honoured to participate as the Youth Delegate of The Bahamas.

The challenges and discrimination faced by young people in the realization of their rights that we wish to address are the gender disparity that exists in the conferral of Bahamian citizenship and the dissociation of fathers within the family structure.

In The Bahamas gender disparity in the conferral of nationality is complex. When a Bahamian woman marries a foreign man, she is unable to pass her nationality on to their children. While the Government has sought to address this, to further assist with alleviating the discrimination impacting affected youth, the Government should continue to raise awareness of the issue nationally, ensure adequate education on the issue and increase efforts to amend the law.

The second issue we want to highlight is the dissociation of fathers within the family structure, resulting in the absence of fathers raising their families and providing support and care.

The greatest challenge arising from absentee fathers in the home, is the denial of boys and young men the training and guidance that fathers provide as well as daughters being deprived of the love, affection and affirmation of their fathers. Unfortunately, most absent fathers do not contribute financially to the basic needs for their children, which can lead to a variety of social issues, such as illegal activity, physical and emotional abuse, and depression.

Without intervention, such issues may be passed to the next generation, and the cycle continues. This causes an imbalance within the family structure, and presents obstacles to young people being fully empowered to fulfil their potential.

We propose a nationwide initiative to connect youth through a mentorship empowerment programme that would assist them in making better choices, overcoming difficult family environments, feeling loved and contributing to breaking the cycle of absent fathers in the home.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to address the Council.