**Live Statement via Zoom at Session 5**

**Workshop Intervention by Bina Ramanand from Family Frontiers, Malaysia**

**As the world confronted the COVID-19 pandemic, nationality laws that discriminate on the basis of gender, exacerbated the hardships experienced by affected families and even caused family separation. In the wake of the pandemic, the cruel impacts of these discriminatory laws had severe repercussions.**

Malaysia was not spared, it is one of 24 countries with a nationality law that denies women and men the equal right to pass on citizenship to their children.

The pandemic’s travel bans on non-citizens meant that Malaysian women could not return home to deliver their children accompanied by their non-Malaysian spouses and children. Additionally, as Malaysia is one of just three countries that does not uphold men’s right to confer nationality on children born outside of legal marriage, consequently children born to Malaysian men born outside legal marriage, due to travel restrictions are denied citizenship. No remedial measures have been offered thus far.

We are heartened though, that the current Malaysian Government, has [stated its commitment](https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2023/01/867215/azalina-constitution-be-amended-allow-mothers-grant-citizenship) to prioritize advancing women’s equal citizenship rights. Yet, we remain deeply concerned by the injustice and suffering faced by Malaysian women and their affected families on a daily basis until full equality is granted.

**We Call on Member States and UN bodies to:**

1. **Close the gap on the remaining countries with nationality laws that deny women and men the equal right to confer nationality on their children and spouses.**
2. **Grant citizenship to children with one citizen parent or adopted parent, without discrimination on the basis of the parent’s gender or marital status**
3. **Review Immigration laws and policies of binational families such that they uphold gender justice, the best interests of the child, and support family wellbeing.**

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