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One of the principal problems facing long-term migrants to and within Africa, whether voluntary or involuntary, is the lack of effective procedures to give them a permanent legal status in their new country; that is, the lack of procedures to grant them citizenship. Whereas most African countries permit, in principle, the acquisition of citizenship by naturalization, in practice naturalization may be almost impossible to obtain.

The criteria on which citizenship by naturalization may be granted vary, but usually include long-term residence or marriage to a citizen. In some countries, acquiring citizenship by naturalization is relatively straightforward, at least in theory. More than twenty countries provide for a right to naturalize based on legal residence of five years; for others, the period required is up to fifteen or twenty years (Chad, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda) – or as much as thirty-five years for the Central African Republic. In many countries, marriage to a citizen either entitles one directly to citizenship, or reduces the residence period and other qualifications required for naturalization. South Africa provides a two-step process: a person must first become a permanent resident, a process that takes a minimum five years; following acquisition of permanent residence, a further five years' residence are required to become a citizen.

Though statistics are often hard to come by, those that are reported reveal that the numbers of those naturalized vary hugely across countries: more than 24,671 became naturalized citizens of South Africa during 2006/07 alone, with others resuming citizenship or registering citizenship by descent;¹ in Senegal, 12,000 people have been naturalized since independence in 1960.² Almost 6,000 foreigners have become Swazi citizens since independence,

from almost 20,000 who applied.³ Botswana granted 39,000 people citizenship between 1966 and 2004.⁴ In Côte d'Ivoire, the 1998 census revealed that only 1 per cent of the population was naturalized and around a quarter was identified as of foreign origin.

Other countries apply much stricter rules, often designed to make it more difficult for those who are not 'natives' of the country to obtain citizenship. In many countries investigations are required, including interviews and police enquiries. Under the exceptionally demanding 2004 nationality law adopted by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), applications for naturalization must be considered by the Council of Ministers and submitted to the National Assembly before being awarded by presidential decree; moreover, the individual must have rendered 'distinguished service' (*d'éminents services*) or provide a visible benefit to the country. In Sierra Leone, citizenship by naturalization is in theory possible after an (already long) fifteen-year legal residence period; in practice it is nearly impossible to obtain. According to available records (many were destroyed during the war) there are fewer than two hundred naturalized citizens. In Egypt naturalization is almost never granted, except to those born in Egypt, with a father of Egyptian origin or from an Arab or Muslim country. Although the grant of a presidential decree is common in civil-law countries and is often a routine administrative procedure without a heavy political weight, the requirement leaves a great deal of discretionary power in the executive branch.

Similarly, some countries apply criteria to naturalization based on cultural assimilation in addition to requirements of legal residence, in particular knowledge of the national language(s). At the most extreme, Ethiopia's 1930 Nationality Law, before it was repealed, required an applicant to 'know Amharic language perfectly, speaking and writing it fluently'. (The 2003 Proclamation on Ethiopian Nationality has reduced this requirement to an ability to 'communicate in any one of the languages of the nations/nationalities of the Country'.) While other countries have more manageable language and cultural requirements, these laws may be used in practice to restrict citizenship on an ethnic

basis. Among the groups most seriously affected by deficiencies in laws for naturalization are refugees.

Refugees denied a permanent home

In the language used by the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), there are three ‘durable solutions’ to the situation of individuals who have crossed an international border seeking refuge from persecution or from civil war: voluntary repatriation, local integration in the country of first asylum, or resettlement in a third country. Although voluntary repatriation to their home country is often the best outcome for those who have fled persecution or war, the reality is that for many repatriation may not be possible because of continued insecurity. Resettlement in a third country is only ever going to be possible for a small minority of those affected. Integration and permanent settlement in the country of refuge may therefore be needed, and the UN Convention on Refugees requires states to ‘facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees’; yet, even where refugees make progress in terms of economic and social integration, there are often no possibilities of converting refugee status into permanent residence and citizenship. As UNHCR puts it, with restraint: ‘Progress has been rather modest in terms of local integration throughout the continent.’⁵

The record of African countries in providing citizenship to long-term refugee populations varies greatly, and many countries do not have laws that establish effective procedures for the acquisition of permanent residence and citizenship by refugees – or any other applicant.

Even in countries that have recently adopted refugee laws, they stop short of following the UN Refugee Convention’s rules when it comes to providing for naturalization of refugee populations. For example, Uganda adopted a new Citizenship and Immigration Control Act in 1999 and a Refugees Act in 2006. In relation to naturalization, the Refugees Act simply states that ‘the Constitution and any other law in force in Uganda shall apply to the naturalisation of a recognised refugee’. These laws require

twenty years' residence in the country: an extremely long period for a refugee who may be able to claim the protection of no other country. Moreover, children born in the country to non-citizens can apply for registration as citizens – but children of refugees, perhaps the category most likely to need this right, are explicitly excluded by the constitution itself. In practice, administration of the immigration directorate has been poor, leading to vast backlogs of citizenship applications.

New refugee laws adopted in Kenya and Sierra Leone also do not grant any right to naturalize; even though the Sierra Leonean act provided for the 'facilitation of lasting solutions' and local integration of refugees. In practice, Kenya excludes refugees from the naturalization provisions of its general laws.

Egypt, like Kenya, does not offer refugees permanent residence or citizenship rights: the Egyptian government treats the position of refugees as temporary, allowing only two solutions – repatriation or resettlement in a third country. There is no specific refugee law, and though the constitution recognizes the concept of political refugee, this status has been granted only to a few high-profile individuals. For the rest, Egypt has effectively passed on the execution of its obligations under the UN Refugee Convention to the UNHCR Cairo office.⁶ Moreover, Egypt instituted reservations to its ratification of the international instruments, relating to refugees' access to employment, state education and public relief and assistance or rationing. Refugees in Egypt and their children find it near impossible to obtain Egyptian nationality, unless they are married to or have a parent who is an Egyptian citizen; they do not qualify for naturalization as Egyptians regardless of the length of their residence in the country. Palestinian refugees in Egypt, who make up some 70,000 of the total 100,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the country, are particularly badly affected. Though they are to some extent integrated in Egyptian society and have preferential treatment with regard to accessing work, they are completely excluded from the possibility of obtaining citizenship, thanks to a 1959 decision of the Arab League that the Palestinian diaspora should not be given citizenship in other

'Participatory research' on refugee issues in Egypt

Throughout my time doing research on Palestinian refugees in Egypt, I experienced interference from the Egyptian security authorities. This has now culminated in being held at Cairo airport when on the way from my home in Amman, Jordan to present a paper in Cairo on the unprotected Palestinians in Egypt. Later I was refused entry to Egypt and deported ...

Of the many people who were in the waiting room, [one case] drew my attention: A Palestinian, holding an Egyptian travel document, was denied entry to Egypt since he overstayed his return visa. His mother is Egyptian and he was raised in Egypt where he remained until 15 years ago when he decided to leave and look for work elsewhere. Today, he works in Tanzania and was hoping to spend his holidays with his family in Cairo. The Egyptian authorities, denying him entry, told him to seek a visa for another country. Through contacts of his wife, he was waiting for a visa from Russia. He was not sure when he would leave, but he had hopes of receiving his visa in another five days.⁷

Arab countries, as a way of preserving their identity and political cause. Thus reforms adopted in 2004, which for the first time allowed the children of Egyptian women and foreign men to obtain nationality,⁸ do not apply to those born of Palestinian fathers and Egyptian mothers. In practice, few if any children born to a Palestinian father and Egyptian mother have yet been granted citizenship, despite the change in the law.

There is, however, movement in the direction of improving access to citizenship by refugees in some other countries. Ghana allows for refugees to naturalize, though again studies of long-term Liberian refugees in Ghana showed they had many difficulties in claiming citizenship. In November 2006 it was reported that the Botswana president had approved the grant

of citizenship to 183 long-term Angolan refugees resident in Botswana since the 1970s who had not repatriated to Angola at the end of the civil war there. Tanzania has a relatively good record on refugee status, including provision of citizenship in the 1990s to Rwandan refugees dating from the late 1950s and early 1960s, and, more recently, to several thousand Somali refugees in the north-eastern part of Tanzania. In 2007, Tanzania offered citizenship to almost 200,000 Burundian refugees resident in the

The story of Khoti Chilomba Kamanga

In 1980, I was leading a fairly a comfortable life for a twenty-two-year-old, single and working as a personnel assistant at the American embassy in Lilongwe. But the political climate in Malawi was suffocating and highly dangerous. I joined the League for a Socialist Malawi (LESOMA), whose leader, Dr Attati Mpakati, was to be shot dead in Harare by agents of the Malawian government. When it became too risky to remain in the country, I opted to flee to Tanzania and became a refugee. Little did I know that, like many exiled compatriots, my grandparents, both parents, as well as a sister, would die without my participation in the burial rituals.

But I wasn't fleeing to a strange land. My parents had, in March 1933, come to what was then Tanganyika (present-day Tanzania) as migrant workers from Nyasaland (now Malawi), my father working initially as a railway stationmaster and retiring from the Tanzania civil service. I was born in the railway town of Shinyanga, and enjoyed my early childhood and education in Dar es Salaam.

I arrived back in Dar es Salaam on 28 July 1980, on a regular commercial flight. A Tanzanian government Aliens Travel Document (ATD No. 5890) was issued to me on 6 August 1980. Humbling hospitality, astonishing efficiency.

From Dar es Salaam, I travelled to Moscow and joined

the Patrice Lumumba University. I mastered the Russian language, began enjoying the food and learned to cope with the long, harsh winters. Eleven years elapsed before I left Moscow to return to Africa. While I was in Moscow, the Tanzanian government replaced the ATD in my possession with the more respectable-looking and widely recognized Nansen passport. On its face were emblazoned the words: 'UN Convention of 28 July 1951 Travel Document'. And with this new international identification document it became possible for the first time to visit countries that had never recognized the ATD.

On return to Dar es Salaam in 1991, one of my first calls was on the Refugee Unit of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Once again, I was speedily issued a document which is among my most treasured. The University of Dar es Salaam had already indicated they would offer me a job if I would produce a work permit. Written in Kiswahili, the Home Affairs permit recognized that I was a refugee and contained the following magic words: 'This document serves as authorization for him to be offered a job or be in gainful employment.' I was able to take the promised work at the university, and soon became the director there of the Centre for the Study of Forced Migration.

When did I cease to be a refugee?

Following the collapse of the Banda regime in 1994 and the advent of democratic rule in Malawi, Tanzania applied the 'cessation clause' in the Refugee Convention. I would no longer be entitled to the Nansen passport, the only valid travelling document in my possession. There was the option of quitting my job and returning to Malawi, a country in which I had not lived since fleeing in 1980. Remaining in Tanzania, the country of my birth and residence for the last three years, seemed more sensible. But it wouldn't be that simple.

I rushed to Malawi to obtain a passport, which I did in June

1995. With that, I returned to the Tanzanian immigration authorities to have my residence status restored and thus keep my job. I had solved one major problem. But not the anxieties of seeking contract renewals nor going in and out of the immigration to sort out my residence permit.

My naturalization application form bears the date 18 January 1998. As early as 14 February 2000 I swore the 'Oath of Allegiance' to the Republic of Tanzania, vowing to preserve, protect and defend the constitution; and yet for the next four years was allowed to continue holding only an alien passport.

A naturalization certificate was issued on April Fool's Day of 2004, but to obtain a Tanzanian passport I had also to furnish evidence of renunciation of Malawian citizenship. The Malawian consular authorities in Dar es Salaam advised me to please travel to Malawi and handle this matter in person. In Blantyre for the purpose, I was welcomed warmly, if quizzically. But once I had handed over the Malawi passport in return for the renunciation certificate, I remained without a valid travel document to allow me to re-enter Tanzania! After much head-scratching by the authorities, it was decided that an 'Alien's Emergency Certificate' would be issued. The reasoning was articulated in the following fashion: 'The bearer has renounced Malawi citizenship and now is a Tanzania [*sic*]. This is to enable him travel to Tanzania as he has no passport at the moment.'¹⁰

country since 1972 and their descendants. But these examples are too few and far between and leave too many excluded.⁹

In South Africa, the years after the transition to democratic rule saw a wholesale review of the treatment of refugees. The new government immediately ratified the refugee conventions and, even before legislative changes to the immigration regime were passed, offered a series of immigration amnesties to particular groups

of foreigners from the region: contract mineworkers (1995); a broader category of people from the SADC region who had lived in South Africa for at least five years and had economic or family ties in the country (1996); and finally Mozambicans displaced by the civil war in that country who had been refused refugee status by the apartheid government (1999).¹¹ An estimated 1–1.5 million people became eligible for South African citizenship in this way, though only 51,000 applications were received from miners, and just over 200,000 for others from the SADC region.¹²

Included within the flood of reforming legislation adopted by the post-apartheid government during its first decade were new refugee and immigration laws.¹³ These laws drew a clear distinction between asylum seekers and refugees and other migrants, and a bureaucratic apparatus was established to deal with applications for refugee status. Around a quarter of a million people have applied for and more than thirty thousand have been granted refugee status, though there are vast backlogs and acknowledged refugees may still struggle to gain the necessary identity documents that should follow.¹⁴ Despite difficulties in practice, South Africa's system does, notably, provide for a transfer of status from refugee to permanent residence and then naturalized citizenship. After five years of continuous residence in South Africa from the date that asylum was granted, the Immigration Act allows for the granting of (permanent) residence to a refugee if the Standing Committee for Refugee Affairs provides a certificate that he or she will remain a refugee indefinitely. Five years after that, a permanent resident can apply for citizenship by the usual rules.

Moreover, of the extensive list of rights in the South African constitution, including comprehensive socio-economic rights, only four rights are limited to citizens: the citizenship right itself, political rights (to vote and stand for office), the right to residence, and rights to freedom of trade, occupation and profession. The courts have confirmed that all others are applicable to non-citizens, and arguably to all non-nationals (including those who are not legally present in the country).¹⁵

South Africa also illustrates, of course, the limits of legal

definitions. From the mid-1990s, as South Africa's borders opened up to the continent, increasing numbers of migrants and refugees came to the country. The numbers of undocumented migrants are highly contested, but probably run to the millions, swelled in recent years by Zimbabweans desperate for work in a functioning economy. But national human rights organizations reported ever more serious worries about xenophobia among the native South African population towards these incomers. In May and June 2008, the situation radically worsened, when attacks on foreigners broke out in Johannesburg, Cape Town and other urban centres, leaving more than sixty dead and displacing tens of thousands.

Tangled up with the resentment and competition for resources that led to violence was the strong sense of ordinary, poor, South Africans that they have been excluded from the great wealth of the country, despite the transition of 1994, and often overtaken by the newcomers. Apparently endemic corruption among officials of the Department of Home Affairs and police means that even those who do hold South African national documents may not be believed. More than a quarter of South Africans want a total ban on immigration. Yet hostile feelings are more complex than a generalized resentment of foreigners, being moderated by race, gender, ethnicity and economic status.¹⁶ Somehow, it seems that South Africa's history of pass laws and population control still has a grip on the popular imagination; while the ANC government's failure to deliver constitutionally promised rights has fuelled tensions not only between citizens and non-citizens but also among different (racial) categories of citizens. A commitment to non-discrimination in citizenship and other law is not enough to solve these problems, which will need a much wider range of policy responses. Yet a continuing official commitment to non-discrimination can also send a signal of societal values that can in time have a much broader effect.

In general, the countries that deal most effectively and humanely with long-term refugees are those with the most liberal naturalization regimes, in which special measures for naturaliza-

Former President Mbeki on migration and xenophobia

Apart from anything else, our intimate relationship with the rest of our Continent is illustrated by the significant numbers of fellow Africans who have sought to settle in South Africa since 1994. Undoubtedly, this trend will continue, adding a new richness to our own society.

Many of these new immigrants bring with them important skills that our country needs. Many of them are also people who are creative, full of initiative and driven by an enterprising spirit. The more they impart these characteristics to us as well, the better we will be as a people and a society.

Necessarily, we must continue to be vigilant against any evidence of xenophobia against the African immigrants. It is fundamentally wrong and unacceptable that we should treat people who come to us as friends as though they are our enemies. We should also never forget that the same peoples welcomed us to their own countries when many of our citizens had to go into exile as a result of the brutality of the apartheid system.

To express the critical importance of Africa to ourselves, both black and white, we should say that we are either African or we are nothing. We can only succeed in the objectives we pursue if the rest of our Continent also succeeds. We sink or swim together.

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tion of refugees are not required because length of residence is the critical criterion. The law in these countries sets the mood for an inclusive and generous incorporation of new members of the society.

Senegal, for example, provides that anyone from a neighbouring country (from which refugees are most likely to come) who has lived in the country for five years can simply opt for Senegalese

nationality, without further conditions. Although many of the more than 60,000 Mauritians expelled from their country in 1989/90 who became refugees in Senegal resisted taking Senegalese citizenship because they feared losing their claim to Mauritanian citizenship, many did do so to facilitate travel and work, even if they preferred not to admit this publicly. Senegal promised that it would guarantee citizenship to any Mauritians who chose not to return following the invitation to do so in 2007.

Western Sahara, Morocco and Algeria: Sahrawi refugees stateless for three decades

The Western Saharan refugees in Algeria constitute one of the largest and longest-standing populations of unintegrated refugees in Africa. Though in a less extreme way than the Palestinians, they are trapped in a citizenship black hole, thanks to a political failure to resolve the fundamental questions of state existence that first led to their flight. Those who remained in their homes in Western Sahara and oppose Morocco's de facto control of the territory face significant restrictions on their civil liberties, including in some cases the right to identity papers and travel documents.

Western Sahara is a former Spanish territory on the western edge of North Africa, bordered by Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania. Its status has been disputed between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Polisario Front¹⁷ independence movement for more than thirty years. While this dispute has remained unresolved, with Morocco in occupation of the territory, more than 150,000 Western Saharans, known as Sahrawis, have lived as stateless refugees in Algeria.

The territory was declared a Spanish colonial protectorate in 1884; in 1958 its legal status was changed under Spanish law so that it became an autonomous province with a degree of elected self-government, whose residents were Spanish nationals. A liberation movement emerged in the 1960s and 1970s and a series of UN resolutions called on Spain to hold a referendum on self-

determination for Western Sahara, but only in 1974 did Spain concede the principle of a referendum and begin compiling a census of the population. King Hassan II of Morocco, however, announced that Morocco would not accept a referendum that included an option for independence; Mauritania also claimed the territory. At the request of Morocco, the UN General Assembly referred the situation to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion: in October 1975, the ICJ ruled that neither Morocco nor Mauritania had any legal claim over Western Saharan territory.

Just days after the ICJ ruling, Moroccan armed forces crossed the border and occupied most of the northern part of the Western Sahara territory, followed by a 'green march' of several hundred thousand Moroccan civilians to 'reclaim' the region for Morocco. Spain then signed an agreement in Madrid with Morocco and Mauritania which agreed a temporary tripartite administration of the territory; in April 1976, Morocco and Mauritania subsequently agreed a partition between just their two states. Meanwhile, Polisario proclaimed the creation of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) on 27 February 1976, following Spain's formal withdrawal the day before. Mauritania renounced its claims to the territory in 1979 and withdrew its forces, following losses in fighting with Polisario; but Moroccan forces remain until today in occupation of most of the former Spanish colony, with only a small strip in the east under the control of Polisario/SADR.

As a result of the Moroccan takeover, around half of the native population fled the territory: by mid-1976 there were 40,000 refugees, growing to 80,000 by the end of 1977. According to the government of Algeria, it hosts today an estimated 165,000 Sahrawi refugees, though the number is contested.¹⁸ Most of these people are still in four camps near Tindouf, a historic oasis town in southern Algeria. Though the camps are poor, the Sahrawi refugees have access to some health, education and other services, thanks to infrastructure established by Polisario with support from the UN, the European Union and other countries, as well as solidarity groups in Spain and elsewhere. Initial close

control of the camps by Polisario has opened up to a somewhat freer system; and, though the Polisario and Algerian authorities have checkpoints on the roads leaving the camps, including to the border posts, in practice camp residents seem to be largely free to leave on trips of short or longer duration. Travel within Algeria beyond Tindouf, however, may require permission from the Algerian authorities.¹⁹

A UN-sponsored ceasefire was agreed between Morocco and Polisario in 1991, based on a peace plan that provided for the establishment of a United Nations mission (known as MINURSO) to organize a referendum on independence or other status for the territory.²⁰ To date, no referendum has been held. Among the key points of contention are the eligibility criteria to vote in the referendum, the options available to be voted for, and the return of refugees from Algeria. Morocco has continued to put forward proposals by which Western Sahara would remain within its control, but with some level of devolution of power to locally elected bodies and officials. In January 2000, after interviewing almost 200,000 applicants, the Identification Commission of MINURSO published a list of just over 86,000 persons eligible to vote in the referendum (48,000 living under Moroccan control and 38,000 in the refugee camps), based on the Spanish census of 1974; Morocco, however, lodged more than 120,000 appeals on behalf of the settler population in the territory. UNHCR also prepared an unpublished list of refugees to be repatriated. The total population in the area under Moroccan control is today close to 400,000.²¹ In 2007, Morocco presented a new plan for Western Saharan autonomy to the UN.

In 1984, the support of Algeria and (at that time) Libya won the SADR recognition from the Organization of African Unity (OAU), following the failure of OAU peace brokering efforts to reach a successful conclusion. Morocco then withdrew from membership of the continental body.²² Algeria remains the SADR/Polisario's main supporter. At different times, more than seventy states have recognized the SADR, most of them in Africa and Latin America, though in more recent years several African countries

have cancelled or 'suspended' their recognition, following the latest Moroccan offer of a form of autonomy to the territory – and Moroccan incentives for a change of position. As of late 2008, the total number of countries recognizing the republic was just over forty.²³ Morocco has never been recognized as the 'administering power' of the territory by the United Nations under the legal framework providing for 'non-self-governing territories'.²⁴

The SADR issues national identity cards to Sahrawis living in the refugee camps and the territories under SADR control, and those who wish to travel abroad are granted Sahrawi passports, with which they can travel to the few countries recognizing the Sahrawi Republic, including Mauritania. The government of Algeria issues short-term passports to Sahrawi refugees who need to travel – usually for reasons of medical treatment, family unification, and so on – to countries that do not recognize the SADR. These passports are obtained by applying to the Algerian authorities via the SADR bureaucracy, but are only travel documents and do not imply recognition of the refugees as Algerian citizens.²⁵ Group permit schemes also allow many thousands of Sahrawi children to travel each year to Spain, Venezuela, Cuba, Italy and other countries to be hosted by families offering solidarity with the refugees. An unknown number of Sahrawis also have citizenship in Mauritania, where many have family or other ties.

In 1976, Spain adopted a decree giving natives of former Spanish Sahara the option during a period of one year to opt for Spanish nationality, under certain conditions.²⁶ Because of the nature of the Western Sahara legal status, however – in which the International Court of Justice rejected Morocco's claim to any legal tie to the territory, while the UN does not recognize Morocco as the administering power – the general principle of an individual choice in case of succession of states between the nationality of predecessor or successor state does not apply.

Nevertheless, those Sahrawis living in the area under Moroccan occupation are under Moroccan law Moroccan nationals eligible for travel and other documentation; moreover, the Moroccan nationality code does not allow for an individual to renounce

Moroccan citizenship except as authorized by decree.²⁷ Since 1977, the inhabitants of the Western Saharan territories occupied by Morocco have also been able to participate in Moroccan national and regional elections. Many Sahrawis, however, reject Moroccan nationality and continue to protest against Moroccan administration of the territory; there were new waves of protest in 1999 and 2005.

In practice, civil liberties are still restricted in Moroccan-administered Western Sahara, though the human rights situation has greatly improved in recent years. Many Sahrawis were among the hundreds of 'disappearances' that took place in Morocco from the mid-1960s to the early 1990s. Moroccan legislation prohibits attacks on the kingdom's 'territorial integrity', and activists for Western Saharan independence still face harassment, including deprivation of travel and nationality documents.²⁸ For example, Brahim Sabbar, a human rights activist documenting violations in Western Sahara, spent a decade in prison in the 1980s, and from 2000 to at least 2007 was denied a passport.²⁹ A group of Sahrawis were deprived of their passports for several years after they attempted to travel to Geneva to participate in UN human rights activities in 2003, though they have since been permitted to travel again.³⁰ More recently, Sahrawi activists employed in civil service jobs have been refused permission by their employers to take leave in order to travel.

A satisfactory resolution of the Sahrawis' plight may have to wait for a political settlement. But in the meantime, the political bargaining should not prevent them from obtaining the citizenship of the countries where they find themselves, especially Algeria, under the normal processes of naturalization available under Algerian law.