

Circuit Court for Prince George's County
Case No. CAE27-35926

UNREPORTED
IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL APPEALS
OF MARYLAND

No. 2446

September Term, 2017

IN THE MATTER OF DERRICK
ANDERSON

Graeff,
Arthur,
Moylan, Charles E., Jr.
(Senior Judge, Specially Assigned),

JJ.

PER CURIAM

Filed: March 5, 2019

*This is an unreported opinion, and it may not be cited in any paper, brief, motion, or other document filed in this Court or any other Maryland Court as either precedent within the rule of stare decisis or as persuasive authority. Md. Rule 1-104.

Derrick Donnell Anderson filed a petition to change his name to Derrick Donnell Bey in the Circuit Court for Prince George’s County. Additionally, Mr. Bey sought to change his race and nationality from “AFRICAN/AMERICAN, U.S. citizen” to “Moor/Americas Aboriginal national ‘Not a United States citizen.’” On January 17, 2017, the circuit court entered an order changing appellant’s name from Derrick Donnell Anderson to Derrick Donnell Bey, but declining to change his race and nationality. Mr. Bey now appeals, claiming that the court erred in not entering an order changing his race and nationality to “Moor/Americas Aboriginal national” so that he could “cease being a 14th Amendment U.S. Citizen[.]” Because the court lacked the authority to grant Mr. Bey’s request, we affirm.

Although Maryland Rule 15-901 allows a person to file a petition for change of name, there is no Maryland law that gives the circuit court the authority to enter an order changing a person’s race and nationality such that they would cease to be a United States citizen. Nor does the court’s refusal to do so under the circumstance violate the Maryland Declaration of Rights, as Mr. Bey claims. Rather, voluntary renunciation of United States citizenship is controlled by federal law, specifically 8 U.S.C § 1481. Mr. Bey asserts that Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, gives him the right to change his nationality. That declaration, however, is not binding on the circuit court or this Court because it is merely a statement of principles and not a treaty or international agreement imposing legal obligations. *See Sosa v. Alvarez-Machain*, 542 U.S. 692, 734-35 (2004). And even if it were binding, Mr. Bey was not deprived of his right to change his nationality. He may

attempt do so in accordance with 8 U.S.C § 1481 by filing a pleading or paper in the appropriate jurisdiction.

**JUDGMENT OF THE CIRCUIT
COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S
COUNTY AFFIRMED. COSTS TO
BE PAID BY APPELLANT.**