



Association Burundaise pour la Protection des Droits
Humains et des Personnes Détenues « A.PRO.D.H. »

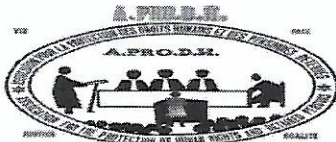
APRODH Statement on blatant Violations of Refugees' Rights in Tanzania

Burundian refugees who have been on Tanzanian soil since 2015 have continued to be persecuted by the Tanzanian authorities. Many of them were killed, others took away, and then reported missing. Since their arrival in this country of exile, they have suffered serious human rights violations. Despite the existence of laws that protect refugees, this situation has continued to worsen overnight.

As a reminder, in 2019, Burundian refugees have always been the subject of persecution and ill-treatment, repeated attacks by armed men who allegedly came from Burundi, including agents of the National Intelligence Service in Burundi (SNR) and the Imbonerakure militia (famous in abuses and criminal acts of all kinds), who have been reported on several occasions, sexual violence, arbitrary arrests, torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment, enforced disappearances and armed robbery, etc. These violations have been increased for forcing Burundian refugees to return home.

Since January 5, 2022, the Tanzanian police and the basungusungu (youth affiliated to the ruling party in Tanzania) have destroyed all bananas' plantations, and fields of plantation belonging to Burundian refugees who are in the Nyarugusu and Nduta refugee camps. Apart from crop fields, all income-generating activities are prohibited and refugees are not allowed to go to the market. And all this is done in the presence of the Tanzanian authorities. What is happening in Nyarugusu and Nduta camps is unacceptable in African culture, and incorporates a violation of International Humanitarian Law.

It is relevant to ponder the reason for the presence of the Tanzanian security forces in the areas where Burundian refugees are concentrated, without any prevention and/or protection measures for the refugees being taken by the Tanzanian authorities, in accordance with the international conventions on refugees including the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention, the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights 1981, including respect for the sacred principle of non-expulsion/refoulement of refugees.



This is also unwelcome for a country like Tanzania, which has repeatedly hosted peace talks for Burundi, to see this nation openly violating the rights of refugees. Obviously, it is a strategy of Tanzania to force Burundian refugees to return.

APRODH is concerned about the behaviour of the Tanzanian government towards the Burundian refugees who are on its soil. We always made an appeal but had no effect, because the situation of insecurity has always prevailed in these camps in guilty and criminal complicity of the Burundian and Tanzanian authorities to repatriate them by force. According to sources on place, there are even plans to destroy their huts, reduce food for the refugees by up to a third and assassinate their leaders.

Taking into account of these serious human rights violations which are perpetrated day by day against the Burundian refugees in the refugee camps in Tanzania, there is a need of urgent action on the part of the Tanzanian authorities, the Community of East Africa, the African Union via its commission in charge of Human and Peoples' Rights as well as the United Nations and more specifically the High Commissioner for Refugees. The latter should use their influence to bring Tanzania to respect the rights of refugees.

In front of this situation, APRODH reiterates its commitment to defend human rights and recommends the following:

• **To the Government of Tanzania to:**

- ✓ Treat humanely and stop acts of both moral and physical torture inflicted on Burundian refugees who are on its soil.
- ✓ Ensure the Burundian refugee camps' security in Tanzania. If the Tanzanian authorities do not want to give exile to the Burundian refugees, the solution is not to kill them or abuse them unduly. It would be better to allow them to seek another asylum where they can enjoy their freedom and protection in accordance with international conventions.



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• **To the East African Community (EAC), African Union and its Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights:**

- ✓ To force the Tanzanian government to put an end to the mistreatment of Burundian refugees, because it is a blatant violation of international rights to which Tanzania is a party.

• **To the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):**

- ✓ To take appropriate measures to ensure the protection of Burundian refugees in Tanzania against all forms of human rights violations,
- ✓ Continue to provide necessary assistance to these refugees in collaboration with all other humanitarian organizations.

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