



To the attention of His Excellency Filippo Grandi
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Geneva.

Subject: Urgent alert letter on the enforced disappearances of Burundian refugees in
Tanzania

Transmitted to:

- Her Excellency Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania
- Her Excellency Veronica Mueni Nduva, Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC)
- United Nations Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID)

Mr. High Commissioner,

The Coalition for the Defense of Human Rights in Refugee Camps (CDH/VICAR) wishes to draw your urgent attention to a deeply alarming situation that persists in Burundian refugee camps in Tanzania, particularly in Nduta and Nyarugusu.

For several months now, night-time abductions and enforced disappearances of refugees have multiplied. Our recently published report¹ documents the following cases:

¹ <https://cdhvicar.org/assets/uploads/media-uploader/cdhvicar-report-en1748849797.pdf>

To date, their families have received no information regarding their fate or whereabouts. They remain in deep distress, with no clear path to justice. These arrests were carried out by Tanzanian intelligence agents driving tinted-window Toyota Hilux vehicles.

Mr. High Commissioner, we call on UNHCR to intervene directly and without delay to ensure that:

- These refugees are released and reappear alive and free; if, tragically, they have been killed, their families are officially informed and allowed to mourn; if still alive, the Tanzanian government reveals their places of detention and the reasons for their arrest, in accordance with international law.

We recall that in July 2020, similar arrests occurred: seven refugees were abducted under the same conditions². Three months later, they were found in Burundi, where they testified to having suffered severe torture during detention. This precedent illustrates the gravity and continuity of practices that blatantly contravene international law.

Some of these disappearances are politically motivated. Others concern individuals accused of denouncing the forced repatriation of Burundian refugees or of speaking out against their mistreatment. Alarming, refugees have even been forbidden from engaging in income-generating activities. Among those forcibly repatriated, some have suffered assassinations and enforced disappearances³.

Mr. High Commissioner, the families of the disappeared want only one thing: the truth about their loved ones and the respect of their human dignity. We rely on your leadership and personal commitment to put an end to these violations and to restore refugees' trust in UNHCR's protection mandate.

² [Tanzanie : Des réfugiés burundais victimes de disparitions forcées et de torture | Human Rights Watch](#)

³ [Unlaisserpassederetourquinepassepas.pdf](#)

Please accept, Mr. High Commissioner, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Done on September 16, 2025

For CDH/VICAR

Léopold Sharangabo

President



CFI:

- Special Rapporteur on refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, and migrants (ACHPR)
- Fortuné Gaetan Zongo, UN special rapporteur on the human rights situation in Burundi
- Delegation of the European Union to Tanzania
- Embassies of the United States, Canada and Germany in Tanzania
- Mamadou Dian Balde, UNHCR's Regional Director for East and Horn of Africa, and Great Lakes
- Zulqarnain Hussain Anjum, acting UNHCR representative in Tanzania