



\*\*\*For immediate release:

## **The Refugee Coalition of East Africa Response to Events in Tanzania**

NAIROBI, KENYA - The governor of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania has created an anti-LGBTQI surveillance squad and encouraged officials and citizens alike to report and begin “rounding up” LGBTQI citizens, threatening to have all in custody within the week. **The Refugee Coalition of East Africa**, a registered LGBTQI community organization in Kenya, releases the following **statement of response**:

We stand in solidarity with our LGBTQI family in Tanzania, as we did with those in Uganda after similar recent events. We wholeheartedly condemn these blatant violations of our rights. To our LGBTQI fellows in Tanzania, we understand your plight and we have lived through your fear. If you choose to flee to Kenya, please know that we are here for you and we highly encourage you to reach out to any of our member organizations for support.

It is our hope that the Kenya will become a leader in the region against this kind of hatred, violence, and discrimination. In light of the likely event of a new influx of LGBTQI refugees from Tanzania to Kenya, we implore officials to take the following into account :

- We call upon the Kenyan government and judicial system to overturn the ban on homosexual acts in the upcoming referendum and to reverse the decision to deny asylum requests to refugees based on sexual identity.
- We call upon the UNHCR to review its policy that LGBTQI refugees do not warrant special considerations and protections and to acknowledge the need for additional services and dispensations for LGBTQI refugees.
- We call upon the citizens of the non-African world, particularly those in the European Union and the United States, to take notice and express your outrage at these events, and to use your voice and your privilege to speak up against these horrifying acts and imprisonments.

The Refugee Coalition of East Africa exists because of exactly this prevalence of homophobia and prejudice in the region. We are sickened by these acts of a so-called government and we implore the world stand up against these violations.

In solidarity,  
The RefCEA Secretariat

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**The Refugee Coalition of East Africa (RefCEA)** is a registered community organization for and by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers. RefCEA was established to unite the various independent LGBTQI refugee organizations in East Africa under an umbrella organization in order to facilitate long-term planning, advocacy, and representation, and to provide fiscal management and fundraising support for its members. Additionally, RefCEA oversees research initiatives representing the LGBTQI refugee community and works toward improving conditions for refugees during the

**FITZ**  
**MEDIA**

Press contact: Adam Fitzgerald  
+1 917 544 5911  
directorfitz@gmail.com

resettlement waiting period. Current membership consists of: Community Support Initiative for Refugees, Natures Network, Refugee Flag Kakuma, Urban Legacy Africa, and Arise Network Africa.  
[www.refugeecoalition.com](http://www.refugeecoalition.com)