

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



STATEMENT BY THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DURING THE SEVENTY-SEVEN SESSION (EXCOM) IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND OCTOBER 2026 DELIVERED BY HONORABLE AYOUB MOHAMMED MAHMOUD (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS

ITEM 4 (A): NOTE ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

15 OCTOBER 2026

Chairperson, Tanzania reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the 1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol, which remain the cornerstone of international refugee protection. At the same time, we underscore the importance of regional instruments, including the 1969 OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, and similar frameworks from other regions. These instruments complement the 1951 Convention by addressing specific realities, and their recognition and full implementation are vital for an effective global protection regime.

Chairperson, Tanzania has hosted large numbers of refugees for decades, in line with our generosity and international obligations. Yet, our long experience compels us to share reflections on the strong emphasis on transitioning from traditional humanitarian assistance to full inclusion in national systems. Our experience shows that when refugees are fully included in national systems, the incentive for voluntary return diminishes significantly, even when conditions in their countries of origin improve. What begins as temporary protection risks becoming permanent refugee situations, as seen in refugees' caseloads in Tanzania dating back to the 1960s and 1970s.

Tanzania notes with concern that the Global Compact on Refugees, while valuable, has in practice been implemented with disproportionate focus on Objective number 2 on enhancing refugee self-reliance. This objective has effectively become the centerpiece of operationalization, attracting massive investments and programmes under the humanitarian–development nexus. Tanzania maintains reservations on this approach. Over-emphasis on self-reliance and inclusion, risks transforming temporary asylum into de facto refugee protracted situation.

Chairperson, we also note the growing phenomenon of mixed and onward movements. While many individuals have genuine protection needs, others use asylum channels primarily for economic opportunities, including benefits linked to inclusion and self-reliance programmes. This places additional strain on limited national resources. Furthermore, some refugees benefit from assistance and return packages, only to re-enter asylum elsewhere; others engage in asylum shopping, moving from one country to another when expectations are not met. These practices unfairly burden host countries. We urge UNHCR to adopt a firmer and more consistent approach in addressing such practices.

In this regard, Tanzania calls on the international community to strengthen support for sustainable solutions, particularly by improving conditions in countries of origin as an enabling tool for voluntary repatriation. Tanzania will continue to play its part in providing protection, while advocating for solutions that are both durable and sustainable.

I thank you.