

**Association of Congolese Refugees living in Denmark
- ACODA-**

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To

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
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CH-1211 Genève 2 Dépôt
Switzerland.

An outcry from resettled refugees living in Denmark

Introduction

It has been almost 20 years since the Danish parliament year after year makes life difficult for refugees by passing draconian laws. Two decades during which refugees felt more frustrated than integrated. But with the vote of the law called paradigm change is a drop of water that just filled the bottle. As human beings, we feel this call to come out of our silence and denounce the authoritarian excesses, massive violations of refugee's rights and minority rights as well as sabotage of international conventions on refugee protection.

No to the betrayal of the Danish government

When the Danish government came to pick us up in the various refugee camps, they promised us that they came to save our lives, to rehabilitate our mental health destroyed by the trauma of war and armed conflicts, rape, violence, massacres, killings etc. but today we feel betrayed. The Danish government has just contradicted itself.

Background

After the Danish parliament has decided to change the bill in the immigration area, the refugees were the target. The new bill has passed with an overwhelming majority vote. This new bill states that the resettled refugees from different refugee camps should know that they are in the Denmark as temporary residents, and their temporary permits must be withdrawn, when possible, and they shall be sent back home. The measures taken by the Danish parliament has brought an

outcry among the resettled refugees. The resettled refugees, known as UN-refugees have decided to come to your highest responsibility asking for a durable solution in another country, where we can call home.

During our stay in different Refugee Camps, before our resettlement to Denmark, the UNHCR Protection Officers used to tell us that Resettlement is a durable solution and that UNHCR has made some arrangements with different countries that are ready to give Refugees a durable solution. Several countries came into Refugee Camps to take Refugees to their respective countries for Resettlement. These Refugees are provided with legal, physical, social and psychological protection. Moreover, they benefit civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. They are given permanent residency on basis of the UNHCR charter as resettled, without any condition imposed on them, in contrast to Denmark, who has loaded a burden on Refugees like the Law of Moses, which no one could not fulfil. No one has called the Danish immigration to resettle us, there were better countries that provide the above mentioned to the Refugees, unfortunately for us, and we are being mentally tortured. Where is our future after spending 7 to more than 10 years with same status that we had in the camp? We were living with uncertainty in refugee camps, not knowing what will happen to us, but we got a guarantee from UNHCR that with the Resettlement to a third country, will improve our expectations and we are going to rebuild our lives. Today living in the Danish society with uncertainty again, not knowing what will happen tomorrow.

According to UNHCR, no country is legally obliged to resettle refugees, and accepting refugees is a demonstration of generosity on the part of governments. The number of states that have established regular resettlement programme and committed themselves to an annual quota has grown steadily.

Denmark is therefore not obliged to resettle refugees and keep them living in the same condition of not knowing what will be tomorrow. As you know, the Danish government is very flexible to change the immigration law, and the Danish parliament can pass a bill at any time to expel all refugees from Denmark. Among the resettled Refugees, there are some refugees who are born in the Refugee camps, hearing that they are from a certain country, which they have never been to. The Danish parliament and government do not expect those people to return to their so-called home after being for so many years in the Refugee Camps.

According to UNHCR,¹ Resettlement is by definition a partnership activity. The Resettlement of Refugees relies on cooperation and evolving partnerships between UNHCR, States, NGOs, and International Organizations.

Resettlement is dependent on states to provide permanent places of residence and support to integrate. UNHCR insists that no country is legally obliged to resettle refugees, and accepting refugees is a demonstration of generosity on the part of governments. The number of states that have established regular resettlement programme and committed themselves to an annual quota has grown steadily.

Therefore, there is no Resettlement in Denmark with a deep look at the UN charter on resettlement, it was a journey filled with worries and anxiety that we are going through. This kind of life has to

¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/partnership-resettlement.html?query=resettlement%20of%20refugee>

end in this modern society where Human Rights should promote. We deserve a better treatment, our kids, too, to whom the status of refugee are attributed despite being born in Denmark. The kids are really affected by what is told in the media and social network. We think Denmark belong to the Danish people only (The Danish People Party).

Therefore, it is up to the Danish parliament to decide if it will help the resettled refugees with permanent residency and support them to integrate and if the Danish parliament and government have failed to give permanent residence to resettled refugees, it is a good idea for UNHCR to find other countries who can take over from Denmark.

On 5th of February 2019, a Danish newspaper wrote that both Sweden, Norway and Finland,² have no plans to change the rules by sending resettled home because it is well accepted that such UN Refugees have been resettled for the only purpose to remain permanently in those respective countries. Norway wrote that it is a well-known custom that resettled Refugees should not be sent back to their countries. They must be given permanent residency.

Following the point of view from other Scandinavian countries the Resettled Refugees living in Denmark have decided to write this letter to you (UNHCR) asking for resettlement to other countries as Denmark has repeatedly shown that they are not willing to provide the resettled refugees with permanent residency and support them through integration. Therefore the concept of Paradigm Shift has been introduced, which means no more Integration, but Repatriation is the new Danish's option.

According to the Danish Refugee Council,³ the refugees living in Denmark experience stress, depression, anxiety, and failure to thrive in their daily lives. It should be noted that the same feelings were experienced in the refugee camps. The question is until when those feelings will remain the resettled refugees' minds.

The resettled refugees have followed the concerns and recommendations of UNHCR to the Danish government to refrain from all amendments of the Danish law that will have an impact on resettled refugees, but the Danish parliament has decided not to listen to UNHCR.

The resettled refugees have also looked at the Danish Aliens Act on requirements of any possibility of applying for permanent residence status, the resettled refugees would like to emphasize that it is not possible for all resettled refugees who can have the possibility to apply for such a permanent residence status. Therefore, the Danish Aliens Act is still a hindrance for the resettled refugees to settle in Denmark.

Our message to the Danish citizen

Dear Danish citizens, this country has always had a good reputation in the world and that made the pride of this country and shows the greatness of its people, a human people, humanitarian, humanistic, altruistic and supportive. But for 20 years, right-wing political leaders have won over

² <https://politiken.dk/indland/art7020572/Danmark-g%C3%A5r-enegang-i-Norden-ved-at-sende-kvoteflygtninge-hjem>

³ <https://flygtning.dk/nyheder-og-fakta/flygtninge-nedbrydes-af-stramninger>

the power of the people and begun to distort the policy inherited from the founding fathers of the Danish nation. In the age of globalization, wanting to make Denmark a castle is a mental recession.

We invite the respectful people of Denmark not to support this law but rather to put themselves on the side of these vulnerable refugees who have been well received in this country for decades.

Our message to all refugees, migrants and foreigners living in Denmark

We ask all refugees, foreigners and immigrants living in Denmark, to remain united, to stand together in order to defeat this law which has no place in our world today, in the concert of nations and cultures.

Our requirements to the Danish Parliament and the Danish Government

We resettled refugees; invite the Danish Government and Parliament to withdraw the new voted immigration act called “paradigm change”. It is unacceptable in our modern world and civilisation. This act is worse than the wall Donald Trump wants to build between the USA and Mexico.

Our requirements to the UNHCR

We, the resettled refugees from different refugee camps, submit our request to UNHCR to look for other countries who can resettle us from Denmark because our status in Denmark is now temporary, and the reward is to be sent home where persecution is permanent. There are countries which are ready to take the refugees, like Canada, Australia and the USA.

Our requirements to European Union and other European bodies

We resettled refugees we invite European authorities to take measures that we constrain Denmark to withdraw this fascist law. Europe needs to build bridges and peace, harmony, mutual understating with other cultures and peoples but not the paradigm change that comes to send Denmark back in the history 500 years.

Kape Kaposho Kishinge, deputy chairman

Elocho Swedi, counsellor

Dr. Omari Elethere Kikombe

ACODA
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Copy transmitted to:

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2. **The Ministry of Immigration and Integration** - Slotsholmsgade 10, 1216 København K
3. **Danish Parliament** – Christiansborg - 1240 København K
4. **Danish Refugee Council**, Headquarters, Borgergade 10, 3rd floor, 1300 Copenhagen K.
5. **Amnesty International Danmark**, Gammeltorv 8, 5. sal, 1457 København K
6. **The Danish Institute for Human Rights** - Wilders Pl. 8K, 1403 København K
7. **UNHCR Regional Representation for Northern Europe**
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8. **President of the European Commission**
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11. **Måns Molander**: Sweden and Denmark Director of **Human Rights Watch**