



NREF: 01/COJESKI/NK/01/2025

Monday January 13th, 2025

The United Nations Inspector
General Office/ UNHCR
Geneva,

CC:

Fillipo Grandi, UNHCR High Commissioner, Geneva
The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights Defenders, Geneva
The UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of Migrants, Geneva
The UN Office of Human Rights, Geneva,
The Protect Defenders, European Union, Brussels
The Protection Team, Frontline Human Rights Defenders, Dublin
The Protection Team, REDHAC Cameroon,
The Protection Team, Defend Defenders, Kampala Uganda,
The Director of BCNUDH, Kinshasa – DR Congo
The Director of BCNUDH, Goma, North Kivu- DR Congo,
The Protection Team of Agir Ensemble for Human Rights,
The Protection Team of Synergie Ukingo Wetu, Goma, DR Congo,
The UNHCR Country Representative in the Democratic Republic of Congo,
The UNHCR Goma, DR Congo
The Permanent Secretary of CNR, Kinshasa DR Congo,
The Head of CNR Goma, DR Congo

Re: Submitting Complaints against UNHCR/CNR Goma threats and intimidations against Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos because of our advocacy on refugee rights in North Kivu, the Democratic Republic of Congo. We call upon your urgent involvement to end threats and intimidations against Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos

Dear Inspector General Office,

The Collective of Youth Organizations for Solidarity in the Democratic Republic of Congo known as COKESKI/DRC, Coordination of North Kivu is a national Network bringing together various youth initiatives, in 2021 COJESKI North Kivu integrated also various refugee initiatives under the project called **Global Refugee Leaders Forum**, this project aims at promoting effective protection of refugees in North Kivu in particular and in the whole country in general. We focus on research, advocacy, capacity building, and information sharing and urgent actions on behalf of those at risk among others.

On Friday December 20th, 2024 we published on different social media platform an alert on the presence of a clandestine Refugee Transit Center located in Policlinic 3 Avenue, Kyeshero, Goma, in North Kivu which serves as military recruitment for Rwanda in order to continue the war in DRC. The Center is officially managed by the Congolese National Commission for Refugees known as CNR Goma in partnership with UNHCR Delegation of Goma. According to witnesses among Rwandan refugees who are the main target and clients of this center, many among those who were mobilized and put in this center and later repatriated to Rwanda, were later on recruited by Rwanda and joined M23 rebel group backed by Rwanda.

For a whole year in 2024 we wrote various emails and letters to UNHCR and to CNR Goma seeking for a meeting in order to discuss about the whole refugee protection in North Kivu and the whole repatriation process which we believe is forced, but both UNHCR and CNR did not accord us the opportunity for a meeting and discuss. We also tried to visit the said Transit Center but we were denied access by the security services.

Motivated by the desire to see refugees being treated with respect and dignity and holding the conviction that despite the war refugees have better protection opportunities in DRC in general and in North Kivu in particular than in Rwanda and Uganda, we opted to make public what is being done in total secrecy in that hidden center.

On Saturday December 21st, 2024 Kulihoshi Pecos started receiving phones calls, threats and intimidations from various intelligence officers claiming to be ANR officers and Hutu Political Actors in North Kivu because CNR is managed by Hutus which we also believe is not proper. Pecos tried his best to share the information and responded to their questions. The ANR officers insisted that Pecos should report to their offices for interrogation which he did not do.

On Tuesday December 24th, 2024 Pecos received an invitation letter from CNR Goma asking him to attend a meeting scheduled for ***Thursday December 26th, 2024 focusing on the protection of refugees in Goma and on the repatriation process***. CNR insisted that Pecos should attend but because of security reasons Pecos sent a representative who also became a target of arrest but managed to sneak out, this was after being alerted that the plan was to arrest him after the meeting. In this meeting both UNHCR and CNR opted to threaten Pecos

Plot 172 Nzangi Butondo Avenue, on main CCLK Road, near Kash Petro Station before New Hope Center, after La Sapientia University, Kituku One, Kyeshero, Goma, North Kivu- DR Congo. Tel: +243853191163, email: cojeskinordkivu@gmail.com, website: www.cojeskinordkivu.org

and indicated that they would have him persecuted. They also wanted to seek for the backup of all invited from various security services, migration, military authorities in Goma, provincial authorities and actors of the civil society who were invited. This was similar to the strategy of isolation which is used against vocal human rights defenders.

From December 26th, 2024 up today Pecos have received messages of people who are tracking him especially in various places where he used to be, and places where he used to pass, including unidentified people coming to the office for intelligence purpose.

Today Monday January 13th, 2025 at around 8:30 am a man who identified himself as from the Court of Law (Parquet de Goma) came to the office with an Invitation Letter addressed to Pecos that he should appear to Court tomorrow Tuesday January 14th, 2025 at 11am without fail. People at the office requested him to leave the letter but he refused, they requested him to take a picture of the letter and send it to Pecos through WhatsApp but he refused. He went and claimed he will come up.

On same day at 8:25 pm an officer from the Court of Law called Pecos on phone and asked him to report to court on Tuesday morning but Pecos told him to write an official letter which he did and Tuesday morning at 11:20 the Court summon letter was delivered at the office saying “you are invited to my Cabinet/Chamber to answer charges against you without fail”.

The case against Pecos under the reference RMP 9006/PR011/2024/KAB has six charges related to his various publication and alerts on the situation of refugees and asylum such as **“making fake noise, misuse of social media, and cyber criminality among others”**.

Dear Inspector General Office,

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees statistics, the Democratic Republic of Congo hosts about 527,000 refugees but we strongly contest this number as we estimate that DR Congo could have more than 4million refugees among them 75% are Rwandans who came since 1994 up today. Basing on information we collect at least 6/10 Rwandan refugees who visit our offices have faced forced repatriation back to Rwanda during operations well executed by CNR and UNHCR, this is similar with Rwandan refugees in Uganda who in most cases are those ones who were picked in DRC in the name of voluntary repatriation.

We have expressed concerns about the lack of clear UNHCR Protection Plan focusing on refugees in DRC, on contrary UNHCR/CNR have prioritized the repatriation process which we believe exposes refugees to risks in country where their fate is unknown. On top of that we have received alerts from refugees and other actors about UNHCR staff officers living in Gisenyi Rwanda while working in Goma DRC, and UNHCR staff officers who are Tutsi working on the protection of Hutu refugees in Goma. Over the years refugees have suspected UNHCR of being behind the deportation and assassination of vocal refugees in Goma, especially in this particular moment when we still have fresh memories of Angelo and Pastor Habimana both Rwandan Refugees deported in 2022.

Holding the view that UNHCR activities are not in line with the refugee protection principles does not make us criminals to be handled by the Courts of Law which we all know its limits in DR Congo. We are so preoccupied by the refugee regime in Goma strategy to silence all those who are critical to what they are doing in order to kill any desire for accountability.

Basing on the above, we humbly come to you for the following:

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We bring to your attention that Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos as a refugee was forced to leave Uganda where he was persecuted because of his activism on the protection of refugees and because of that he should continue enjoying the close monitoring of his situation by UNHCR Goma according to UNHCR Voluntary Repatriation Hand Book. However on contrary UNHCR Goma is in association with those persecuting him,

We call upon you to ensure that all threats and intimidations against Pecos are ended, and ensure that accountability measures are put in place against all those close or far involved in various threats and intimidations against Pecos, his organization and all those working with him in the refugee protection in North Kivu, this is in line with the spirit of ending impunity,

We call upon you to exercise your influence to both UNHCR and the Democratic Republic of Congo Government to end this practice of sending refugees to Rwanda and put in place alternatives that promotes refugee protection in North Kivu. We cannot sacrifice the protection of refugees in order to please Rwanda as exchange for peace in North Kivu promoted in various agreements. *We believe that refugees are not the problem but they have problems.*

We call upon your office to engage with all partners and stakeholders to ensure the security of Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos, his offices and all his colleagues who feel threatened and living in fear now,

We call upon your office to direct UNHCR Goma to desist from using the security services and the institutions of the government including the Courts of Law in order to threaten and to intimidate vocal human rights activists, but rather put in place civilized approach of dialogue and effective communication in line with UNHCR approach of cooperation,

We call upon your office to direct UNHCR and CNR to withdraw their fabricated charges against Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos and desist from manipulating third parties in order to fabricate charges against Pecos as strategy to weaken him and threaten him. UNHCR and CNR should stop using refugees and some Congolese in order to threaten Pecos,

We bring to your attention that from now, anything that may happen to Kulihoshi Musikami Pecos, his colleagues and his offices will be attributed to UNHCR/CNR Goma,

Yours sincerely

Luendo Gedeon

Permanent Secretary