

**OPENING SPEECH BY HON. MWIGULU LAMECK NCHEMBA (MP),
MINISTER FOR HOME AFFAIRS, AT THE HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE BETWEEN
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AND THE
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)**

**Hon Rtrd Major General Raphael Mugoya – Regional Commissioner Katavi
Hon Rtrd Brigadier General Emanuel Maganga Regional Commissioner of
Kigoma**

**Ambassador Simba Yahya, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home
Affairs**

Distinguished Regional Administrative Secretaries

Hon District Commissioners for Ngara

Distinguished Senior Government Officials

**Mr. Volker Turk, UNHCR, Assistant High Commissioner – Protection,
Geneva**

Ms. Catherine Wiesner, Regional Refugee Coordinator (Burundi), Nairobi

Valentin Tapsoba, Director, UNHCR Regional Bureau for Africa, Geneva

**Mr. Mamadou Dian Balde, Deputy Director, Comprehensive Response
CRRF, Geneva**

Ms. Chansa Ruth Kapaya, UNHCR Country Representative

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning

Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the United Republic of Tanzania and on my own behalf to give a warm welcome to our co-operating partners from the office of the High Commissioner in Geneva to Tanzania and in particular to this high-level dialogue between the government of the United of Tanzania and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

We are indeed grateful to UNHCR for initiating the idea of having this dialogue. The fact that some of you had to travel long distances to participate in this dialogue is a reminder to all of us on its significance.

Secondly and of equally importance I want to acknowledge the presence among us, of the Regional Commissioners and the Regional Administrative Secretaries from Kigoma, Kagera and Tabora and Katavi who despite their busy schedule are with us today to participate in this High Level Dialogue which I must say is a very important event to us.

Distinguished Participants
Ladies and gentlemen,

I also wish to pay special tribute to the office of High Commissioner for Refugees, the Country office now headed by Madam Chansa Kapaya for their continued support and co-operation that has enabled the United Republic of Tanzania, over the years to continue to dispense her International Obligations as a Host state in providing sanctuary to hundreds and thousands of refugees and Asylum Seekers.

Distinguished Participants
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I cannot over emphasis the tremendous and special humanitarian role that has been played by the Regions of Kigoma, Kagera, Tabora and Katavi, for over five decades. They have continued with sheer courage and determination to offer sanctuary to hundreds of thousands fleeing persecution. Their presence here today testifies to their continued commitment to serving humanity even in the wake of the mounting challenges and hardship that continue to face their Regions. I believe this Dialogue will offer them an opportunity to air some of the challenges they encounter in their day to day duty of serving refugees.

Distinguished Participants
Ladies and gentlemen,

Serving refugees is an International obligation that has never been easy and cannot be accomplish by a host country alone. It is a partnership undertaking that takes to tasks, the efforts of multiple stakeholders as enshrined in the Principle of Responsibility and International burden sharing.

It is against this backdrop when initially we were requested to have this High Level Dialogue, we accepted the opportunity knowing very well, that this was the best opportunity for us as a country to have a face to face and frank discussions

with the office of the High Commissioner in the light of the mounting challenges facing our country in hosting large numbers of refugees but even more important, as the opportunity for ***Voluntary Repatriation*** to Burundi has opened its avenue with an already, over **6,000 registered refugees**.

Distinguished Participants

Ladies and gentlemen,

As a country that is renowned for her generosity and hospitality to hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees for over five decades, and which for too long has endured the and sustained the impact created by large movement of refugees the United Republic of Tanzania, welcomes the New York Declaration, and its subsequent CRRF. We are committed and stand ready to co-operate with all stakeholders to ensure the full implementation and realization of the CRRF. To demonstrate that commitment, on 2nd June, 2017, the Government officially launched the **CRRF secretariat** and a lot of work since then has been accomplished in terms of preparing the road map for its implementation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we start today's high-level dialogue, I would like to affirm the commitment of the United Republic of Tanzania to continue honouring its long standing tradition and international obligation in providing asylum and protection space to people running from persecution notwithstanding the burden on national resources, which come with hosting refugees. Fortunately, the international community, through the New York Declaration, has shown strong willingness for sharing the burden and responsibility for hosting and supporting the refugees. We now need to translate these commitments into effective support to host governments and communities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I have seen the agenda for today's dialogue and it is gratifying to note the discourse will be on matters of interest and concerns to both the government and the UNHCR. It is for this reason that today's high-level dialogue is both necessary and indeed timely.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to finish my remarks by wishing you all the best in your deliberations. I am convinced that we will draw useful lessons and insights from today's dialogue that will lead to practical steps in dealing with challenges facing us. With these few remarks, I now declare the High-Level Dialogue between the

Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) officially opened.

Thank you for your kind attention.