

# BREAKING BORDERS & BINARIES

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# BREAKING BORDERS & BINARIES

I am a trans woman originally from Iran. I have been living in South Africa for a few months now. Unfortunately, I was forced to leave my home country due to the Iranian government's discriminatory policies. Despite my academic and professional achievements, I was not allowed to live as a woman. The government demanded forced sterilisation and sex determination treatments, which required their permission. After numerous appeals to the judicial authorities, I was denied this permission.

In addition to this, I was subjected to horrendous abuse in the forensic medicine of the Islamic Republic. I was raped, and they even forced me to undergo electric suspicion treatment. As a member of the LGBT community, I was deemed an enemy of Islam and faced continuous threats of imprisonment. About two years ago. After having frequent meetings with two psychologists, a psychiatrist, and an endocrinologist and confirming my gender identity with their help, and doing a lot of research about myself, I decided to start hormone therapy without the Iranian court's permission. This decision was punishable by life imprisonment or death, as the Iranian court considers hormone therapy and transitioning to be a violation of God's creation in man and woman, regardless of the individual's gender identity.

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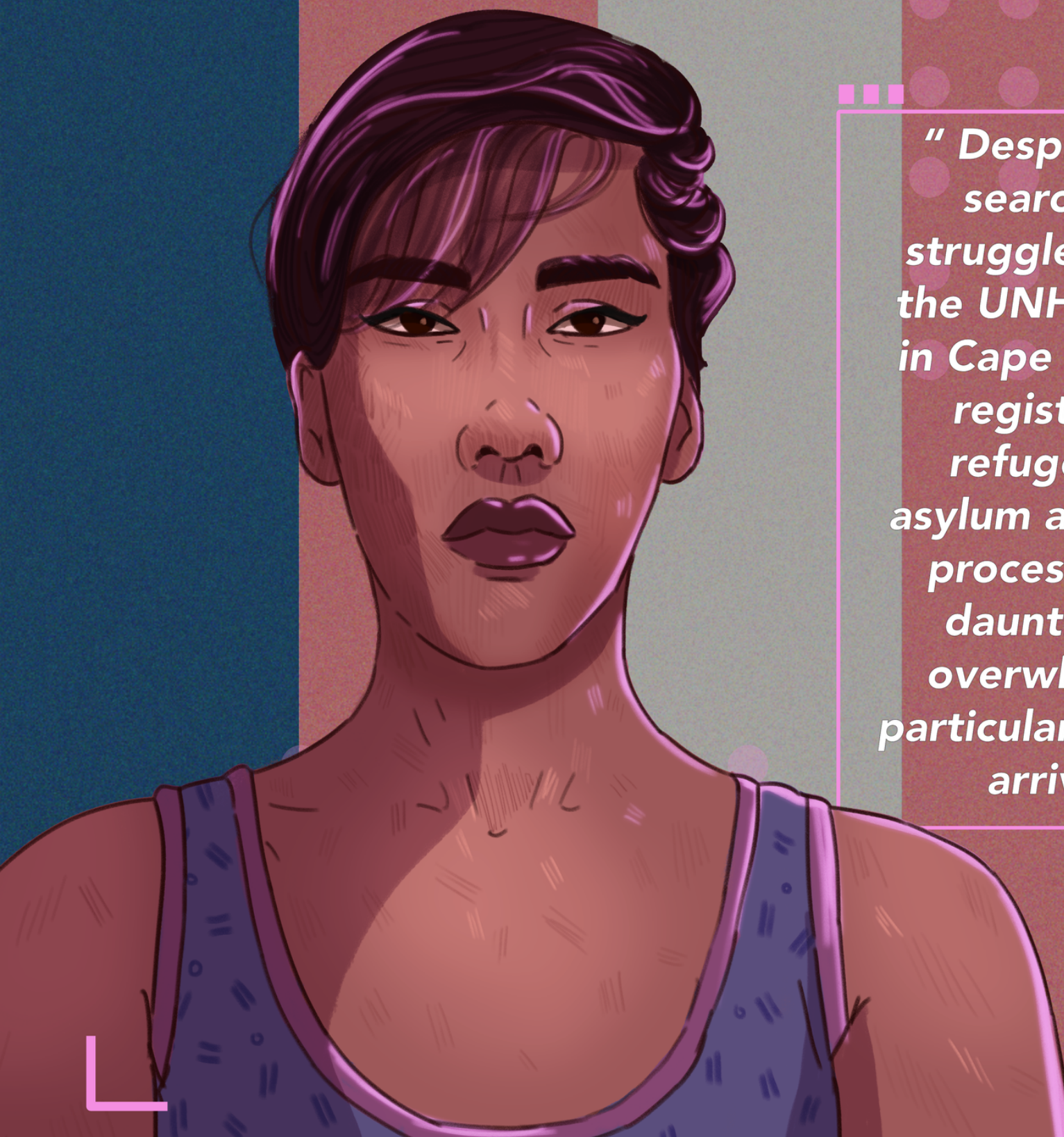


# BREAKING BORDERS & BINARIES

*“ Despite much searching, I struggled to find the UNHCR office in Cape Town and register as a refugee. The asylum application process can be daunting and overwhelming, particularly for new arrivals.”*

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*Focus: Closure of Refugee Reception Offices in South Africa*

Asylum seekers who arrived in South Africa after March 2020 cannot lodge asylum claims due to the closure of the Refugee Reception Office as a result of COVID-19. This leaves them at risk of arbitrary arrest, detention, and deportation, which violates the principle of non-refoulement.

Transgender and gender non-conforming migrants who are undocumented face a range of challenges, including discrimination, harassment, and violence. Without legal documentation, they may not be able to access healthcare, education, or employment. They are often forced to rely on underground economies, which can be dangerous and exploitative. Additionally, transgender migrants may face unique challenges related to gender identity, including difficulties accessing hormone therapy or gender-affirming surgeries.

The closure of the offices will result in a backlog of asylum claims in the already strained asylum system, leaving many asylum seekers without legal status or protection. It's important to recognize the unique challenges faced by asylum seekers and transgender migrants, and to advocate for policies and practices that protect their rights and safety.

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