

**Peacebuilding Commission
Working Group on Lessons Learned**

**Concept Note
“Comparative Lessons from Addressing
Internal Displacement in Peacebuilding”**

*Held in cooperation with
Representative of the SG on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons
Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs*

**Thursday, 13 March 2008
10:00 am – 1:00pm
Conference Room 2**

Background and Rationale

In many conflict-affected countries the scale of displacement is so significant and the percentage of the population displaced is so high that finding durable solutions for internally displaced people is a critical element of sustainable and effective peacebuilding. In total, some 25 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) reside in countries afflicted by or recovering from protracted violent conflict. Durable solutions can be achieved through their return to the place - and reintegration at the place - of origin, as well as local (re)integration in the areas in which IDPs originally take refuge or settle in another part of the country.

The return of internally displaced persons to their places of origin is often the preferred option for IDPs. Return and reintegration of displaced people are used as an indicator of effective peacebuilding, and the way these issues are resolved can have a major impact on the sustainability of peace in a country. It is therefore timely that the Peacebuilding Commission both examines how the obstacles that returnees face can be overcome and consolidates some lessons learned about the challenges and success stories associated with the return of IDPs.

This session of the PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned will examine the comparative experience of helping IDPs to return successfully in the following five areas:

1. Voluntary return without coercion
2. Ensuring safety and security of returnees
3. Housing, land, and property issues in the context of displacement

4. Creating an environment that sustains return
5. Financing reintegration efforts

It is hoped that such a dialogue within the PBC will further the linkages between peacebuilding and the critical humanitarian issue of internal displacement.

Structure of the Meeting

Chair

- H.E. Ambassador Raymond Wolfe, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations

Panelists

- Dr. Walter Kaelin, Representative of the UN Secretary-General on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, *“Durable solutions for internally displaced persons: an essential dimension of peacebuilding”*
- Neill Wright, Senior IDP Coordinator, UNHCR *“UNHCR’s experience in the field”*
- Dr. Elizabeth Ferris, Co-Director of the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement, *“The role of the civil society in ending displacement and peacebuilding”*

Discussant

- Dr. Ed Luck, Vice-President and Director of Studies, International Peace Academy (IPA) and Special Adviser to the SG on the Responsibility to Protect

Inputs and Outputs

The RSG on the Human Rights of IDPs, in collaboration with the PBSO, have prepared a briefing paper that provides a comparative overview of the experience of the UN system in helping IDPs to return successfully in the five areas outlined above. The meeting will seek to identify core principles and policy recommendations to better inform the work of the PBC in addressing internal displacement in current and future peacebuilding activities.

A Chair’s Summary of the discussion will be distributed to member states.