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# Resolving Internal Displacement in Turkey: The Need for Reconciliation

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The massive internal displacement of Kurds in the 1990s is one of the most important issues within the larger Kurdish Issue in Turkey. It encompasses several elements of the conflict and requires special attention in order to develop solutions to the Kurdish Issue. Despite its importance, however, both academics and politicians in Turkey have under-examined internal displacement. In 2009, the Turkish government launched the Kurdish Opening[1] to address several dimensions of the Kurdish Issue; however, this initiative quickly faltered and failed to deal with topics such as the problems facing internally displaced Kurds. In 2013, the government initiated another wave of the peace process, yet by mid-2014 this new initiative had not taken any policy measures to address internal displacement.

In this chapter, I argue that a reconciliatory approach and policies are needed to deal effectively with the Kurdish displacement, one of the most pertinent issues to arise from the three-decades-long conflict. I argue for a rights-based approach to policies designed to address the internal displacement situation, which must include a focus on reconciliation between the different actors in the conflict in order to build a long-lasting peace process. The data for this paper were drawn from my fieldwork in the cities of eastern and southeastern Anatolia that experienced forced migration, especially in the form of rural to urban migration, as well as in Ankara and Istanbul, the largest host cities for Kurdish IDPs.[2] In what follows, I first introduce the rights-based approach to displacement and how reconciliation factors into it. I then provide a brief history of Kurdish displacement in Turkey, and discuss the perceived "irreconcilable" differences between

the Kurdish internally displaced persons (IDPs), the Turkish state, and the civil society organizations (CSOs) working on the issue. Next, I explain how certain elements of reconciliation are crucial to addressing IDPs' needs and problems. Finally, I examine how the internal displacement situation in Turkey can shed light on some of the theoretical debates in the displacement and reconciliation literatures. In this analysis, I focus on how the Turkish state's compensation program to IDPs has failed to translate into reconciliation among different strata of Turkish society and public offices.

## THE RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH
## TO INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

The rights-based approach has been at the heart of advocacy efforts to establish internal displacement on the international agenda. The UN's 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement are founded squarely on a rights-based approach, and stress the state's responsibility to equitably respect and protect the rights of all those within its borders, including IDPs. In contrast to needs-based approaches to displacement, which see displaced people as a problem and focus on satisfying their needs, the rights-based approach focuses on "the integration of two kinds of rights: civil and political rights; and economic, social and cultural rights, as set out in international human rights conventions and covenants" (DRC on Migration, Globalization and Poverty 2007, 1). In practice, responses to internal displacement often lack a concerted focus on the rights of the displaced, and scholars who work on displacement issues only began to address them from a rights-based approach relatively recently.[3] The traditional developmentalist or humanitarian (needs-based) approach to conflict-induced displacement centred on providing aid and economic help to IDPs and allocating resources to conflict areas. This traditional focus stemmed from the fact that in the aftermath of the Cold War, the international community was primarily concerned with providing safe havens to the displaced, including to refugees who crossed borders. To deal with sudden massive displacement waves, countries, and international non-governmental organizations (allocated material and human capital for aid and development. Such an approach was necessary to deal with the immediate consequences of displacement, but failed to provide a long-term vision to address the root causes of conflict that led to that displacement (Churruca Muguruza and de la Cruz 2011).

The rights-based approach to displacement recognizes individuals as rights-holders with legal entitlements to protection and assistance, and

states and other authorities as duty-bearers with responsibilities to respect and protect individuals' rights. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), refugees' and IDPs' protection needs to be rights-based, defined as "an approach grounded upon and geared towards the full and equal enjoyment of rights;" the protection of these rights is the state's foremost responsibility (UNHCR 2010, 10). Scholars who work on return movements also emphasize the importance of a rights-based approach by citing voluntariness, property restitution, and non-discrimination as parts of the framework that guides the return process (Teferra 2012).

One of the challenges of enacting a rights-based approach pertains to the difficulty of enforcing human rights standards. For example, the UN's 1998 Guiding Principles are central to the rights-based approach to internal displacement and are well-grounded in the international human rights laws. However, they are considered soft law, and it is thus hard to ensure states comply with them (Kurban et al. 2006b). Moreover, as I discuss below, especially in cases concerning the rights of ethnic groups, states often refuse to grant equal rights to their ethnic citizens, which in the first place is one of the causes of displacement. Nevertheless, international organizations' and NGOs' adoption of the rights-based approach to displacement in recent years reflects the view that this approach can be a powerful way to pressure states to improve responses to IDPs. Accepting responsibility for rights violations, redressing losses, and preventing continued conflict cycles not only fall under states' responsibilities as duty-bearers, but also are crucial for the transformation of conflict and the establishment of peaceful societies.

Keeping in mind that most conflict-induced displacement results from ethnic conflicts, it is essential to address such issues from a rights-based approach to prevent re-escalation. Especially in ethnic conflicts that result from the state's unwillingness or inability to recognize ethnic groups' cultural, social, and economic needs and rights, sustainable peace and development require states to respect these rights so that IDPs from marginalized ethnic groups feel included and recognized as equal citizens.

## LOCATING RECONCILIATION
### WITHIN THE RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DISPLACEMENT

Reconciliation, a process "by which parties that have experienced an oppressive relationship or a destructive conflict with each other move to attain or to restore a relationship that they believe to be minimally accept-

able" (Kriesberg 2001, 48), is deep and complex. There are many types of reconciliation, not all of which resonate universally. Many move far beyond "minimally acceptable" conditions, and ask for deeper under-standing and acceptance among the conflicting parties.

Reconciliation "involves changes in attitudes, aspirations, emotions and feelings, perhaps even beliefs" (IDEA 2004, 4), and may encompass several elements: truth, acknowledgment of wrongs, justice, forgiveness/ healing, reparation, bridging trust across societal divides, and individual or group security and well-being (Kriesberg 2001, 48; Lederach 1998; IDEA 2004, 4). Assefa (2001) argues that the parties can only enter into a new and mutually enriching relationship if they take the following steps: honestly acknowledge the harm and injury they inflicted on the other, express sincere regrets and remorse for the injury, apologize for their role in inflicting injury, let go of the anger and bitterness that conflict and injury caused, and provide compensation to the victims for past griev-ances and damages. These steps are required not only to move toward a resolution of the painful past, but also to enable conflicting groups to live together sustainably and interdependently in the long-term (Leder-ach 1998, 30–1).

According to Rouhana (2004), one of the key issues reconciliation processes must address is the historical responsibility of both individual perpetrators and political systems. This becomes especially crucial in asymmetric relations and repressive systems. Addressing questions of trust and historical responsibility, Rouhana (2004, 37) argues, is "of utmost importance not only because they validate the experience of the victims, although this validation is essential for the victims' transcendence of a his-tory of domination and abuse. These processes are also critical to reassur-ing the victims that past wrongdoing will not reoccur and to determining future steps needed to rectify the past and plan the future."

Another challenge in societies struggling to achieve even a minimal degree of reconciliation is changing perceptions and creating shared his-tories among the parties. Especially in conflicts that are long-lasting and resistant to resolution, beliefs about the nature of the conflict and major events that shaped it are often one-sided and selective; they help members of the society to view themselves as just, righteous, humane, and moral, and explain the present situation. This "reconstructed" and" re-appropri-ated" memory is incorporated into individuals' daily life in different forms (Bar-Tal 2003). What Bar-Tal terms the "culture of violence" in ethnic con-flicts, which develops in response to the experiences of physical violence throughout the conflict, permeates societal products, institutions, and

channels of communication that perpetuate a collective memory in the form of societal beliefs, public rituals and ceremonies, and monuments. For example, one group's members might commonly believe they are the victims of the conflict and that members of the "other" are the perpetrators, or national monuments may honour such victims. These cultural artifacts become constant and enduring reminders of the conflict itself (Bar-Tal 2003). In the absence of shared representations of history or a common language to refer to the conflicting events, parties in conflict might choose different reference points from the past to justify their positions. Therefore, a reconciliation process that aims for coexistence between the parties should be owned not only by the perpetrators and victims, but also by other groups in the conflict-affected society; it should have a political structure that supports bottom-up initiatives and allows previously silenced voices to be heard.

Beyond transforming political institutions and cultures, reconciliation processes also need to enable more interaction and communication between the conflicting parties to change what Bar-Tal (2000) calls the "conflictive ethos." To establish a peaceful society and prevent conflicts, such transformation can be advanced "by using an array of processes that address trauma, transform conflict, and do justice" (Schirch 2004, 26). This means reconciliation is a multifaceted, multilayered process that should consider diverse needs and problems at the individual, group, and national levels. It requires moving from a concerted focus on isolated problems to seeing the whole picture and adopting a holistic approach to address root causes; such a holistic approach incorporates "various processes – *legal, social, political and economic* – at many levels of society" (Baxter 2007, emphasis added).

As Rouhana (2004, 35, emphasis added) argues, "reconciliation ... seeks to achieve a kind of relationship between the parties that is founded on *mutual legitimacy*." There are various reconciliation models, and many intractable conflicts require multiple layers of reconciliation processes. Moreover, reconciliation must not only occur at the victim-perpetrator (individual) level and repressed group-repressive system/group (intergroup) level, but should also encompass the bystanders within the society in which the conflict took place (societal level). It also requires a mutual legitimacy and understanding between actors at different levels, such as between individual victims and the state.

Restoring relationships at multiple levels requires dealing with the past. Many scholars and practitioners argue that truth-telling is necessary for reconciliation at individual and societal levels because it acknowledges

and validates the hurtful experiences of the past. Acknowledgment en-
ables people to recognize that the "other" has a story, re-humanizing the
demonized enemy and shattering simplistic, polarizing, good-versus-evil
narratives.

Studying forced migration from a rights-based approach and putting
reconciliation at the centre, therefore, expands understandings of dis-
placement beyond simply a humanitarian phenomenon. Approached
from this perspective, displacement may be located in a wider political
and historical context and linked to the inequalities and violations at its
root. In other words, viewing displacement through the lens of rights-
based approaches and reconciliation theories requires a nuanced under-
standing of the causes of the conflict; listening to different explanations
of the conflict that led to displacement; and opening a channel for dia-
logue between these different approaches, as well as understanding the
social and political context of forced migration and its aftermath.

## RECONCILIATION:
### A NEW "R" IN DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO DISPLACEMENT?

Scholars concerned with the resolution of displacement have only started
to consider certain elements of reconciliation relatively recently (see, e.g.,
Çelik 2006, 2013; Koser 2007; O'Neill 2009; Fagen 2009; McHugh 2010).
The Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC 2010) Framework on
Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons points out the need
for IDPs to benefit from effective remedies for displacement-related viola-
tions, including access to justice, reparations, and information about the
causes of violations. It also stresses the importance of adopting a human-
rights-based approach to supporting durable solutions that puts IDPs at
the centre of decision-making processes. In other words, according to the
framework, IDPs need to be included in local and national policymaking
processes, and receive redress for any material and immaterial losses they
experienced during the conflict that led to displacement. Remedies, such
as sincere apology and regret along with some form of compensation for
immaterial losses, are important for not only redressing IDPs' losses but
also preventing the conflict's recurrence. Where a close relationship exists
between conflict and displacement, the Framework on Durable Solutions
also suggests "peace agreement[s] should effectively address the specific
needs of IDPs, including: safety and security; housing, land and property
issues; reconciliation and peace-building; post-conflict reconstruction;
and remedies for violations suffered" (IASC 2010, 25).

The UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement state that IDPs, whether in their places of settlement or after their return home, should not be subject to discrimination (Principle 29). Building on this principle, the Framework on Durable Solutions provides guidance to local and international actors on how they should address possible inter-communal problems that IDPs might face in the places where they (re)integrate, resettle, or return, and indicates:

> Beyond or in the absence of a formal peace process, community reconciliation and confidence-building mechanisms are often necessary, in particular where IDPs and the resident population or different groups within the IDP population are seen as having been associated with opposing sides in the conflict, but now live side by side. In addition, conflict resolution mechanisms may be needed to resolve disputes that occur when IDPs seek to integrate or re-integrate into communities where there is competition over scarce resources, such as land or livelihood opportunities. (IASC 2010, 26)

Another important question that needs to be tackled when considering the relationship between reconciliation and displacement is whether the elements of reconciliation can be addressed in a way that may lead to durable solutions to displacement even while conflicts are ongoing.[4] Within this context, it is important to remember that the international documents that inform responses to internal displacement, such as the UN's Guiding Principles and the IASC's Framework on Durable Solutions, suggest that responses should occur in a timely manner. In other words, national and international actors can and should address some problems that arise from displacement without waiting for conflicts to end. The same argument can be extended to reconciliation. Even though the continuation of violence makes conflicting parties less likely to accept actors' reconciliatory moves, certain elements of reconciliation can promote peace and durable solutions to internal displacement and should therefore be promoted where possible, even during conflict. In this context, building trust across societal divides and between the state and ethnic groups, increasing individual and group security, and acknowledging wrongs become the most important elements of reconciliation efforts and cannot wait for peace agreements. Rather, formal and informal efforts to advance these dimensions of reconciliation may make the advent of a peace agreement all the more likely.

As international standards show, reconciliation is an important dimension of rights-based approaches to the resolution of displacement. Under international law, displaced persons have the right to return (whether temporarily or as a durable solution to their displacement), and if this right is not respected reconciliation may be undermined. However, addressing return from a rights-based approach requires expanding on traditional humanitarian and development methods to include support for reconciliation, because in the absence of at least a minimal degree of reconciliation at the local level, returns will be unsustainable. Where traditional approaches focus on the efficient delivery of aid to the displaced, integrating reconciliation as part of a rights-based approach necessitates being more responsive to IDP's rights and needs, as well as more transparent and collaborative.[5] Additionally, this approach requires states to take action to eliminate structural violence and cultural artifacts that celebrate the violent past, and to redress human rights violations that took place before, during, and after displacement.

## KURDISH INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN TURKEY

Even though Turkey's Kurdish Issue has roots as far back as the Ottoman Era, with eighteen rebellions taking place between 1924 and 1938, it became known as the Kurdish Question after 1984 with the emergence of the PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, Kurdistan workers' party), an irredentist group in conflict with the Turkish state.[6] The PKK launched its first attack on the Turkish state in 1984. In 1987, following further PKK attacks, the government declared emergency rule in thirteen Kurdish-populated provinces. Since then, the war between the Kurdish insurgents and the Turkish military forces has claimed more than 30,000 lives.

In the 1990s, village evictions and forced displacements took place in the eastern and southeastern parts of Turkey where the majority of the population is Kurdish. Displacements were mostly due to the fact that both the PKK and the state forced the villagers to take sides in the conflict, and/or the villagers felt insecure because of the increase in violence in the region. The report prepared by a parliamentary research commission formed in 1997 to examine internal displacement stated that the villagers' eviction constituted a violation of a number of constitutional rights, such as the right of all citizens to protect and develop their lives (article 17), respect for private and family life (article 20), respect for domicile (article 21), the right to property (article 35), the right to the protection of

basic rights and freedoms (Article 40), the right to education (article 42), and the right to just compensation for the expropriation of private property (article 46) (Kurban et al. 2006b). Many IDPs did not know about the condition of their lands, homes, and belongings during their long stays away from home due to the worsening security conditions in the region (Human Rights Association 1995). Access to evacuated villages was also prohibited.

There were no official records of the number displaced in the conflict, and the extent of displacement is still a contested issue between the CSOs and state institutions: estimates range from one million to four million IDPs. IDPs migrated mostly to the city centres in the region or to metropolises in the western parts of the country. Numerous studies have found that even after many years, most IDPs still face devastating living conditions in their place of relocation (Göç-Der 2002; Çelik 2005b; Aker et al. 2005; Kurban et al. 2006b). Literature on the consequences of Kurdish internal displacement within the region and in major cities shows that it fostered urban poverty (Human Rights Association 1995, 1998; Sönmez 1998; Göç-Der 2001; Çelik 2005b; Altıntaş 2003), social exclusion (Human Rights Association 1995, 1998; Erder 1997, 1998; Çelik 2005b), a few cases of suicide (Halis 1999), and social marginalization in urban life, especially among women (Çelik 2005b). These findings show the impact that displacement has on all levels of society.

The Turkish state policies addressing the consequences of forced displacement mostly focused on aiding and, more recently, (unsuccessfully) compensating IDPs for their losses. Historically, the state did not recognize the massive number of IDPs and did not develop efficient strategies to help them resolve their problems in their places of origin and in the host cities to which they migrated. After Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons Francis Deng visited in May 2002, the government started to enact measures intended to redress the wrongs IDPs suffered. However, as I discuss below, there are various problems both in the implementation of these measures and the intentions that the government institutions have in their stance towards displacement problems (Kurban et al. 2006a, 2006b; Fagen 2009; Yükseker and Kurban 2009). These past state practices show that the Turkish state's vision for the resolution of the Kurdish Issue and displacement is still mostly focused on the economic development of the Kurdish-populated region and granting limited cultural rights to Kurds, rather than on recognizing and respecting their rights and advancing reconciliation on different levels.

## PERCEPTIONS OF "IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES"
### BETWEEN THE STATE, IDPS, AND NGOS

It is important to acknowledge that since every conflict has its own history and nature, every reconciliation process should be contextually defined and based on the society's specific needs and conditions at the given time. Although the academic literature on reconciliation suggests that there are several key areas that need to be addressed in order to have a successful reconciliation process – such as justice, peace, historical responsibility and accountability, trust, security, apology, and forgiveness – it is crucial that reconciliation projects should first determine what different actors perceive as "irreconcilable" areas in a specific conflict and design policies to address them, incorporating responses to the broad areas identified in the literature.

One of the biggest challenges in overcoming the bitter history of Kurdish displacement is the gulf between the way the state and other actors, especially NGOs, present the "facts" and the terminology they use to frame the conflict. I will now detail the issues in a nutshell.

### Statistical "Facts"

There is still a large discrepancy between NGOs' and state institutions' claims regarding the number of IDPs in Turkey. As indicated in a report following Deng's 2002 visit, determining the numbers of those affected by internal displacement is crucial in designing effective coping mechanisms. Until the 2000s, the Turkish state's official stance towards the issue was to ignore the scale of the mass displacement. According to a report prepared by a committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, in six eastern and southeastern Anatolian cities, which were under the state of emergency legislation, and in five nearby cities, 820 villages and 2,345 hamlets were evacuated, and the IDP population totaled 378,335 (TBMM 1997). Turkish state officials claim that out of this number, 137,636 IDPs have returned to their homes since 1998, when a Prime Ministry Circular initiated the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project.[7] Such state statistics indicate that only a relatively small IDP population needed assistance.

On the other hand, international organizations and domestic and foreign NGOs historically claimed that the IDP population in Turkey stood between one and four million. For instance, the United States Committee for Refugees (1999) has estimated that the number of IDPs is between 380,000

and one million. Human Rights Watch (2002) has cited a figure of two million. The Foundation for Society and Legal Studies (TOHAV) (2006), the Human Rights Association (1995), and the Migrants' Association for Social Cooperation and Culture (Göçmenlerle Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Derneği, Göç-Der) (2001) have used estimates between three and four million in their reports and declarations (Human Rights Association, Turkish Human Rights Foundation, Göç-Der, et al. 2001).

The first decade of the twenty-first century was a turning point for state policies regarding the internal displacement issue. After the Turkish state welcomed Deng in 2002,[8] the government commissioned Hacettepe University's Institute of Population Studies to conduct a comprehensive survey on IDPs in Turkey, *Türkiye Göç ve Yerinden Olmuş Nüfus Araştırması* (TGYONA, Turkey migration and internally displaced persons survey).[9] The TGYONA report (HÜNEE 2006) estimated the size of the displaced population originating from the fourteen provinces due to security related reasons as between 953,680 and 1,201,200. Interestingly, this report's estimate of the IDP population falls between estimates claimed by the NGOs and the state. Notably, the state resisted publicizing the report for a long time, and the number presented in the report is almost three times greater than numbers the state had previously claimed (Aköz 2007).

The difference in the numbers official sources and NGOs present reflects their different understandings of and discourse on the nature of the conflict and possible policies to address these issues. Even after the release of the TGYONA report (HÜNEE 2006), some CSOs claim that the numbers are much higher than what is reported by the state and the TGYONA report. According to a recent report written by the branches of Göç-Der (2011, 2), there are "more than three million" Kurdish IDPs. The discrepancy stems from the fact that the state and NGOs use different measures to estimate the IDP population after some twenty years. While the state commissioned academics in a state university to estimate the size of the population based on IDP numbers in host communities, the NGOs multiplied the number of evacuated hamlets and villages by an estimated minimum number of people who used to live in them.

Under- or over-reporting the numbers of IDPs takes internal displacement to another conflict level: if numbers were more than what the state claimed for years, this raises the question of what else it hid. Given that the scale of displacement is more than what the state admitted, did it intentionally fail to protect a large segment of its population? Did it have efficient policies to deal with its consequences? Now that the discrepancy

between the state's previous claims and evidence-based estimates of the IDP population is public knowledge, should the state apologize for any mistakes that were predicated on this underestimation? Alternatively, are some political actors continuing to over-report the number of IDPs, with a view to shaming the state and strengthening their own positions in possible negotiations? Such questions undoubtedly affect approaches to dealing with the consequences of internal displacement and keep the conflict between NGOs and IDPs and the state alive.

### Causal Facts and Terminology

Whereas the Turkish state claims that forced migration is the consequence of "terrorism" and the "fight against terrorism" in the region, most NGOs claim that the state's village guards and military forces compelled many to leave by burning houses and terrorizing civilians (Human Rights Association 1995; Göç-Der 2002; TOHAV 2006). Furthermore, the state and these NGOs still do not agree on the terminology used to define internal displacement. The Ankara branch of the United Nations Development Programme officially translated the UN's Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into Turkish in 2005. To refer to "displacement," this official translation adopted the term "*yerinden olma*" – an active verb that does not indicate that someone caused the displacement. NGOs opposed this term, and claimed that the correct translation should be a passive one, "*yerinden edilme*," indicating that displacement was done by some agent, referring mostly the role of state actors, such as the military, gendarmerie, or village guards.[10]

### Compensation

During Deng's visit to Turkey in 2002, the government was preparing legislation to compensate losses that occurred during what it called its fight against terrorism. In October 2004, the Law on Compensation for Losses Resulting from Terrorism and the Fight against Terrorism (Compensation Law) came into practice. Article 5 assigned damage assessment commissions, which were to be established in the affected provinces on demand, the task of processing IDPs' petitions, evaluating the incurred losses, and specifying the amount of compensation. The law provides reparation for three kinds of losses: damage to moveable or immoveable property, damage to the life and body of the person, and damage sustained due to inability to access one's property. After assessing the damage applicants sus-

tained, the commissions are required to prepare declarations of friendly settlement, which specify the compensation to be paid in cash or in kind, and present the declarations to the applicants (Kurban et al. 2006a).

However, NGOs reported several problems regarding the composition of the commissions as well as the application of the law (Kurban et al. 2006a, 2006b; Yükseker and Kurban 2009).[11] IDPs and NGOs regarded these commissions, composed almost entirely of public officers with only one civil society participant – a representative from the bar associations of the city in which the commission operated – with suspicion. The frequent unwillingness of the vice governors who led the commissions to give the victims their due compensation also fostered mistrust toward the state.[12] Additionally, although the law's objectives include "bolstering trust towards the state, rapprochement between the state and its citizens and contributing to social peace," several problems led NGOs and IDPs to question the state's sincerity and a whether reconciliation between the state and IDPs was even possible.[13] These problems included the law's exclusion of compensation for pain and suffering; lack of mechanisms for bringing the perpetrators of violations to justice; and the fact that NGOs, as representatives of the IDPs, were not included in the compensation committees (Kurban et al. 2006a).

### *Fostering Return Migration*

Historically, the Turkish state's position in dealing with internal displacement has focused on regional development, unlinking the issue from its political context (Ayata and Yükseker 2005). This position meant that state policies were concentrated on fostering return migration rather than on understanding the root causes of the conflict.[14] In fact, previous studies show not only that the percentage of people who would like to return is low, but also that it is usually the elderly and families with economic difficulties who are more likely to return (HÜNEE 2006; Kurban et al 2006b). Compared to the view of many NGOs and international organizations that return migration should be supported by long-lasting political, social, and economic reform, the state has concentrated on short-term reconstruction policies; that is, mainly providing infrastructure for villages and material assistance to IDPs.

In response to the government's policies, NGOs emphasize that return is a *right*, not a substitute for other crucial policies that deal with the root causes of the conflict (Ayata and Yükseker 2005; Kurban et al. 2006a, 2006b). As discussed above, most IDPs could not return to their homes due to the

ongoing conflict for a long time, and established new lives in the places they migrated to. However, many IDPs, especially the elderly, still long for their villages. Many displaced men, who could not find jobs in their new places of residence, want to return to their villages and work seasonally. Last, but not at least, IDPs want to be able to visit their homes (Kurban et al. 2006b). All these perspectives lead them to call for return as a "right," but not always with a view to resettling permanently in their villages. The Turkish state willfully ignores these demands by preventing access to some villages,[15] arguing that it also has a right to prevent its citizens from exercising their right of return when state security is at risk. Even though the Turkish state can legitimize its position by arguing that in the midst of an ongoing conflict, the state has a right to prevent its citizens' access to dangerous places, some NGOs argue that security is merely an excuse to prevent the displaced resettling in their villages, especially in the mountain villages the PKK can control. Moreover, according to a report prepared by Göç-Der (2008), the Compensation Law is not designed to help IDP returns, and the compensation provided is not enough for most IDPs to be able to return and restart their lives.

## CONFLICT-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT IN TURKEY: THE NEED FOR RECONCILIATION?

The above arguments show that the Turkish state historically has not been responsive to IDPs' needs and interests or to NGOs' requests and criticisms. Before discussing the areas where reconciliatory policies and programs are needed, I discuss different potential reconciliation models.

Reconciliation is both an outcome and a process undertaken to restore relationships between different actors. However, which relationships reconciliation processes should seek to restore is a complex and critical question. According to Tavuchis (1991), apology and forgiveness can occur at various levels: the interpersonal level between one individual and another (one to one); between an individual and a collectivity (one to many); between a collectivity and an individual (many to one); and between one collectivity and another (many to many). As the state represents (or should represent) a collectivity, one of the important components of reconciliation in communities affected by armed conflict is restoring relations between the state and its citizens.[16] In the context of Turkey's Kurdish Issue, the damaged relations between the state and IDPs as well as between IDPs and other collectivities in society constitute the most important dimensions of the need for reconciliation.

### *Restoring State-IDP Relations*

One of the central aspects of the damaged relationship betwen the Turkish state and the Kurdish IDPs is loss of trust. The longstanding violence in Kurdish-populated regions led to Kurdish IDPs' belief that the state considers them second-class citizens. At the same time, the fact that some villagers support the PKK led state officers to view Kurdish villagers as potential PKK members. Moreover, the Compensation Law and state aid programs to the poor added to this mistrust instead of addressing it. As a member of the Adıyaman Bar Association involved in the implementation of the Compensation Law observes:

> Let me tell you an interesting story. A man applied for a Green Card [a generic poverty alleviation government program card providing free health care and reduced medical costs]. This is what the gendarmerie did: they wrote a letter to him saying that some relative of his at some time joined an illegal organization; therefore, he is disqualified. Now, can this person have peace with the state? (Member of Adıyaman Bar Association, interview, 8 February 2007)

A Göç-Der (2011, 220) study found that some IDPs whose applications for redress under the Compensation Law were rejected think that state officers and members of the Compensation Law committees in the municipalities work to collect evidence against IDPs. These examples indicate that although the state has taken measures to address the economic dimensions of internal displacement (e.g., poverty) and IDPs' compensation claims, the mechanisms it has produced and the way they are applied do not heal the most damaged relations.

Other important components of possible reconciliatory moves related to the Kurdish internal displacement situation include the acknowledgment of past wrongs; recognizing that internal displacement is part of the Kurdish Issue, and understanding the position of the "other" (both by the NGOs and the state). As another member of the Adıyaman Bar Association (interview, 8 February 2007) notes, it is important to understand why some people in the Kurdish-populated regions were "against the state": "Being against the state is almost automatic [here]. There are those who lost their kids, those whose kids are in prison and those whose sons/daughters are in the mountains ... If you only construct roads for them, or bring them educational opportunities, we cannot get over this dichotomy. There is an economic side to the issue but

also a political side. In the latter, there is a need for important steps to be taken."

Thus, restoring trust between the state and IDPs first and foremost requires that the state listen to IDPs' stories, understand their positions, treat them as citizens, and acknowledge possible past mistakes while addressing the causes of the conflict that gave rise to displacement in an effort to prevent its recurrence.[17] For many IDPs and NGOs working in this field, this entails finding and prosecuting the perpetrators of extra-judicial killings and securing public acknowledgment and apology for such actions as well as for village evacuations. Moreover, many also believe that state mechanisms, such as the Compensation Law, were put in practice not to try to sincerely compensate IDPs for their losses, but as a show for European countries to create the illusion of support for the IDPs.[18] The leader of the Diyarbakır Branch of the Human Rights Foundation, one of the powerful human rights organizations that deal with various types of human rights violations, including displacement in Turkey, argues that such laws do not do justice to those who suffered socially and economically, or compensate for their losses:

> For us this type of compensation and its application are not satisfactory and do not provide justice. And it is not only that. There are thousands, millions of people who were uprooted by forced evictions and alienated from social life. This is a very serious problem. These people do not have any social security... The most important thing is that you bring up methods and mechanisms to re-incorporate them into society as productive people ... This is what the state should be doing but has not done so far. For this, it is important to confront the past and account for past mistakes. Accepting that a problem exists is the prerequisite to resolving it and the state is not doing this ... It has to accept that there is a Kurdish Issue and it has to deal with its consequences. (Leader of the Diyarbakır Branch of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey, interview, 24 January 2007)

### Restoring Village Guard-IDP Relations

The long-lasting conflict in southeastern and eastern Anatolia also damaged relations between the villagers and the village guards and "helped to deepen local cleavages and hostilities [at] the local level" (Balta 2004, 2).[19] Even though studies show that most IDPs do not want to return permanently to their villages, the existence of village guards still creates a per-

ception of insecurity and prevents some IDPs from returning to their vil-
lages – whether temporarily or permanently – as they wish to avoid fur-
ther confrontation with the guards (Kurban et al. 2006b). The negative
view toward village guards is not only a result of the crimes many guards
committed, but also because in the 1990s "the state used the village
guardianship system to identify which village and/or individuals were
pro-state," thus creating a division among the population in eastern and
southeastern Anatolia (Balta 2004, 13). Göç-Der's (2011, 225–6) study
found that half of all IDPs see the village guard system as a barrier to
return and half consider security officers (e.g., gendarmerie) as an obsta-
cle to return. Similarly, Kurban and Yeğen (2012) argue that security con-
cerns and village guardship are the most important factors preventing
return. An IDP's remarks are telling in this regard: "We wouldn't return if
there would be even one village guard. I would never make peace with
them. Only if they would leave their arms could they be my brothers. In
that case, I do not have to ask for an apology" (Female IDP, interview, July
2004).

Many NGOs share similar concerns. They argue that if the Turkish state
is sincere in its attempts to resolve the conflict and find durable solutions
to internal displacement, it has to abolish and disarm the village guards.
However, in many communities, the state pays village guards. Without the
village guard system, they would not have any form of social security, so it
is not easy to convince them to put down their arms, not to mention
acknowledge past wrongs in which they may have been involved. Given
these facts, they constitute potential spoilers if the PKK and the state ever
make peace. Moreover, because many of them have committed crimes
such as abducting women, killing civilians, aggravated assault, and taking
up arms against their own communities, they are not welcome among the
villagers. The state has prosecuted only a small percentage of village
guards who undertook criminal acts.

Besides the breakdown of the social fabric with the introduction of the
village guard system and many petty crimes committed by the villagers,
the state's connivance further contributed to the IDPs' sense of injustice.
The village guards are not a homogenous category: not all have commit-
ted crimes, and some question the village guard system and the things
they have done. However, quitting is for the most part not an option
because of the insecurity felt against the PKK and the system provides ben-
efits to the guards (Özar et al. 2012). Because it is known that the village
guards "have joined soldiers in village burnings, unsolved murders and
attacks in 1990s," and the state did not do anything to bring the perpetra-

tors to court, IDPs like the above cited female IDP are uneager to reconcile with the guards (Özar et al. 2012, 170). Indeed, many IDPs and NGOs want to see the prosecution of village guards who committed crimes as part of the peace and reconciliation process (Akdeniz Göç-Der 2014). Moreover, because in some villages, village guards confisticated IDPs' properties (Göç-Der 2011) and do not want to give them up, there is a need to consider the guards' role in property restitution processes. However, NGOs lack strategies for how this problem "could ever be resolved" (member of the Hakkari Branch of the Turkish Human Rights Association, interview, 29 September 2006).

It is important to note that village guards can be a significant source of information in efforts to confront the past; for example, they can help enable healing for the families of those who disappeared by identifying the locations of mass graves.[20] Although this may not necessarily lead to reconciliation between the guards and the IDPs themselves, it nonetheless may help to fulfill an important step in reconciliation processes: finding out the truth about what has happened.

Recently, many NGOs have started to discuss possible ways to disarm the guards and re-integrate them into society (see, e.g., Helsinki Yurttaşlar Derneği 2011). However, this is not an easy task since the state lacks economic resources to provide new jobs and the village guards' low education level makes it difficult to relocate them to the more developed parts of the country.

*Restoring IDP-Host Community Relations*

Most IDPs who have settled down in big cities do not want to return to their homes.[21] However, their new lives are not easy either. In addition to financial problems, they face social exclusion and in some cases discrimination (Human Rights Association 1995, 1998; Erder 1997, 1998; Çelik 2005b). Furthermore, the Kurdish Issue, which has historically been considered a conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK, spread to another level through the interactions between IDPs and host communities (mostly Turks in large western cities). A study in Izmir, one of the western cities which received a high number of IDPs, found that the inhabitants of two isolated neighbourhoods in the city (one an affluent Turkish neighbourhood and the other a poorer neighbourhood mostly populated by Kurdish IDPs and migrants) had negative perceptions of each other, with Turks holding different but stronger negative views of Kurds than vice versa (Ok 2011).

Several studies in recent years point out this increasing social polariza-
tion between Turks and Kurds (Çelik and Blum 2007; Gambetti 2007;
Saraçoğlu 2009), and it is clear that because most IDPs are Kurds, the Kur-
dish Issue has become more visible to the average Turk (Ayata and Yük-
seker 2005). However, in the nearly twenty years since the displacement
took place, the public in Turkey has paid it little attention despite its scope
and seriousness (Kurban and Yeğen 2012). Moreover, as the leader of
Hakkâri Mayın İzleme Grubu[22] (interview, September 2006) indicates,
increasing Turkish nationalism post-2004 contributed to social tensions
mostly between the Kurdish IDPs and Turks in the big cities in western
Turkey:

> [After 2004] the struggle against the Kurds was taken from the securi-
> ty forces and [implicitly] delegated to [ordinary] Turks [in the sense
> that some Turks in the western cities started attacking some Kurds on
> the belief that they are PKK members] ... The way the Kurdish Ques-
> tion is defined portrays Kurds as a problem. Killing on behalf of so-
> called patriotism was justified. I find this [trend] more dangerous
> than that of the earlier period because before, the violent struggle was
> aimed at a group – the PKK. Now, we see that everyone is being
> charged [as "terrorists"]. They created such a public opinion.

The lack of public attention to the IDP issue and increasing Turkish
nationalism have serious implications for efforts to resolve the displace-
ment situation and promote reconciliation between the IDPs, the state,
and their fellow citizens. However, relatively few NGOs have highlighted
these issues.

### Acknowledgment, Apology, and Finding the "Truth"

As stated earlier, one of the aims of the Compensation Law is "bolstering
trust towards the state, rapprochement between the state and its citizens,
and contributing to peace" (*Official Gazette* 2004). However, many NGOs
and IDPs believe that the law does not reach or even aim to increase trust
or peace. Arguably, this is because:

> First of all, the law does not investigate how displacement took place,
> what happened and who instigated it ... With the village evacuations,
> it is known who was responsible ... There is no concern for helping
> IDPs to have peace with the state. We cannot have societal peace and

reach social justice by paying compensation because we can reach these [goals] only by [referring to the state] acknowledging mistakes. When we talk to the [compensation] applicants, we see that especially in the cases of death, they do not want compensation. They want truth-finding and acknowledgment. There is nothing about this in the [Compensation] Law. There should be restorative justice. How would you have this? By reconciliation. (President of TOHAV, interview, 23 September 2006)

Of course, one of the reasons for the failure to satisfy these demands historically was that the conflict was ongoing. More importantly, there was no political will to confront Turkey's recent past or to link internal displacement to the overall Kurdish Issue. Neither the Compensation Law nor the Kurdish Opening addressed Kurdish IDPs' demands specifically or the Kurdish population in general.[23]

Truth-telling is necessary for reconciliation at the individual and societal level because it acknowledges and validates the hurtful experiences of the past. It can also help reassure the victims of the conflict that the state will do its best not to repeat its mistakes. The official state understanding of the displacement situation (including how the state sees the reasons for the displacement, as well as the laws and regulations it passes to address its consequences) does not recognize that displacement has ethnic and historical dimensions (Ayata and Yükseker 2005; Çelik 2013). In opposition to this position, many NGOs claim, "Kurdish displacement started with the history of the [Turkish] Republic, with the Dersim Law on Resettlement.[24] TOHAV defines this displacement as Kurdish displacement" (President of TOHAV, interview, 23 September 2006). For these NGOs, overcoming the legacies of the past requires acknowledging historical responsibilities and bringing justice to those whose citizenship rights have been violated (see Kurban et al. 2006; Kurban and Yeğen 2012). Thus, compensation without accepting guilt does not satisfy the NGOs or contribute to reconciliation or, in turn, sustainable solutions to displacement.

## CIVIL SOCIETY IN TURKEY:
### PUSHING FOR RECONCILIATION AND PARTICIPATION

State officers have historically seen civil society organizations dealing with the Kurdish Issue in Turkey as enemies of the state linked to illegal organizations, while NGOs have historically seen the state as authoritarian. This dichotomy manifests especially in the understanding of certain "sensitive"

issues, such as internal displacement, and limits the role of civil society to certain functions, particularly advocacy and service delivery to the IDPs (Çelik 2010).

The most important factor affecting the parties' willingness to engage in reconciliation is the major power asymmetry between them (Rouhana 2004). It is no surprise that historically the Turkish state has been the dominant actor in the Kurdish Issue. Its vision for the resolution of the Kurdish Issue significantly determines the future of the conflict as well as its policies toward internal displacement. However, this does not mean that civil society is ineffective in pressuring the state to reconsider its position on certain policies. CSOs, especially the bar associations, were successful in changing some articles of the Compensation Law and extending the deadline for applications. However, it is important to note that CSOs in Turkey do not typically have a broad vision of reconciliation in their plans for addressing internal displacement. They limit themselves mostly to issues of justice, truth-finding, and historical responsibility, but ignore or fail to deal with mistrust between different layers of society and the state, and issues of healing.

Despite these shortcomings, civil society organizations in Turkey have played an important role in pressuring the state to include them in decision-making processes concerning Kurdish IDPs. Although they have not been very successful in achieving this goal, they nevertheless made this demand public. This can be considered an important contribution since it is through getting involved in the decision-making process that CSOs have made the international community more aware of the problems IDPs face. An example of their success in affecting decisions for the IDP community was the Van Action Plan, which lays down government strategies to overcome the consequences of internal displacement in the city of Van, the second biggest IDP-hosting city in eastern and southeastern Turkey.[25] In the Van Action Plan (2006, 10), the government presented NGO support as favourable in "the fields of education, health, and income generating activities which are relevant to social and economic development." Through this document, the state recognizes NGOs as legitimate actors in certain policy areas, but it still fails to recognize their representation capacity. In fact, including NGOs in the process has the potential to tell the other side of the story to the different sectors of society who do not know anything about the Kurdish displacement. This may help open up dialogue at the national and personal levels. Granted, it is only in a limited number of cases that NGOs documented IDPs' stories in an effort to reach out to the broader society and show that IDPs' citizenship rights have been violated and that they

suffered before and during the conflict.[26] However, these activities are sig-
nificant because such narratives are largely unknown to the average Turk
in western parts of the country. If and when such stories are heard, public
support for dialogue between different strata of the society could increase,
opening up opportunities to advance reconciliation between displaced
Kurds, non-displaced Turkish citizens, and the state.

In recent years, some NGOs in Turkey started pressuring the state to
form truth and reconciliation commissions regarding certain aspects of
the Kurdish Issue, including internal displacement (Kurban et al. 2006;
Kurban and Yeğen 2012). They hope that these commissions may be a way
to demand accountability, apology, and compensation. However, the for-
mation of these commissions runs the risk of intensifying the conflict
since society may not yet be ready to accept that their communities car-
ried out certain human rights violations (Çandar 2011). There is also a
need for CSOs to present the violations committed by all parties to the
conflict, which they may not be willing to do due to their politicized
stance in the conflict.[27]

Lastly, pressuring states to engage in reconciliation processes or initiate
reconciliation between different strata of society requires coordination.
Unfortunately, CSOs working on displacement not only lack coordination
but also compete with each other on certain issues. For example, the mem-
bers of bar associations competed over the material profit they would get
by representing the IDP cases in the compensation commissions (Kurban
and Yeğen 2012). The CSOs' varying ideological positions also prevent
them from working in coordination. Therefore, while it is clear that CSOs
may play an important role in advancing reconciliation, the complexities
associated with their involvement should not be underestimated.

## CONCLUSION

Reconciliation is a long process and a goal. Achieving even a modest
degree of reconciliation requires considering the specific dynamics of dif-
ferent social contexts and acknowledging that peacebuilding efforts
devoid of reconciliatory moves may be particularly fragile and susceptible
to failure. Steps toward reconciliation include replacing fear with non-vio-
lent coexistence through facilitating basic communication across social
divides, building confidence and trust, and creating empathy by revealing
truths about past injustices (IDEA 2004, 4–5). Reconciliation attempts
need to address the root causes of the conflict; ways to overcome struc-
tural inequalities in the social and political system that led to the conflict;

and ways to prevent their recurrence, because "peaceful coexistence, trust and empathy do not develop in a sustainable way if structural injustices – political, legal and economic – remain" (IDEA 2004, 5). Advancing reconciliation between the Turkish state and the Kurdish IDPs would require the state to build legitimate and representative state institutions, which would lead to respect for fundamental human rights, tolerance, peaceful coexistence, rule of law, democracy, development of a human rights culture, effective conflict resolution mechanisms, transparency, and public debate (Gibson and Gouws 1999). In such efforts, CSOs can play an important role in pressuring the state to move from an exclusionary, authoritarian, and non-representative position to one that is open to dialogue and receptive to various social sectors' needs and demands. The success of such advocacy efforts, however, depends on the power relations between civil society and the state, as well as on the nature of the conflict that led to displacement.

Reconciliation in communities affected by large-scale forced migration should go hand in hand with a rights-based approach to displacement. These approaches require protecting and empowering IDPs by including them in peace and policymaking processes and seeing them as both individuals and group members. The fusion of these approaches requires addressing group- and national-level needs (including for apologies, acknowledgment, and trust) as well as individual level needs and rights, such as the right to a remedy like compensation and public apology. The Turkish state has attempted to reduce reconciliation to simply individual compensation, while CSOs have pushed for recognition of the need for apologies, acknowledgment, and trust-building. A long-lasting peace and durable solutions to internal displacement require not only combining the approaches that focus on group and individual needs, but also synthesizing the state's and CSOs' efforts to address the root causes of the conflict and to overcome its consequences. Providing compensation to IDPs cannot advance reconciliation or durable solutions to displacement if other important issues, such as building trust across societal divides, truth-telling about human rights violations, and acknowledging past mistakes, are not dealt with by all parties to the conflict. A rights-based approach to displacement requires accountability of all parties; IDPs' inclusion and representation in social and political life as well as in policymaking processes; and incorporating bystanders to support peace processes and durable solutions to displacement. As the Kurdish internal displacement case shows, failure to address any of these elements may undercut attempts to resolve conflict and enable solutions to displacement.

**NOTES**

1 The project, when then-minister of the interior, Beşir Atalay, announced it in July 2009, was entitled the Kurdish Opening, suggesting that it was designed solely to address the Kurdish Issue. Later, it came to be referred to as the Democratic Initiative, and finally the National Union and Brotherhood Project, reflecting the loss of the focus on dealing with the causes and consequences of the Kurdish Issue. When the initiative was originally proposed, it was believed to include greater cultural rights for Kurds (excluding teaching in Kurdish), some form of local autonomy, and incentives to demobilize and reintegrate PKK fighters into society. However, the project only provided a Kurdish channel in the state-owned TV broadcasting network, changed laws dealing with rehabilitating minors involved in "terrorist acts," and allowed the use of Kurdish in prisons.

2 Between February 2004 and spring 2007, I conducted interviews with representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), state officers, and IDPs, and observed several meetings of international organizations and NGOs. The fieldwork took place in thirteen of the fourteen cities giving rise to IDPs, as well as in the two largest host cities in western Turkey, Ankara, and Istanbul. The interviews totalled ninety-seven, nineteen of which were with representatives from the state (generally governors or vice-governors of the ministries responsible for different aspects of the government's response to the internally displaced), and fifty-eight of which were with leaders of civil society and representatives from the United Nations Development Programme and the European Commission in Ankara. Twenty interviews were with IDPs. I would like to thank MireKoç (Migration Center at Koç University) and Sabancı University for their financial support for the research.

3 In the 1990s, scholars also began to address displacement from a human security perspective (Churruca Muguruza and de la Cruz 2011). The human security approach shifts the focus from state security to protecting citizens from both direct and structural violence by providing welfare, safety, and rights protection. Achieving this goal requires demanding accountable services from duty-bearers as a matter of rights; thus, the approach emphasizes human rights. Closely associated with the rights-based approach to displacement, the human security approach emphasizes a struggle for rights to social, political, and economic development that is inclusive and participatory. Both human security and rights-based approaches focus on the outcome *and* process of development and protection; these approaches involve a strong focus on power inequalities discrimination, and require participation,

non-discrimination, and accountability of actors for sustainable develop-
ment (IASC 2010).

4  For additional perspectives on this issue, see Vidal López (this volume).

5  It is important to recognize that even if a rights-based approach, including
support for reconciliation initiatives, is comprehensively implemented, rec-
onciliation itself may still be elusive as conflicted parties may not necessarily
want to reconcile. If the rights of displaced persons and other groups are not
respected, reconciliation is all the more likely to be thwarted.

6  Although "Kurdish Question" is the most commonly used terminology to
refer to the conflict, recently it has been replaced by a more politically
correct term, "Kurdish Issue," since the former sees Kurds as the source of the
problem without recognizing the state's responsibility.

7  Bekir Sıtkı Dağ, Department of Strategy Development, Ministry of Interior
(MOI), Presentation at the "Support to the Development of an IDP Program
in Turkey Project" workshop, Ankara, 23 February 2006 (hereafter UNDP
Workshop).

8  See Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally dis-
placed persons, Mr Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on
Human Rights resolution 2002/56, E/CN.4/2003/86/Add.2, 27 November
2002.

9  Following Deng's recommendation, the government asked Hacettepe Uni-
versity's Institute of Population Studies (Turkey) to undertake a comprehen-
sive survey of the IDPs. The study was done between December 2004 and
June 2006 from a representative sample of IDPs in fourteen internal displace-
ment producing cities, ten receiving cities, and a sample of fifty-seven cities
which neither produced nor received IDPs. The number of IDPs in the quan-
titative sample was 7,300 (HÜNEE 2006).

10  The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation, for example, insis-
tently uses the term "*yerinden edilme*," arguing that this is in line with the
interpretation of Guiding Principle 6, para. 1, offered in the *Annotations to
Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (Kurban et al. 2006b) because dis-
placement has mostly been undertaken arbitrarily by state actors.

11  Law No. 5233 appeared in the *Official Gazette* on 17 July 2004 (No. 25,535),
and entered into force on 4 October 2004.

12  For a detailed analysis of the principles and the flaws in the application of
the law, see Dilek Kurban et al. (2006a, 2006b).

13  Compensation Law, preamble.

14  For a detailed criticism of these policies, see Ayata and Yükseker (2005).

15  Even though access to some villages is prevented there were some successful

returns, especially between 2002 and 2007. According to the Ministry of Interior's website, 187,861 IDPs have returned to their villages. However, it is unknown whether these numbers reflect permanent returns, and the number of those who have been re-displaced especially after the re-escalation of violence in the post-2007 period.

16  For further discussion of the potential role of transitional justice processes in advancing reconciliation and restoring relations between the state and its citizens, particularly in the context of the pursuit of durable solutions to displacement, see Duthie (this volume).

17  Most scholars accept that the root cause of the Kurdish Issue is the state's inability and unwillingness to grant cultural rights to Kurds (e.g., Kramer 2000; Yeğen 2007; Çelik 2010). Therefore, policies addressing the causes of conflict require granting at least cultural rights and broadening the political system to give more representation to the Kurdish population. However, some Kurdish political actors, such as the pro-Kurdish Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi (BDP, Peace and democracy party) also ask for some form of decentralization, which they call "democratic autonomy," in the Kurdish-populated regions.

18  Toward the end of the 1990s, the European Court of Human Rights started to accept petitions by IDPs who were evicted from their villages or who were not permitted to return to them, and issued a number of rulings ordering Turkey to pay compensation to the displaced. Many NGOs argue that the Compensation Law was a result of the increasing financial burden these cases placed on the Turkish state, as through this law the state would pay much less and would also save face in the international arena. In fact, the Preamble of the Compensation Law states that the law was prepared "with the aim of compensating quickly and via friendly settlement people who incurred damages as a result of terrorism, or during the fight against terrorism, or from measures taken to fight against terrorism, without their having to apply for legal remedies, and to ensure that only those whose applications are not resolved through friendly settlements apply to the European Court of Human Rights and to prevent the use of compensation as a means of unjust enrichment" (*Official Gazette* 2004).

19  Village guards are locally recruited civilians armed and paid by the state to fight against the PKK. According to the Ministry of the Interior, there were 23,000 voluntary and 48,000 provisional village guards in the region as of September 2009 (Milliyet 2009). According to the statistics gathered in 2006, 5,139 provisional village guards "committed crimes" between 1985 and mid-2006. The national media have carried various stories in recent years about

village guards' criminal activities such as the abduction of women, aggravated assault, and forming armed gangs (Kurban et al. 2006b).

20 Diyarbakır Human Rights Organization (informal correspondence, 11 March 2014) argues that some mass graves were exhumed with the help of village guards, who identified their locations. However, for security reasons, the names of the village guards and the location of the graves have been kept anonymous.

21 For further discussion of reconciliation between displaced persons and host community members, see Celestina (this volume).

22 Hakkâri Mayın İzleme Grubu is an informal network of several lawyers and human rights activists, formed in 2004 in Hakkâri, a city on the border of Turkey, Iran, and Iraq. Its main aims are to raise awareness of the large number of landmines in the city, to profile people who suffered from landmines, and to provide them with legal and psychological help.

23 Recently, there have been more academic and journalistic accounts analyzing Kurdish demands. These studies show that although Kurds in Turkey may have highly varied demands, the majority of Kurds want linguistic, cultural, and political rights as a group, which can come with constitutional and legal reforms, some sort of regional autonomy, disarmament of the PKK, securing a place in society for the Kurds, and general political amnesty (TESEV 2008; Yeğen 2009; Milliyet 2012).

24 On 21 June 1934, the Turkish parliament passed the Law on Resettlement (Law No. 2510), which regulated the settlement of immigrants and resettlement within the country. The law divided Turkey into three zones according to the population's adherence to "Turkishness." The first zone consisted of localities where the population possessed non-Turkish elements but where the Turkish culture was desired (as a result, immigrants from the former Ottoman provinces who had Turkish origins were settled in these localities). The second zone was made up of regions reserved for people who were expected to assimilate into Turkish culture. The third zone consisted of regions that were to be totally evacuated (the inhabitants of these regions were to be settled in the first two zones) (Tekeli 1994; McDowall 1997). The law also aimed to break down the structure of potentially powerful tribes and abrogated tribal property rights. Tekeli (1994) reports that 25,831 people from 5,074 households were transferred from fifteen cities in eastern and southeastern Anatolia to western Anatolia. However, many households that were transferred to other provinces in the 1930s returned to their homes in the 1940s, as Turkey moved to a multiparty regime in 1947 and the obligation of the transferred people to stay where they were settled was lifted.

25  In December 2004, the government formed a commission to formulate a
    strategy document outlining its policy on IDPs. The framework for the gov-
    ernment strategy was issued by the Council of Ministers as a special Deci-
    sion of Principle on 17 August 2005. Following this framework for action,
    the government launched an action plan for service delivery to the IDPs in
    Van (Van Action Plan 2006). The plan not only signifies a change in the
    Turkish state's position to take into account the international community's
    recommendations, but is also an important tool to analyze the Turkish
    state's actions in practice.
26  Exceptions are Göç-Der (2008a) and some documentaries made by
    independent groups.
27  Since many Kurdish political parties have been closed down by the Consti-
    tutional Court in the last fifteen years, it is common to come across
    politicized NGOs that act more like political parties than NGOs (Çelik 2010).