Return of the Internally Displaced Kurds and Reconstruction of the Post-Conflict Zones: An Actors Analysis
Ayşe Betül Çelik

1. INTRODUCTION

There are various repeated clichés and naming as an end result of long years of violence. The assumption that "The problem of migration cannot be resolved without first resolving the Kurdish question" is one of these repeated clichés. Is there another meaning to this cliché rather than sentencing people to hopelessness by imprisoning a humanitarian issue into a political one?
(Türköne 2006).

Internal displacement is not only a humanitarian issue but also a political one, because it started with the abuses of basic human and citizenship rights and it requires the restitution of such rights. As an abuse of a basic citizenship right, internal displacement is part of the Kurdish question as a humanitarian issue, which requires an immediate attention. .... However, these humanitarian dimensions are not independent of its political dimension, and therefore, should be thought together... What the NGO people who directly work with the internally displaced people, members and leaders of bar associations from the region [which experienced internal displacement], and the academicians working on the issue emphasize is the fact that it is not possible to find effective and durable solutions by disregarding the political dimension of the issue
(Kalaycıoğlu 2006).

The Republican Turkish history is full of internal migration periods[1]. However, it is the internal displacement[2], which Turkey has experienced in the 1990s[3] that fostered the discussions in Turkish political scenes as to what extent migration and identity in general, and

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[1] Between 1923 and 1950, there were also immigration from Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Romania. Total immigration from the Balkans during this period was 850,000. Immigration from these countries continued until 1960, after which it slowed down (Tekeli 1994: 202-226.). For a detailed analysis of internal migration in Turkey since 1923, see Tarih Vakfı Yayınları 1998.

[2] In this report, I use the terms internal displacement and forced migration interchangeably although the latter is a category that contain both refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs).

[3] The forced migration of Kurds began to take place when the PKK (The Kurdistan Workers' Party) took up arms against the Turkish state in 1984. However, it intensified especially between 1991-1994 when forced evictions increased in numbers in several villages of the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian regions. A more detailed analysis of the reasons of migration will be provided in the below sections.

Kurdish internal displacement[4] and Kurdish Question in specific are interwoven[5]. The above two quotes indicate the divergent perspectives on how this issue is approached by different actors and how such approaches challenge dialogue not only around the internal displacement issue, but also on the Kurdish question in Turkish politics.

The objective of this chapter is to study these two divergent points as represented by different actors involved in the issue, and the discourse they produce on the nature of the conflict and the issues emerge. It also addresses the necessity of reconciling the differences between the actors involved in the process; namely the state, the IDPs, international organizations (IGOs) and the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on the nature of the conflict, return of the IDPs, and possible conflict resolution and reconciliation issues and techniques. In doing so, this report will address these actors' perspectives on the policies related to the areas affected by the conflict and designing policies to address internal displacement; and how these actors negotiate/cooperate with each other over the nature of the problem, the definitions of the paradigms conditioning reform in the region affected by the conflict and return migration, the strategies to be adopted, and policies to be produced. Making use of a broad range of literature from various social science disciplines such as sociology, political science and conflict resolution, the objective of the proposed research is to study: a) the implications of the recent political developments addressing the consequences of internal displacement and the start of the return migration; b) the role that the state, NGOs and international organizations play in addressing these issues, reforming the conflict zones, and overcoming the problems of return migration; and c) how these actors negotiate over the

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[4] Even though one cannot claim that all IDPs were Kurdish in the absence of statistical facts, it is shared by many that the majority of them were Kurds (See for example, Kurban et al. 2006b; Aker et al. 2005; Kurban et al. 2006a; Ayata and Yükseker 2007).

[5] As it will be discussed below, Kurdish NGOs claim that since the formation of the Turkish Republic, Kurds have experienced forced displacement and that the new migration wave is no different than these. However, what was specific to the 1990s was that this internal displacement wave furthered a strong Kurdish national movement by the PKK and it brought up new discussions about Kurdish identity in the Turkish public in the light of Turkey's democratization period. For further discussion, see Çelik 2005).

nature of the problem, the definitions of the paradigms conditioning reform in the region and return migration, the strategies to be adopted, and policies to be produced.

The data for the report were drawn from the author's fieldwork in the region between February 2004 and February 2007 that consists of interviews with NGO representatives, members of the international organizations (namely, the European Union and the United Nations), the state officers and the locals, participant observation in the several cities of the region which produced IDPs, and analysis of secondary data such as newspaper articles and NGO publications and public announcements.

A study with the above mentioned objectives requires a good understanding of the causes of the forced migration and actors involved as well as how they situate the issue in relation to the Kurdish question. When the actors differ in their understanding of the nature of the conflict, the number of the IDPs, and the definition of the problems, it is highly probable that they will also diverge on the strategies and policies to be adopted to deal with the internal displacement issue including the need for reconciliation processes. The divergence on the sources of the problem as well as the strategies to be adopted and possible resolution methods renders the lives of those who were the victims of the forced migration. In the following sections, we will analyze the issues perceived by these actors as we portray the conflict. Before this analysis, let us study the internal displacement phenomenon in the literature.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Internal Displacement: Causes and Consequences

Until some 20 years ago, refugees and internally displaced people were not even discussed in the international plane. Since the end of the Cold War, especially with the collapse of the communist regimes and state failures, the world's attention largely focused on refugees. However, simultaneously the world was witnessing another problem of human movement: internal displacement. This unnoticed problem in the 1990s reached such a degree that it could no longer be left unattended. As of 2006, the number of global IDPs was estimated to be around 23,700, 000[6].

Internal displacement became the focus of U.N. protection in 1992 and the representative to the U.N. Secretary-General has brought it to the international human rights agenda in 1997 through an introduction of guidelines on internal forced migration. With the *United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, the international community now has a framework to prevent internal displacement and effectively deal with its consequences. Although being a guideline rather than a binding document (Hampton 1998:3), this document is the only international document that defines the phenomenon and advises states on how to help the IDPs. According to the United Nations' definition, IDPs are the persons or groups of persons

> "who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular, as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of, armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border" (United Nations 2005. Guiding Principles, Introduction, Article 2).

This definition includes both the people who were *forced* to and felt *obliged* to leave their homelands. According to the Guidelines, internal displacement can happen due to development projects (development-induced displacement), disasters (disaster-induced

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[6] Visit <http://www.idmc.org> for the breakdown of the number across the countries.

displacement) and conflicts (conflict-induced displacement). The definition also recognizes *groups* as well as individuals as victims of this experience. The differences among categories and inclusion of *groups* as victims are crucial in understanding the role of the state *vis a vis* the IDPs in cases where the source of forced mobility is the conflict between groups (and where the state is an insignificant/non-influential actor); or between state and a social group. Conflict-induced internal displacements caused by the failure of the polity often are linked directly to the state's active involvement in a conflict (i.e., the state choosing a side in the conflict through its policies), its inability to perform its functions by failing to isolate itself from incompatible interests, or its failure to take seriously or to even comprehend the nature of the conflict.

Conflict-induced internal conflicts produce either refugees or IDPs, depending on whether the migrant has crossed an international border. Lee (1996) argues that both forced immigration and internal displacement are results of coercion and compulsion; thus, the mechanisms protecting the two should be the same. However, policies protecting the two differ to a great extent, since the agencies in charge of regulation of policies are different (in case of refugees, the international agencies and host countries; and in cases of internal displacement, the nation-state which the IDP belongs to).

What is important to note in the case of internal displacement is that international refugee laws protecting refugees against the discrimination imposed by the hosting states do not apply in the cases of internal migration because IDPs remain within the borders of their states. When governments insist that they can handle issues by their own means, internally displaced persons are deprived of any international material assistance[7]. This, in most circumstances, affects migrants' physical security and material well-being. Whereas

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[7] Cohen argues that there are several cases where governments discourage international involvement, and these IDPs remain beyond the range of international activities. The governments of these countries either do not acknowledge that there is a problem (i.e. Algeria, Myanmar, India) or insist that they can handle the issue themselves (i.e. Turkey, India) (See Cohen 1999). Of course, the case for Turkey started to change from 2002 onwards, but it is important to note that Cohen's judgment was right before 2002.

immigrants in most cases can receive help from the sending country through diplomatic missions, which can facilitate their adaptation to the new environment (Rex et al. 1987), IDPs, who are victims of internal conflicts, usually lack material support from their governments. The status of immigrants may be regulated by the agreements between the host and the receiving states, and in cases, where immigrants are refugees; their rights are protected by international treaties. However, in the case of internal displacement, where the forced migrants are considered to be citizens (even though they might be unrecognized ethnic groups), the issue is regarded as an 'internal affair', thus, beyond international regulation (Çelik 2005a).

According to the literature on internal displacement, some responsibilities of states emerge before, during and after the forced migration as well in the reconstruction of the post-conflict zones. Literature suggests that states, before, during and after the forced migration, should

a) establish prevention mechanisms for conflict-induced displacements (**conflict prevention**);

b) provide assistance during and after the emergency (**assistance and service delivery**);

c) protect individual rights (the right to life, right to property, etc.) during the forced movement and return migration (**protection**);

d) facilitate safe and voluntary return of the IDPs (**return and reconstruction**); and

e) improve and strengthen state institutions to guarantee and protect these rights (**democratic socialization and culture of peace**) (Lee 1996; Hampton 1998; Cohen and Deng 1998a; Cohen and Deng 1998b; Martin, Midgley, and Teitelbaum 2002; Mooney 2000).

During and after internal displacement, states are also obliged to protect certain rights such as right to life, prohibition of torture and degrading treatment or punishment, right to

liberty and security, right to fair and public hearing, land and resource access rights, and rights to freedom of movement and residence. If internal displacement is a consequence of an armed conflict, states carry the responsibility to protect their citizens[8] as well as their rights to freedom of movement and residence[9]. However, state's responsibility is not limited with protection and assistance. It is also bound with prevention, fostering return through reconstruction and creating an environment for democratic socialization and culture of peace[10].

Based on the above-mentioned literature on internal displacement, we can argue that the following issues become important especially in conflict-driven internal displacement:

a) whether the group of IDPs is solely a member of a group (ethnic, racial, class, gender, etc.) and whether the displacement is a result of a conflict where the state is a "party" to the conflict or favors one party over the other,

b) whether the state has been willing and capable of providing assistance to the IDPs, and in the cases where it is incapable whether it allowed international assistance,

c) whether internal displacement is a consequence of failure to exercise full citizenship rights or has resulted in so, and

c) whether it addresses the root causes of displacement in its "corrective" mechanisms.

2.2. The 3R's of Internal Displacement

The above argument suggests that certain issues need special attention in the study of return of the IDPs and addressing their needs. Limited literature on internal displacement and

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[8] Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Convention 3GC and the 1977 Protocol additional to the 1949 Geneva Convention, and Relating to the Protection of the Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts-Protocol II.
[9] Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 12 of the International Convention on the Civil and Political Rights.
[10] "The culture of peace is based on the principles established in the Charter of the United Nations and on respect for human rights, democracy and tolerance, the promotion of development, education for peace, the free flow of information and the wider participation of women as an integral approach to preventing violence and conflicts, and efforts aimed at the creation of conditions for peace and its consolidation." (A/Res/52/13, 15 January 1998, para. 2).

return migration suggests that overcoming the consequences of conflicts and internal displacement encompasses a broad range of activities that need to be undertaken by the states, NGOs and international actors, especially in the post-conflict phase[11]. In conflict-induced displacement, there is a need for dealing with the causes of conflict as well as taking short to long-term measures to overcome the consequences of displacement. That is to say, the efforts should concentrate not only on addressing the immediate consequences of displacement both in the places of origin and displacement, but also include *peacebuilding[12]* efforts to prevent another renewed cycle of violence and establish durable peace. Issues of planned resettlement schemes, development activities and boosting up of economic areas at the place of origin, reintegration of returnees into civil and political life (Arowolo 2000; Ghosh 2001), human rights practices, protection of special groups such as women and children, rehabilitation of the ex-combatants; overcoming poverty; creating institutions that will foster lasting peace, stability and security; designing and implementing mechanisms for bringing together the parties to the conflict; reconciliation between the conflicting parties (Lederach 1998; Abu-Nimer 2001; Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit of World Bank n.d.; Nygren 2003); addressing the psychosocial needs of those who have suffered; and transforming the conflictual relationship between the parties are the areas that these actors need to work on to prevent another cycle of violence that would cause other displacements. Thus, peacebuilding requires activities such as capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation (Maiese 2003).

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[11] The term "post-conflict" should not be taken to mean that underlying conflicts have been resolved entirely. Rather, it is used to describe the end or de-escalation of active violent hostilities (negative peace) rather than establishment of a positive peace. See "Difficulties Encountered During Fieldwork" for further discussion.

[12] The term "peacebuilding" came into widespread use after 1992 when Boutros Boutros-Ghali used it in *Agenda for Peace*. The Agenda referred to "disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refugees, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming and strengthening governmental institutions and promoting formal and informal processes of political participation" (Article 55), to "address the serious problem of land mines (Article 58), and to "prevent the recurrence of conflicts" (Article 57) (Boutros-Ghali 1992). Although scholars use the term in a broader meaning, including activities in other phases of conflict, this report adopts the term introduced by Boutros-Ghali, that is, the activities in the post-conflict phase.

We can summarize these issues under three broad terms used in the peacebuilding literature: *Reconstruction* of the conflict zone (economic revival and rebuilding of infrastructure); *Rehabilitation* of the political system and society (getting back to the 'normal' way of life especially in terms of establishing a democratic governance; and reintegration of the former combatants into the society); *Reconciliation* between the parties involved (a process encompassing components of truth, justice, forgiveness/healing, reparation, trust across the divide in the society, and individual or group security)[13].

Many studies in conflict, post-conflict and internal displacement address the necessity of reconciliation process to have a closure with the past, to heal the social wounds and to prevent another escalation of the conflict. 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 acceptable" (Kriesberg 2001:48), is a deep and a complex one, which "involves changes in attitudes, aspirations, emotions and feelings, perhaps even beliefs" (IDEA 2004:4). It encompasses several elements: truth, acknowledgment of wrongs, justice, forgiveness/healing, reparation, trust across the divide in the society, and individual or group security and well-being (Kriesberg 2001:48; Lederach 1998; IDEA 2004:4). Therefore, return migration and durable solutions to forced migration require a synthesis of these three R's, some of which can consist of immediate planning (e.g. rebuilding infrastructures), whereas some should include long-term processes (e.g. societal healing).

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[13] These concepts are used differently by different scholars. For example Galtung argues that there is a need for 3 R's to take place to overcome conflicts: *Reconstruction* (including rehabilitation/healing, rebuilding/development, restructuration/democratization, and reculturation/culture of peace) after violence; *Reconciliation* (closure and healing) of the parties and *Resolution* (dealing with the root causes) of the underlying conflict (Galtung n.d). Although expressed with different terminology, the argument made by scholars of peacebuilding is similar to the arguments made here.

2.3. State, IGOs and NGOs in IDP-Related Policies and Peacebuilding

As argued in the above sections, to deal with the issues and problems that arise in the post-conflict phase, scholars suggest that various local and international actors along with the state come into the picture. Overcoming the legacy of conflict-induced internal displacement and fostering return migration requires that local actors, state, and international actors not only cooperate but also synchronize their efforts. The assumption behind this argument is that each actor has its capacities and limitations, and that any effort that is not supported by all would not produce a long-lasting solution. Therefore, along with the state, local administrations, NGOs and international actors (political and financial institutions) could and should play a role in the areas of decision-making and service-provision.

Since in many conflict-induced internal displacements, states consider the matter as a domestic one, and do not welcome international intervention with the argument that it is an attack against its sovereignty, the role of international organizations is usually limited with assistance (material and technical) and advising[14]. However, international organizations can also play an important role as facilitators in initiating discussions between competing actors, and they can act like a pressure group through offering the parties rewards and punishments. Of course, in the second case, an analysis of the international actor's leverages, limitations

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[14] However, there are some "success" stories, where international cooperation produced effective results. The help and pressure of international organizations has resulted in an increase in the number of return projects almost everywhere in the world. For example, the UN carried out two major projects to support the return efforts in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador: The International Conference on Refugees in Central America (*Conferência Internacional sobre Refugiados da Centroamericanos* – CIREFCA) and The Development Programme for Displaced Persons, Refugees and Returnees (*Proyectos Decoraciones y Reformas* – PRODERE). The International Labor Organization (ILO), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Health Organization (WHO) participated as sub-contractors. The Local Economic Development Agency (LEDA), a unit under PRODERE and operated through the sponsorship of ILO, initiated a UN programme. This programme aimed at achieving a peace process in Central America between 1990 and 1995 and at providing help to displaced persons, refugees and returnees. As this programme was very successful, there are currently attempts to realize similar models with the sponsorship of ILO in Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia, Croatia, Djibouti, Mozambique, Somalia and Tajikistan (Çelik 2006).

and its relation with the parties become important factors determining the outcome; that is, moving from a non-cooperative to a more cooperative approach[15].

As laid above in the discussion of causes of internal displacement, the study of conflict-induced displacement requires a special attention to the relationship between the conflicting groups. Representation of the voices of IDPs becomes an important issue especially in cases where there are no political actors to represent culturally-different groups, who constitute the majority of the IDPs. In other words, if the victims of forced migration are composed mostly of people of different ethnic groups, and if there are no institutions to speak on behalf of their 'group rights' violated during and after migration (e.g. difficulties due to linguistic barriers), it is not possible to talk about a holistic approach in durable solutions to internal displacement problem. In such cases, NGOs play an important role in reframing the internal displacement issue different than the definition of the state, in discussing with local administrations and state organizations the roots of the conflict; and in the direct representation of the people affected by internal displacement. However, in many conflict-induced migrations, states disregard the presence of NGOs or consider them as illegal arguing that they have connections with or representatives of ethnic parties or "terrorist" groups. Apart from Latin America, there are not many instances where NGOs have been able to protect the rights of IDPs versus the state or where they have exercised pressure in the enactment and implementation of the necessary laws, mostly due to this reason.

Previous studies in migration field also found that associations become important actors especially as service providers and putting pressure on the state for a change in policies. However, due to several limitations of the NGOs (e.g. financial sources, human capital,

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[15] International organizations can use various powers to change state behavior. Rubin, for example, talks about five types of power: reward (being able to offer side-payments), coercive (being able to establish threats and sanctions), expert (having greater knowledge on the conflict issue), referent (power to bring parties to negotiation) , and legitimate (having legal rights and sanctions) power (Cited from Fisher and Keashley 1991). There is a growing literature especially on how conditionality (and membership) becomes an important power of third parties when it comes to persuade the states to comply with international norms to foster democratic governance (see for example Çelik and Rumelili 2006; Çelik 2005a; and Beriker and Eralp 2005).

technical expertise and potential for politicization), most NGOs need assistance from and/or cooperation with an international organization to undertake such roles.

In the recent years, the United Nations (UN) also acknowledged the fact that "civil society organizations have played an increasingly active role in conflict prevention, management and resolution"[16]. This increasing role, especially in the post-1990 period took several different forms all around the world. Several studies summarized the role these organizations play in conflict and post-conflict zones as: working in emergency relief and assistance work (or on longer term social and economic work), works concerned with social justice, human rights advocacy and monitoring in situations of potential or actual conflict, concentrating specifically on conflict prevention and peacebuilding work.

Potentially, NGOs can serve several core functions in peacebuilding: a) protection, b) monitoring and accountability, c) advocacy and public communication, d) socialization and a culture of peace, e) conflict sensitive social cohesion, f) intermediation and facilitation, and g) service delivery (Paffenholz and Spurk 2006)[17]. These functions are also important in conflict-induced forced migration and return migration. Among all these functions, only service delivery can be considered as related to economic issues (thus, connected to reconstruction activities). In fact, along with service delivery and assistance role NGOs are expected to monitor state activities, warn the international community on state abuses, advocate rights, create environment to bridge difference, foster democratic norms and peace culture. They can even act as facilitators in the conflict process. Therefore, they have a considerable amount of direct and indirect role and responsibility in the 3R's mentioned earlier.

[Insert Table 1 here]

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[16] Report of the Secretary General on the Work of the Organization, 31 August 1999 Supplement no I (A/54/1 paras 39-40).

[17] Paffenholz and Spurk (2006) define service delivery as the direct provision of services to citizens, e.g. self-help groups and argue that this function is especially important in cases where the state is weak and civil society becomes a basic provider of shelter, health or education.

2.4. Kurdish Internal Displacement and Its Consequences

The conflict-induced internal displacement of the Kurds in the 1990s was the result of a) the evacuation of villages by the military, allowed by the 1987 emergency rule[18]; b) the PKK's (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* - Kurdistan Workers' Party) pressure against the villagers who do not support the PKK to abandon their villages; and c) insecurity resulting from being caught between the PKK and Turkish security forces (Kirişçi 1998). Internally displaced Kurds migrated to big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmit, and Izmir in Western Anatolia, and Adana and Mersin in the Mediterranean region, but there was also a village-to-city migration within the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian regions (Akşit et al. 1996; Human Rights Association n.d.; Human Rights Association 1995; Human Rights Association 1998; Human Rights Watch World Report 2002). Many internally displaced Kurds did not know about the well-being of their lands, homes, and belongings during their long stays away from their homes due to the decrease in security conditions in the region (Human Rights Association 1995). In the case of those whose villages were evacuated, access to the village was prohibited. Literature on the consequences of Kurdish internal displacement within the region and to big cities show that Kurdish internal displacement fostered urban poverty (Human Rights Association 1995; 1998; Sönmez1998; Göç-Der 2001; Çelik 2005b; Altıntaş 2003), social exclusion (Human Rights Foundation 1995; 1998; Erder 1996; 1997; Çelik 2005b; Global IDP), in some cases suicides (Halis 1999), and social and political disintegration especially among women (Çelik 2005b) in the cities.

For a long time the Turkish state has been unwilling to assist those who were forced to leave their homes, and rejected international assistance. The state's position on this, however,

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[18] In 1987, the Prime Minister Turgut Özal established a system of emergency rule (OHAL) with a regional governor for most of the southeast. It aimed to control the region with strict state measures. The system was also supported by the village guard system of thousands of civilian, pro-government Kurds to supplement the state's control in the region (Gunter 1997).

recently began to change with Turkey's increased willingness to comply with the norms of the *European community*, more specifically with those of the Council of Europe and the European Union (EU), and the de-escalation of the conflict in the region since the capture of the PKK leader[19]. The clearest direct legislative effect of Turkey's eagerness to join the EU came with the gradual removal of the emergency rule in the Kurdish populated provinces in eastern and southeastern Anatolia towards the end of 2002.

After the capture of Öcalan, the leader of the PKK in 1999, the government initiated a return program. Turkish state's return policy until recently has always been concentrated on providing places to the returnees in new areas where it could control a possible PKK support. For this aim, in previous decades it came up with the idea of village-towns.[20] Although the government gave up its efforts to relocate the IDPs to the village-towns, state's existing main policy, "Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project" (RVRP) is still concentrated on re-building infrastructures of the villages with limited financial resources[21].

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[19] For a detailed analysis of these changes, see Çelik 2005a.

[20] The idea of village-towns goes back to the Bülent Ecevit's government in the 1970s. Village-towns consist of small town-houses built next to each other with police stations nearby. They allow only small amount of land for the villagers as compared to the traditional village structure. Hasim Haşimi, an ex-MP from Diyarbakır, who chaired the Turkish Grand Assembly's "Commission for Research into the Problems of the Citizens Who Have Migrated Due to the Evacuation of Settlements in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolian Regions", argued that the money spent on the project would be wasted because of the impracticability of the project. In an interview published in Turkish Daily News, he argued that these projects do not work because inhabitants choose to settle in a different place due to the inadequate resources in the village-towns (*Turkish Daily News*, January 30, 2001).

Besides the actual failures of the project, the village-towns are not popular among the IDPs because the project envisages merging several villages together. This is against the social and economic structure of the region, encompassing hamlets that were formed because of blood feuds and tribal disputes. These tribal people refuse to live together. Besides, bringing together the people of several villages, and allocating them limited land limits their economic and social lives (Haşimi cf. *Turkish Daily News*, January 30, 2001). Despite these shortcomings, village-towns are still promoted in the new Framework Document for the internal displacement issue (see below).

[21] The Turkish government has initiated the RVRP in 1994 targeting IDPs. The RVRP initially covered 12 provinces and was administered by the General Directorate of Rural Services between the years 1994 and 1999, but it acquired its current shape when its administration was transferred to the Ministry of Interior and the Special Provincial Administrations of the relevant provincial governorships. In the years 1999-2002 the GAP administration prepared Sub-Regional Development Plans within the framework of RVRP in collaboration with governorships. Initially consisting of 12 provinces, the RVRP now covers 14 provinces, with the addition of Adıyaman and Ağrı. The objectives of the RVRP are as follows: resettling those who wish to return, in the vicinity of their own villages or in other available areas; building the necessary social and economic infrastructure and facilitating sustainable living conditions in these areas; rebuilding and reviving the disrupted rural life; developing a more balanced settlement plan in rural areas; providing a more rational distribution of government investments and services; and supporting the development of "central villages" (Kurban et al. 2006b).

The clearest international dimension and direct recognition of the problem was evidenced by the Turkish state's welcome of the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons (RSG), Francis Deng in May 2002[22]. Following this and other mark stones in Turkey's domestic and international policy, the Turkish state has recently passed new resolutions and policies to foster return migration and compensate for the losses occurred during its "fight against terrorism". In line with these developments, the Turkish state passed a new law for compensation for the losses, commissioned Hacettepe University's Institute of Population Studies (HIPS) to conduct a comprehensive survey on IDPs in Turkey (TGYONA)[23], adopted a new framework for action[24], and policies designed for IDPs and launched an action plan for service delivery to the IDPs[25] in one of the cities that produced IDPs[26]. As seen in these policies, the government's efforts are focused on return and tied to development projects.

There have been studies arguing that such policies "within the framework of a depoliticized policy discourse centered on "regional development" (…) disentangles the phenomenon of internal displacement from the Kurdish issue as a political problem and instead links it to a "technical" agenda of development" (Ayata and Yükseker 2005:6). Picking up from this argument, this report argues that the state's intractable focus only on the

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[22] "Specific Groups and Individuals Mass Exoduses and Displaced Persons", Report of the Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons, Mr. Francis Deng, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/56, E/CN.4/2003/86/Add.2, 27 November 2002.

[23] Following Deng's recommendation, the government asked HIPS to undertake a comprehensive survey of the IDPs. The study was done between December 2004 and June 2006 from a representative sample of IDPs in 14 internal displacement producing cities, 10 receiving cities and a sample 57 remaining cities. The number of IDPs in the quantitative sample was 7,300 (HÜNEE 2006).

[24] Following the recommendation after the RSG's mission in 2002, the government formed a commission in December 2004 in order to formulate a strategy document outlining its policy on IDPs. The framework for the government strategy entitled "Measures on the Issue of Internally Displaced Persons and the Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project in Turkey" (hereafter The "Framework Document") was issued by the Council of Ministers as a special "Decision of Principle" (*Prensip Kararı)* on 17 August 2005. The four-page paper is not a strategy document, but a framework that lays down the principles that will shape the final strategy to be adopted. The Framework Document can be obtained from the website of the Ministry of Interior: <http://www.icisleri.gov.tr/_Icisleri/Web/Gozlem2.aspx?sayfaNo=722>

[25] Van Providence Action Plan for the IDPs Service Delivery (September 2006) is available at <http://www.undp.org.tr/demGovDocs/VanActionPlanEng10.10.2006.doc>.

[26] See Kurban et al. 2006b for a detailed analysis of improvements made since 2002.

policies of development prevents production of a holistic approach, which addresses root causes and establishes a durable peace. Yet, at the same time, while claiming a holistic approach with a focus on justice, reconciliation, and group rights, what NGOs working on this issue do is limited with providing a discourse around these "fancy words" without necessarily pushing for a political and social environment fertile for such discussions and undertaking activities to transform the conflictual relationship.

[Insert Table 2 here]

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses

This research aims to study the multi-layered consequences of Kurdish forced migration, and the way the actors dealing with these issues present these consequences and needs of the IDPs. To address this question, several hypotheses from previous studies on forced migration in Turkey and elsewhere along with literature on internal displacement in post-conflict environments were drawn.

> a) The activities of the state until 2002 classify as "Reconstruction" activities with no reference to the root causes of the conflict. However, through the EU's increasing pressures and indirect intervention to the issue, the state is trying to shift its policies to deal more with the rehabilitation side of the issue. It is this research's argument that neither in the state's past nor in its future attempts is there any intention to deal with the reconciliation side of the issue, which many IDPs might ask for.

> b) The way the international organizations deal with the issue is also limited with visions of reconstruction and rehabilitation. One can argue that the assumption behind the measures imposed by the EU more broadly

on the Kurdish Question and on the internal displacement is that rather than negotiating issues explicitly with the actors involved and undergoing a healing process, once the country would conform to the democratic and cultural norms of the organization; the problems that caused such conflict and forced migration will diminish. However, both the UN and the EU are also trying to achieve rehabilitation through public awareness and capacity-building of the NGOs. Therefore, they might have a direct long-term effect as well.

c)   It is more likely that the NGOs, which argue to be representing the interests and needs of the IDPs, will address the political issues related to the internal displacement. However, it is important to analyze how this approach is used to represent these needs, and how effective they become to find remedies to the problems.

d)   Literature on the return of the IDPs in post-conflict environments and internal displacement in general also point out the necessity of a holistic approach (that is, addressing all problem areas) and coordination among the actors. The research also analyzes to what extent this is achieved by the actors.

3.2. Methodology

The research for this report was based on a review of secondary sources as well as fieldwork. Fieldwork took place in 13 of the 14 cities, which produced IDPs, and are under the regulation of RVRP[27], and Ankara and Istanbul. For this research project I utilized the following primary sources:

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[27] These 14 cities are Adıyaman, Ağrı, Batman, Bingöl, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Hakkâri, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, Şırnak, Tunceli and Van. I had interviews in all of these cities except for Ağrı.

(i) in-depth interviews with the IDPs: Research on the differences between actors addressing IDPs' needs requires first and foremost listening to their "voices." To be able to protect objectivity, I tried to reach IDPs through my informal networks rather than having an access through state institutions or NGOs. The number of group interviews with the IDPs is eight where twenty-nine IDPs were interviewed.

[Insert Table 3 here]

In my interviews with the IDPs, I tried to gather data on what they consider the biggest problem in the post-conflict phase in terms of *security*, *economic well-being*, *confronting the past* (including need for apology/forgiveness, justice and truth-seeking), *identity* and *psychological* needs (in other words, the economic, political, and socio-psychological needs of the IDPs). Semi-structured interviews on these different topics, then helped me to distinguish how the IDPs connect (or do not connect) the issue with the broader issue of Kurdish Question in Turkey and distinguish it from any voluntary migration.

I also resorted to the previous research such as that of TESEV (Kurban et al. 2006b) and the results of the TGYONA study (HÜNEE 2006) to grasp the needs and interests of the IDPs.

(ii) in-depth interviews with leaders of state agencies, local administrators in the region, representatives of the NGOs in the region, Ankara and Istanbul departments of the UN (namely, UNDP) and the Representation of the European Commission to Turkey: The total number of interviews is 77; 49 of which are funded by MireKoç. Out of these interviews, 19 were held with representatives from the state (mostly governors, vice-governors are the representatives within the related ministries), 52 with NGO leaders, 1 with a leader of an initiative, 1 with a representative from the UNDP, 1 with a representative from the European Commission in Ankara and 1 with an informant. I also interviewed 2 women center founded by the DTP-led mayors in Diyarbakır.

[Insert Table 4 here]

In my interviews with the state officers and the EU representatives, I tried to analyze to what extent these policies refer to the problems of economic backwardness of the region (in other words, how much it is an 'underdevelopment problem', as argued by some) and to what extent the EU pressures have shifted state's approach to deal with the cultural, social and political rights of the IDPs.

In my interviews with the representatives from the international organizations, I tried to find out what projects they support and the reasons/objectives behind these policies. My hypothesis was that the U.N. and the E.U. would differ in their capacity and power in allocating resources and mobilizing NGOs to take action to deal with several dimensions of the problem since their acceptance by and power on the state might differ depending on the political context.

(iii) participatory observation in trainings, public announcements of state initiatives, and conferences held by the NGOs on the issue: To be able to analyze the approaches and activities of the actors, it was also crucial to observe the activities of the actors. Interestingly enough, the period in which this research took place, there was an increase in the activities of almost all actors involved. I joined the two public meetings held by the Ministry of Interior and UNDP about their HÜNEE report[28]; one conference organized by TESEV after the launch on their book on the issue, and joined UNDP's training of NGO's on the Guiding Principles[29]. I also joined several conferences on the Kurdish Question, where some NGOs addressed the Kurdish internal displacement issue as a sub-question under this heading.

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[28] Joint conference of UNDP- Ministry of Interior, "Support to the Development of an Internally Displaced People Programme in Turkey" was held in February in Ankara. In a one day conference representatives from the state branches, NGOs and INGOs were present to listen to the partial report on the developments of the Hacettepe University survey titled "Study on Migration and the Displaced Population in Turkey", initiated in December 2004. The RSG, Walter Kalin, was also present in the conference.

[29] "Training of Trainers on the Protection of IDPs" took place in Van on September 4-7, 2007, where local NGOs, several branches of the UN (UNDP, UNHCR) and representatives from the state branches attended the meeting. The list of participants and the final report of the workshop can be accessed at <http://www.undp.org.tr/demGovDocs/VanWorkshopReportSeptember06.doc>.

Secondary data came from the following:

(i) statistical data and reports gathered from state institutions, local NGOs, independent organizations dealing with the Kurdish forced migration and the archives of the EU and the Council of Europe. I also utilized the data compiled by HÜNEE (This study gathered data on the population migrated from the provinces affected by the conflict and host cities; socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the IDPs, and sub-group population of the IDPs).

(ii) newspapers: The developments on the state policies and public declarations of the NGOs were also crucial to note the divergent approaches. For this aim, reports, analyses and news from Özgür Gündem[30], Hürriyet, Zaman and Bianet websites were regularly archived taking 1999 as the starting year. I also compiled articles from Radikal and Milliyet. For the recent and past laws on the issue, the reference point was the Official Gazette.

3.3. Problems Encountered During Fieldwork

Undertaking fieldwork during the summer of 2006 has been rather difficult because reaching some cities and conducting a healthy interview about forced and return migration were hard due to the fact that the violence increased dramatically after the March 2006 events in the region. Unfortunately, these events also made me question the basic assumption of my research: that is, the Kurdish Question has been in the post-conflict stage since 1999. However, we also know from the literature that conflicts have their unique histories with ups and downs and that if certain prevention mechanisms are not applied properly, conflicts are doomed to escalate again. Even though the interviews were hard to undertake given the fact that the post-conflict environment gave way to re-escalation of violence again in the past months, it also gave me the opportunity to analyze what led to this shift in the eyes of the

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[30] This newspaper's publication has been banned for short intervals since 1999. The data in these periods are missing.

actors. In this period, the interviews I had provided me a temporal analysis as well as an opportunity to discuss the changing perceptions of the actors as related to changes in the level of violence. I reconstructed my interview questions to analyze the actors' evaluation of causes of forced migration, their ideal return migration scenarios in the midst of increasing or decreasing violence and what the 'other' actors could have done or can do to establish these ideal scenarios. In fact, through this re-design in the methodology that this research could also be able to answer the following question: did the actors make the necessary moves to deal with the problems of the IDPs and the root causes needed to be addressed in the post-conflict phase?

4. RE-THINKING TURKEY'S INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT ISSUE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF "KURDISH QUESTION": NEGOTIATION AMONG THE ACTORS

4.1. What Do the IDPs Want?

Before discussing the needs and wants of the IDP population, one needs to emphasize that the IDP population is not homogenous. We can come up with various dimensions in making up this heterogeneous population in the analysis of the IDP population in Turkey. These include but are not limited with age (young population vs. the elderly), gender (women vs. men), reason of migration, host place (metropolises in the west, cities in the region which produced displacement, sub-province in the region, etc.), etc. However, in the light of the results of the TGYONA study (HÜNEE 2006), one can come up with some ideas on what the IDP population's characteristics are. As indicated in the report, below results can give the reader an idea on the reasons and consequences of the internal displacement:

1.   The size of the migrant population originating from the 14 provinces due to security related reasons *may be* between 953.680 and 1.201.200. These results

indicate that 80 percent of the security related migration that took place in twenty years between 1986 and 2005 is rural originated, and 20 percent is urban originated.

2. The numerical size of the return migrant population is estimated to be between 10,9 and 12,1 percent of the population migrated from the 14 provinces in the last twenty years due to security reasons. The share of those stated that they do not wish to migrate in the future is 84,5 percent, and the share of those undecided is 4,7 percent.

3. It is stated that about half of security related migration was unreported (no prior notice was given by an official state agency). In the case of reporting, it is stated that almost all were verbal reports. 55 percent of those who have migrated due to security reasons but have not returned to their origins are willing to return to their origins.

4. 50,1 percent claimed to be aware of RVRP; 53,4 to be aware of Compensation Law; and 79,0 percent to be aware of European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). To those persons claimed to be aware of RVRP, Compensation Law and ECHR, it was asked whether they have applied to this law or court; 25,1 percent of the respondents stated they have applied to RVRP, and 37,1 percent to Compensation Law and 8,9 percent to ECHR (TGYONA 2006).

These results suggest that most migrants have experienced sudden displacement from their rural places (no prior notice) due to "security reasons." Such finding is not surprising because the previous studies have emphasized the fact that displacement has been *forced* upon the IDPs and they were given no prior written notice (Aker et al. 2005; Kurban et al 2006a; 2006b). A recent study by *Ulaşılabilir Yaşam Derneği* (UYD)[31] also found that most migrants left their places due to village burnings (%73) and because they were forced by the security

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[31] The survey was done in 2006 with 266 IDPs residing in Ovacık and Hozat districts of Tunceli.

forces to leave (%18). The remaining population left their places because they were afraid of their well-being (%9) (UYD 2008).

The most common problems encountered in the place of destination are poverty, unemployment and health problems (especially among women)[32]. Among the IDP girls, the most common problem is limited access to education in the place of destination in the 14 cities, resulting mostly from a combination of poverty and practice of patriarchical tradition in the region. Those who return usually complain about the weak or no state support for the reconstruction of their houses, not having enough livestock to support their family and the shortage of infrastructure in their villages. According to the results of the UYD study, such needs for the construction of houses and infrastructures are the important conditions of return. The number one priority for the IDPs, who want to return, is listed as "guarantee" [that there will not be another forced migration] (60.2% of the respondents listed this as number one priority) (UYD 2008). Again, although Tunceli can be considered as a special case not only because of its specific background of forced migration history, but also because it is a province, which still experiences the OHAL-like governance, it seems like IDPs, when it comes to choosing among "security concerns" and "economic difficulties", prefer to return regardless of the fact that "home" is not secure for them. To put it differently, if the IDPs are experiencing severe economic problems, they may be willing to risk their lives by returning at least seasonally. In the UYD study, 33% of the IDPs listed "security concerns" as "not important at all". However, this is not to argue that all IDPs would like to return or return without any conditions. In fact, the results of TGYONA show that most IDPs are not willing to return. Without specifying the reasons in detail, the results suggest that those, who do not want to return, show their reasons as the factors related to the place of origin (%20), both

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[32] This finding is supported by my fieldwork results as well as previous studies mentioned in the literature review section.

place of origin and place of destination (19,2%), and both place of origin and other reasons (%20,7) (HÜNEE 2006).

IDP's unwillingness to return is not an unknown fact. In fact, many studies point out the fact that internal displacement is now mostly an urban issue (Kurban et al. 2006b). However, TGYONA study undermines the fact that some IDPs would still want to be able to return to their villages during the harvest season (seasonal migration). The study does not provide the socioeconomic background of those who do /do not want to return, either. TESEV's recent study found that in Batman, Diyarbakır, Hakkari and Istanbul, those IDPs who suffer economic difficulties in their place of destination would like to return (Kurban et al. 2006b). UYD's study also shows that 48.5% of the IDPs want to return to their place of origin and %27 want to be able return seasonally. In most cases, the motive for return is economical (%64) (UYD 2008).

One interesting result of the TGYONA survey is that there is not much difference among the two genders in terms of their return motivations, with women slightly more willing to return (%58,5 of women and %50,8 of men want to return) (HÜNEE 2006). This, in fact, is a contradictory result with the prior studies and results of this research. In her fieldwork in Diyarbakır, for example, Yükseker found that men have a higher tendency to return than women (Kurban et al. 2006b).

These different claims by the state and the NGOs on the consequences of forced migration and the needs of the IDPS, in fact, point out that it is very important to ask the IDPs what they understand from return, and why they would (or not) like to return. Most of the IDPs consider return as "return in the given conditions". Return sometimes also becomes a "political request" from the state although the individual himself/herself does not think about returning. That is why an in-depth analysis of the IDPs' requests and considering return not only as a process but also as a "right" becomes a necessity (Kurban et al. 2006b). Moreover,

for most IDPs, return is not a simple physical movement of people, but it has other political issues attached to it.

The results of this study show that in most cases, IDPs request the "right to return" and are more willing to return on a seasonal basis or be able to visit relatives in their villages. Families and single women with children are less likely to return due to the difficulties of access to education in the villages. Return mostly divides families, in which case some members of the family stay in the city and some return due to economic difficulties. Also, in most cases, IDPs set their return conditions: reconstruction of their houses and re-gaining of their livestock; reconstruction (and in most cases construction) [33] of their infrastructure, and establishment of "peace".

The use of the word "peace" by the IDPs needs some elaboration. IDPs do not simply mean the end of violence. When asked in detail, it becomes obvious that their use of the word goes beyond negative peace[34], and also implies such concepts as disarmament and rehabilitation of the PKK members. In several cases, especially by the women, there was a request from the state to find the "truth" on and perpetrators of the extra-judicial killings. This, IDPs claim, was a need to re-establish the trust between them and the state. They argued that if truth on the extrajudicial killings would be revealed, there would be no need for public apology.

One other interesting result of this study was that when asked for return conditions, IDPs did not list any linguistic issues (e.g. service delivery in Kurdish). This is mostly because NGO personnel reaching them and delivering aid know Kurdish and use it in their daily communications. In most cases, IDPs want *honorable* aid (meaning, the need to be self-

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[33] Reconstruction in most cases is a misnomer. Especially in villages located in the mountainous areas, such infrastucture has never existed. For the IDPs, who became city residents for more than a decade now, it is hard to re-adopt to the environments, where such facilities lack.

[34] Negative peace is used in the literature to mean the end of armed conflict. Positive peace, on the other hand, is more than negative peace in the sense that there is collaborative relationship between the conflicting parties and that the root causes of the conflict is addressed.

sufficient in their lives) and "peace" (which mostly had an implicit meaning in reference to the 'release of relatives in the prisons and re-integration of the PKK combatants to the society'). In some cases, where the IDP was highly politicized (read as a Kurdish nationalist), (s)he would also ask from the state the release of Öcalan and taking him as *muhatab* (the representative).

4.2. 'Irreconcilable' Differences

One of the biggest challenges in overcoming the bitter history of Kurdish displacement is that there is a big difference the way the state and the other actors especially the Kurdish NGOs present the "facts" and the terminology they use in framing the conflict. In a nutshell, we can summarize these issues as follows:

a) *statistical 'facts'*: these actors differ on the claimed numbers of how many have been displaced. As indicated by a report following the RSG's visit, determining the numbers of those who were affected by internal displacement is crucial in designing effective coping mechanisms. 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 five nearby cities, 820 villages and 2,345 hamlets were evacuated, and 378,335 people were forced to leave (TBMM 1997). Again according to The Ministry of Interior (MOI) 358,335 people were displaced from 945 villages and 2,021 hamlets during the 1984-1999 period and that 137,636 of them have returned to their homes since 1998, when the RVRP was initiated through a Prime Ministry Circular.[35] International organizations and domestic and foreign NGOs put the figure of IDPs in Turkey between one and four million.[36]

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[35] Bekir Sıtkı Dağ, Department of Strategy Development, Ministry of Interior, Presentation at the "Support to the Development of an IDP Program in Turkey Project" Workshop, 23 February 2006, Ankara.
[36] For instance, the US Committee for Refugees (USCR) has estimated the number of IDPs to be between 380,000 and 1 million. Human Rights Watch (HRW) has cited a figure of 2 million. Turkish Human Rights Foundation (THRF), Human Rights Association (HRA) and Migrants' Association for Social Cooperation and Culture (Göç-Der) have used estimates between 3 and 4 million in their reports and declarations. See, USCR

The difference in the numbers presented by official sources and NGOs, in a way, reflects the two different positions on the understanding of and discourse on the nature of the conflict and possible policies to address these issues. The recent report of the TGYONA results argues that the size of the migrant population originating from the 14 provinces due to security related reasons may be between 953.680 and 1.201.200 (HÜNEE 2006). This report, interestingly, indicates a number whose range is between what is claimed by the NGOs and the state. However, it is also important that state resisted publicizing the report for a long time (Aköz 2006), and that the number presented by the report is almost three times more than what the state claims to be. Moreover, this fact is not incorporated into the design of new policies targeting IDPs after the release of the report.

b)   *Causal facts and Terminology*: whereas the state claims that the forced migration is the consequence of "terrorism" and "fight against terrorism" in the region, most NGOs claim that the state's village guards and military forces have forced many to leave by burning houses and prosecuting civilians. There still exists a conflict between these NGOs and the state on the terminology used to define internal displacement. The official Guiding Principles were translated to Turkish by the Ankara branch of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). This official translation adopted the word *"yerinden olma"*, an active word, which has no indication that displacement was done by someone, despite oppositions by the NGOs. These organizations claim that the correct translation should be a passive one, *"yerinden edilme"*, indicating that displacement was done by some agency[37].

c)   *Compensation*: During the RSG Francis Deng's mission to Turkey in 2002, the government was preparing a legislation to compensate the losses occurred during its "fight against terrorism". This law, put in practice in October 2004, "Law on Compensation for

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1999; HRW 2002; and Joint Press Release by HRA, THRF, Göç-Der and other NGOs, 31 May 2001, available from <http://www.tihv.org.tr/basin/bas20010531.html>.

[37] TESEV, for example, insistently use the word *Yerinden Edilme*, arguing that based on the Principle 6 Para. 1of the Annotations to Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, such actions done arbitrarily for security reasons are "ülke içinde yerinden edilme" (Kurban et al 2006 b).

Losses Resulting from Terrorism and the Fight against Terrorism" (hereafter "Compensation Law")[38] 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. However, there are still problems reported by the NGOs about the composition of the committees as well as the principles and the application of the law. These commissions, composed of all public officers with only one civil participant - namely a representative from the bar associations- are highly suspicious in their fairness of decisions in the eyes of the IDPs and NGOs. Also, in most cases state officers', (mainly the vice governors, who are leading the commission) unwillingness to give the victims their due compensations fosters the mistrust towards the state[39]. Additionally, although the objectives of the law include "bolstering trust towards the state, rapprochement between the state and its citizens and contributing to social peace," [40] law's exclusion of compensation for pain and suffering and of bringing perpetrators of violations to justice, and the fact that NGOs, as representatives of the IDPs, are not included in the compensation committees (Kurban et al 2006) bear question marks in the sincerity of such moves by the state and a possibility of reconciliation between the state and the IDPs.

d)   *Fostering return migration*: As argued above, the state's focus on regional development, de-linking the issue from its political discourse also means that all policies on this issue are concentrated on fostering return migration[41]. In fact, previous studies show that not only the percentage of people, who would like to return, is low (HÜNEE 2006; Kurban et al 2006b) but also it's usually the elderly and families with economic difficulties, who are more likely to return. It is now a known fact that the issue of internal displacement cannot be addressed only by producing policies on return. Also, as compared to many NGOs and

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[38] Law No: 5233, appeared in Official Gazette on 17 July 2004 No. 25535, was put in force on October 4, 2004.
[39] For a detailed analysis of the principles and the flaws in the application of the law, see Dilek Kurban et al. (2006b).
[40] Compensation Law, Preamble.
[41] For a detailed criticism of these policies, see Ayata and Yükseker 2005.

international organizations' view that return migration should be supported by long-lasting political, social and economic reform, state's approach up until now has rather been concentrated on short-term *Reconstruction* policies; that is, mainly providing infrastructure for the villages and material assistance to the IDPs.

4.3. State as the 'Hegemonic' Actor

In the Kurdish question, the state has always been the most hegemonic actor with its institutions, ideology and the military power. The conflict started to de-escalate when the PKK leader was captured in Kenya towards the end of 1999 and a one-sided ceasefire of the PKK following this. This event demarcated that the state in this new phase will *continue* to be the most important actor. However, one can argue that the state's role before, during and after the conflict (and corresponding migratory waves) has always been focused on to keep its hegemony in the conflict zone and secure its territorial sovereignty and *national security* rather than protecting *human security*[42] and overcoming the bitter legacy of the internal displacement.

Although not fully adhering to the principles laid in the Guiding Principles on the protection of the IDPs, the Turkish state recently made important steps to abide with the international standards. In its "Framework Document"[43] for the internal displacement, the government argues that

> "numerous villages and hamlets were deserted in Turkey between 1984-1998, particularly due to the pressure and coercion of separatist terrorist organizations and other factors such as the search for better living conditions, large-scale development projects

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[42] The concept of "human security" was introduced to the literature through the UN Development Programme's 1994, *Human Development Report*, and the Commission on Human Security's 2003 report, *Human Security Now*. According to these reports, states should protect their citizens against violent threats to individuals, while recognizing that these threats are strongly associated with poverty, lack of state capacity and various forms of socio-economic and political inequity, hunger, disease and natural disasters.
[43] One of the recommendations of the RSG for the government was "to clarify its policy on internal displacement, including return, resettlement and reintegration, (and) to make that policy known…" (UN 2002). However, rather than being a strategy document for clarification of its policies, this belated document is a framework document to guide for the required strategy document.

within the context of South Eastern Anatolia Project and natural disasters"(Framework Document 2005: 1).

Although the Framework Document can be regarded as a positive step in officially recognizing the UN definition of internal displacement, state's lack of recognition of its own role in the process and insistent refusal to come up with effective and durable solutions to the problem have been harshly criticized by the NGOs (See Kurban et al. 2006a; and Göç-Der's criticism cf. Kurban et al 2006a:14, footnote 10).

It is by no means arguable that the visit to the RSG and Turkey's bid to the EU significantly contributed to these positive developments. Yet, it is also obvious that the state's existing policies only poorly address *Reconstruction*. Its recent policy of compensation, although being a big step in compensating for *material* losses, does not address root causes and indicates no willingness for reconciliation except for the un-practiced objective of "contributing to social peace[44]."

Yet at the same time, one needs to acknowledge the fact that the state has made a big step from denying the problem to accepting its presence (Ayata and Yükseker 2005). However, this acceptance is in the form of "management" (Ayata and Yükseker 2007) or rather a re-installment of its hegemony. While public announcement of accepting that the fact that the state could not "manage" this "crisis", as expressed in the below words of the Assistant Secretary to the MIO, can be considered as a positive step to address the past mistakes, the very fact that such efforts are done to save Turkey's fame at the international level and by de-linking the issue from the Kurdish "conflict" (therefore, considering it a pure humanitarian crisis) still keeps the internal displacement as an ongoing predicament:

> In summary, perhaps we may not be able to prevent migration given the terror and security conditions of the time, but we could have directed it for the well-being of the people and the society. This was a *crisis* but we could not apply *crisis management*.[45]

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[44] This objective stated in the compensation law is not defined by the law.

[45] Zekeriya Şarbak. Opening Speech delivered a TESEV Conference, 4 December 2006, emphasis added. Full speech can be accessed at <http:// http://www.tesev.org.tr/etkinlik/yerinden_edilme_kof_sunumlar_zsarbak.php>

Interviews with IDPs and NGOs as well as previous studies (Kurban et al 2006a) show that the IDPs do not differentiate between the Kurdish conflict and internal displacement. State's consistent denial of the link results in fostering IDPs' mistrust in the state and NGOs' politicization as a reaction. Although TGYONA study can and should be considered as a positive opportunity to address the IDP problems, the state does not acknowledge its fault and responsibility in the conflict and displacement by calling the reasons of displacement as "terrorism and fight against terrorism" (Compensation Law) or vaguely defining it as "security-driven" (HÜNEE 2006).

It is true that the state has been successful in picking up the most important problem of the most IDPs; that is, poverty, but its failure to implement policies dealing with these needs even after some twenty years, and its implicit objective to show the issue as linked to "terrorism" resulting in *only* economic difficulties make it an actor, whose moves would not produce long-lasting effective solutions.

4.4. NGO's: the Push For Reconciliation?

Analyzing the role of NGOs as actors in the internal displacement issues requires beforehand a brief introduction of the historical limitations set upon the civil society by the state. Leaving aside the historical roles of 'strong state' and 'weak civil society', especially the NGOs working on the issues that the state considers as 'a threat to its national integrity' (namely the radical Islam, Kurdish Question and issues related to these broad categories) have always been under the state control, suppression and harassment. Moreover, the OHAL regime that lasted in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia suppressed the NGOs so much and so long that in many places they could not come back as influential actors to the Turkish political scenes. As an answer to the question "why aren't there many NGOs addressing the

IDP issues in specific and broader issues of the Adıyaman people?" the words of the leader of the Adıyaman İHD was telling in this regard and could very much be generalized for the region:

> The 1980 coup d'état passed from here. Yes, it did visit elsewhere as well but it passed from here so harshly that those who were members of political organizations and civil society at those days are either in other cities or abroad now, and those who are left behind do not want to be engaged (Interview with the president of Adıyaman IHD, 7 February 2007).

As discussed above, Turkey's EU membership process and developments after the RSG's visit to Turkey resulted in policy changes and somewhat softening of the state's approach towards the civil society. One of the strongest evidence of this change, at least on paper, is stated in Van Province Action Plan for the IDPs Service Delivery. According to this document, the support of NGOs to the plan and their cooperation and partnership are essential for durable return policies. However, NGO support is only favorable in "the fields of education, health and income generating activities which are relevant to social and economic development in the scope of KDRP (RVRP)" (Van Action Plan 2006:10). In other words, NGOs are seen as service-providers and their cooperation is desirable for but limited with activities that fall under *Reconstruction* activities. In fact, these activities are in parallel with what most NGOs do in the Kurdish-populated regions, but what makes them different than the above-mentioned definition is that they also add *identity* to this perspective. For example, almost all NGOs working with the IDPs emphasize the need for using Kurdish in these services to reach out IDPs, some of whom (especially women) cannot speak Turkish. In the stake-holders meeting with the Van Governorship and the UNDP, most NGOs mentioned this requirement, but the final document for Action Plan did not include such a provision. This incidence exemplifies the inseparability of 'political'

dimension from the humanitarian one[46]. Undertaking these service-deliveries (read also as 'humanitarian') becomes a *political* issue when asked to be delivered in Kurdish.

Before discussing the approach of the NGOs towards the IDPs, we need to emphasize that there is not a homogenous NGO body when it comes to dealing with the broad range of IDP problems. In a nutshell, we can categorize the NGOs working on forced and return migration into two clusters: those whose work is concentrated on the economic and social dimension of the issue (especially on poverty) and those that link the phenomenon of internal displacement with some legal and political issues (such as human rights) within Turkey's democratization process. The biggest characteristic of the post-1990 period in Turkey has been the enormous and quick mushrooming of NGOs dealing with several dimensions of this problem. Most NGOs nationwide devoted their capacities and assets more on the social illnesses associated with forced migration (poverty, accommodation problems, unemployment, etc.). There is a big variation within this cluster. Along with home-town associations from the Kurdish-populated regions functioning in the big cities, several nationwide NGOs contributed mostly to improving the lives of those, who were the victims of forced migration, although their focus is not on the IDPs *per se*. NGOs such as home-town associations from the Kurdish-populated regions, donate items like food, clothing and school supplies to the poor (including the cluster of poor IDPs in big city centers), whereas a few such as Sarmaşık Solidarity Association in Diyarbakır, some women NGOs like KEDEV in Istanbul and in the region target capacity-building through providing seminars to the IDPs. However, most of these attempts have been to help the forced migrants get adapted to their places of destination.

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[46] In the Turkish context, linguistic rights of the Kurds is a political matter since the Turkish constitution does not allow the use of any language besides Turkish in public institutions, including schools. During Turkey's EU membership process, certain steps have been taken to change some laws concerning linguistic rights. Passing of a law in 2001 that allows broadcasting in other mother tongues besides Turkish and learning these languages in private courses are examples of such limited developments (See Çelik 2005a for a detailed analysis of these developments).

In the recent years we also witnessed an increase in the second cluster. It is actually this cluster that one should pay more attention to since their analysis of forced migration and framing of return migration significantly diverge from that of the state. These NGOs such as Migrants' Solidarity Association (Göç-Der), Human Rights Association (İHD), Organization of Human Rights and Solidarity for the Oppressed People (Mazlum-Der), and bar associations of the 14 IDP-produced cities became important actors, which claim not only to help IDPs apply to the Compensation Commission, but also talked on behalf of them by criticizing the compensation law and its practices. In fact, for a long time, they asked the state to provide some kind of compensation, right to return, economic guarantees (e.g. investments in the region, solving the unemployment problem), protect cultural rights (e.g. right to be taught in and broadcast in Kurdish), and de-militarization of the region (especially abolition of the village guard system and the system of emergency rule- *Olağanüstü Hal OHAL*). However, after the passing of the Compensation Law, their whole attention focused on whether the payments were fair enough, whether the Commissions were representative and objective, and whether the compensation should include immaterial losses. Ayata and Yükseker argue that although the law helped some NGOs, which have been disconnected from their constituencies, to use this opportunity to reach the IDPs, they did these without producing new discourses and suggestions, but simply reproduced the state's policy discourse by only addressing its policies, namely the KDRP and the Compensation Law (Ayata and Yükseker 2007:45).

Yet at the same time, it is mostly these NGOs that link the internal displacement issue with the Kurdish Question. NGOs in this cluster argue that the state disregards and deletes the owners of the problem from the discussion of formulating policies and providing grounds for a possible dialogue process, which they believe, handicaps an effective solution to the problem.

This problem remains as it was in the 1993-1994 period because nobody responded to these people. Neither were the laws responsive to their needs and demands. We believe that in order to overcome these problems, the owners of the problems should be listened to. This is the first and the most important prerequisite. I cannot resolve your problems and produce remedies without listening to you and by deciding on behalf of you. But unfortunately, up until now this has been the case. How can this resolve the issue? (Interview with the president of Batman Human Rights Association, 7 July 2004)

The state's understanding of 'humanitarian' means 'assistance to IDPs', whereas NGOs claim that undertaking a humanitarian action requires accepting that the issue is related to identity rights, returning the dignity back to these people, healing their pain by understanding and sharing them, and helping them express themselves and overcome their traumas by restituting their rights:

The humanitarian side of the issue… Because the state does not acknowledge the pain and trauma these people experienced -and they did experience these-, it is important to say that 'I understand your pain and acknowledge it'. These are important factors in strengthening these people's belief in justice and their belonging to the state. How will these wounds be healed? Not by giving them money" (Interview with the president of TOHAV, Istanbul, 23 August 2006).

The most important remedy is to create an environment where the people of this geography can easily explain themselves (Interview with members of the Mardin Egitim-Sen, July 2004).

In the analysis of IDP needs, regardless of the place of destination, the biggest problem of the IDP population turns out to be financial difficulties. Based on this analysis, it is expected that the civil society should concentrate most of its activities in providing the IDPs capacity to overcome these difficulties. The NGOs in the first cluster, while addressing these issues, almost exclusively undertake this job as a *charity work* rather than *capacity-building*, resulting in a failure to produce a self-sufficient IDP population. NGOs in the second cluster also help the IDPs, but rarely and also as a charity work. Furthermore, their rhetoric, which portrays IDPs as 'victims' needy of help and incapable of addressing their own needs only help the 'politicization' of the matter.

Making the internal displacement issue 'political' is also evident in the NGOs' argument of historical victimization. Most NGOs relate the forced migration of the 1990s to a historical background and see it as a continuation of internal displacement experienced by Kurds since the beginning of the Republic. For example, Göç-Der celebrates a "Migration Week" in the third week of June every year, a date that is chosen to remind a very significant historical moment for Kurds. On June 21, 1934, the Resettlement Law, which relocated many Kurds in some provinces following the Ararat Rebellion, was put in order. Referral to this date points to an important memory construction and increased sense of belonging among its IDP members, yet at the same time feeds into the group's sense of victimization[47]. The same argument is also found in other NGOs:

> The people of Dersim experienced the same internal displacement back in the 1930s, too. But they were allowed to come back to their villages after a certain time and none of their villages were destroyed. Somehow, they managed to reconcile with the state. Moreover, this happened during the nation-building period. Now, it happened again. These people want a guarantee that it will not happen again. They want to *trust*. Who is going to give them this guarantee? (Bilgin Cengiz, an executive member of UYD, speech given at TESEV conference, Istanbul, 5 December 2006, emphasis added)

Many NGOs working in this field are uneasy with the fact that the state perceives and presents the issue still as a 'terrorism' issue without mentioning the root causes, without who has undertaken the evacuations. Most of these NGOs also argue that de-historicizing the issue and de-linking internal displacement from the Kurdish question would not produce effective outcomes.

> Yes, you can approach internal displacement as a humanitarian issue and de-linking with from the Kurdish question. It is like cutting a gangrened finger from the body. But why did my body produce the gangrene? (Interview with the President of Diyarbakır Göç-Der, Diyarbakır, 22 January 2007)

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[47] Bar-Tal (2003) describes societal beliefs about victimization as beliefs that focus on the losses, deaths, the harm, the evil, and atrocities committed by the enemy while delegating the responsibility for the violence solely to the "other". In these beliefs forming a part of the collective memory, the dead and wounded become the concrete evidence of the group's status as a victim.

In fact, in a context where such issues are not discussed or represented by political parties due to the national election threshold[48], it becomes much harder to separate the "political" from the "humanitarian." That is perhaps why most NGOs, while helping the IDPs by allocating aid and asking for justice and peace also discuss the need for changes at the macro level, such as lowering the national threshold. However, by becoming politicized, they also lose their civic role of transforming relations between and attitudes of the conflicting parties through conflict transformation activities[49]. This also decreases their potential of initiating a dialogue with the state, and also feeds into a vicious cycle created by accusations of the state that the NGOs act like political parties, and a consecutive reaction to this accusation by the NGOs. Such an issue-based reactionary position also prevents NGOs from developing long-term holistic approach to the issue.

> We always discussed that in Turkey, the reaction of the civil society to certain issues has always been an instant one. It is because we only react when something happens somewhere. We do not necessarily have methods to resolve the issue, nor any suggestion or any prevention mechanism for it (Interview with the president of TOHAV, Istanbul, 23 August 2006).

In fact, the above-mentioned stance to the internal displacement and other 'sensitive issues' (like secularism in Turkey) is only present mostly in a few foundations in the second cluster of NGOs[50]. Most associations working on the issue call themselves as *activists*, and try

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[48]The restrictiveness of the threshold system applied in the electoral law is a big concern especially for the Kurds. Because they are highly congregated in eastern and southeastern Turkey but do not constitute a big minority in Turkey, the votes the pro-Kurdish party, DEHAP (now DTP) gets are also congregated in these regions. The biggest evidence of this is that DEHAP could win mayorships in the big cities of the region in the absence of such national thresholds. For example, the mayors of Batman and Diyarbakır, as candidates of DEHAP, which joined the elections in an alliance with some leftist parties, called "Democratic Power Alliance," won the local elections in March 2004 by getting the 73.6% and 58.4% of the votes, respectively. <http://www.hurriyetim.com.tr/secim2004/default.aspx>. However, its national representation is below the national threshold of 10%, which is criticized by many as a non-democratic electoral law. In the last national elections (2007), however, DTP "solved" this problem by "independent" candidates, who later on formed the DTP group in the parliament.

[49] Conflict transformation activities include but are not limited with problem-solving workshops, dialogue groups and education activities.

[50] Within the second cluster, we need to differentiate foundations from associations. Although both are NGOs, in Turkey their regulation and capacities differ. To set up a foundation, a certain amount of capital (either in cash or in commodity) should be devoted for a cause (i.e. children's education), whereas such requirement is not sought for the associations, which can be found by a petition of certain amount of citizens submitted to a regulatory

to influence the public through their reports and public activities. Almost all foundations' direct target group is the policy makers, whom they try to reach out through their reports prepared by professional experts and academicians. TESEV is one such foundation, which emphasizes this:

> We are not a rights-based association. That is, we do not do petitioning campaigns, lobbying or go out in the streets to protest or publicize an issue. We do not plan to react to what is going on in the political agenda today. What we do is locating the political issues within a broader perspective; within the democratization process of Turkey through the EU accession negotiations (Interview with the Project Coordinator of the Democratization Project, TESEV, Istanbul, 4 January 2007).

In analyzing the approach of NGOs we also need to refer to a specific case: the emergence of NGOs dealing with women's needs. As discussed above, IDP women emerged as a special category. NGOs have been mostly receptive to the needs of this group, whereas this was lacking in the state's approach[51]. The increasing number of women NGOs in the region shows that at least quantitatively these needs find a voice. In fact, it can be argued that besides human rights NGOs, which consider the internal displacement phenomenon within the human rights horizon, it is women's NGOs in the region, which mostly materialized the voices of the IDPs. However, such a finding should not be surprising. "In most cases, women play a crucial role in the follow-up of violence, searching for victims or their remains, trying to reconstitute families and communities, and carrying on the tasks of memory and the demand for justice"(IDRC n.d.).

Analyzing the presence of NGOs in the 14 IDP-producing cities and receiving cities reveal an interesting picture. Five cities need special attention: Istanbul, Ankara, Diyarbakır,

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body within the Minister of Interior. Therefore, although the foundations have the advantage of operating with better budgets, they have the disadvantage in the establishment stage due to the financial quota they have to satisfy at the initial launch. Associations also have the disadvantage of being under strict state regulation, suppression and regulation for a long time in the history of Turkish Republic. Although this has changed with the new law on associations through Turkey's accession to the EU process, most NGOs in the second cluster argue that the state officer's approach of considering them as "illegal organizations" did not change.

[51] This started to change with the Van Action Plan, which made a reference to women as a special category. However, Ayata and Yükseker (2007) argue that rather than a genuine intention to address the needs of the women, the Plan, in fact, adopts a gender sensitive approach because of the UNDP's and the state's developmentalist discourse, which in all around the world includes such themes as gender.

Batman, and Van. In these cities, not only the number of NGOs working on the issue was high, but also these NGOs' activities were much broader than those of the other cities. Istanbul and Ankara, because of their position of hosting NGO headquarters should not be a surprise to the reader. However, the remaining three need further elaboration.

One of the biggest conclusions that can be driven from this analysis is that the receiving cities in the region were successful in producing NGOs to deal with the problem, be it in an effective way or not. Batman, Hakkari and Van are the three big cities in the region, which hosted the greatest number of IDPs not only from their own sub-provinces and villages but also from those of the surrounding cities. In terms of addressing the needs of the IDPs, it seems like the receiving cities in the region were receptive at least in terms of founding organizations (quantitatively).

Secondly, we can argue that local governors *do make* a difference when it comes to creating a collaborative work. Their approach to the NGOs mostly determines the scope of the NGO work. It is true that state bureaucrats do not make up a homogenous group, but rather there are differences, even contestations among them. These differences are not only between different strata of the state (e.g. governors and the police force), but sometimes within the branch itself (e.g. between different governors served in the region). For example, governors who have worked in the region during the war years have more tough positions towards the IDP issues, believing that IDPs have links with the PKK. These even blame other bureaucrats, who are more tolerant to the flourishing of new institutions that challenge and question their power. The results of this study show that the Turkish state cadres working in the region do not have a unique approach to deal with the issue. Especially milder and more receptive approach of the governors of Diyarbakır, and Batman has made some difference in the recent years. Van governor, on the other hand, became an important actor after his proposal to host the first UNDP project to facilitate return; Van Action Plan.

Of course, one can argue that the causality is wrongly put; that is, it is the NGOs that make the local governors more receptive rather than vice versa. In either way, it is true that a local governor, who pays more attention to the sensitivities of the local inhabitants and of the IDPs, does make a difference.

Lastly, there is also a need to discuss the role of the DTP (previous DEHAP) mayors, especially in Batman and Diyarbakır. In Diyarbakır, for example, a woman centre was founded to deal with the problems of women in general and IDP women in particular. It can be argued that these mayorships facilitated the mobilization of the "civil society" on the issue. Once, again the causality can be the other way around as well. These cities already have a high level of Kurdish consciousness (read as support to the DTP in this context), which shows itself as DTP mayorship and politicization of the NGOs along the DTP ideology. However, once again regardless of the direction of causality, an analysis disregarding the fact that the presence of and collaboration with the DTP mayors as important actors in the process would be presenting the half of the picture.

4.5. IGOs: Reproduction of the State Discourse?

Studying the role of the IGOs requires, first of all, differentiation of the U.N. and the E.U., the two actors, which became influential in pushing the Turkish state change its stance towards the civil society. In doing so, one needs to pay attention to the powers that each organization has. In issues related to the internal displacement, although UN's attempt in 2002 initialized and speeded up the return and reconstruction to a certain extent, it is through EU membership process that the Turkish state felt *obliged to* make changes in its policies. According to Çelik and Rumelili, the EU had the coercive, reward, legitimate and referent

power[52] to introduce itself as a third party to the Kurdish Question, producing somewhat effective policies (Çelik and Rumelili 2006).

Besides its direct structural involvement, the European Union also came into play as an important donor to the NGOs directly, and affecting the policies related to the functioning of these NGOs and on the Kurdish Question, indirectly. Especially in Diyarbakır, the biggest Kurdish-populated city in the region, micro credits funded by the EU are allocated to some NGOs to increase capacity-building. Diyarbakır Bar Association, for example, has received a great amount of money from this fund to educate the habitants, especially the IDPs about their legal rights. Yet, at the same time, such indirect effects produced NGOs, which focused on project-production (thus, an avenue to gain money in some cases), rather than a genuine representation of the IDP population (Ayata and Yükseker 2007).

With increasing international involvement in the post-conflict issues especially through IDPs' application to the European Court of Human Rights and EU's structural prevention mechanisms imposed on the state, the Turkish state started to feel the pressures of these organizations more heavily. The most general conclusion that can be drawn out of Turkey's bid to European integration within this context is that the Turkish State started treating this conflict as a "democratization" issue if not an unpronounced minority representation issue. Although the EU had an increasingly higher pressure on Turkey on these issues especially after Turkey's acceptance of candidacy, its vision of post-conflict peacebuilding seems to be limited mostly with economic reconstruction, and to a certain extent with rehabilitation (the establishment of democratic governance and good human rights practices) rather than including the reconciliation component of the issue. This stems from the fact that EU's intervention is more of a structural prevention rather than an emphasis on establishing a dialogue between parties involved in the issue and broader reconciliation efforts. However,

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[52] Through its reward power, EU can change Turkish state's position by giving it certain rewards. Its legitimate power gives it the legal right to exercise its power over Turkey on cases of non-compliance. Because Turkey values its relationship with the EU, EU can use this power to pressure Turkey in certain ways.

when asked why EU does not have a reconciliation perspective, a representative from the European Commission in Ankara replied that in fact, it does, but it was not a priority at the moment (Interview, Ankara, February 2006). In fact, it is after TESEV's release of its report on the developments after the RSG's visit in 2002, where Joost Lagendijk and Hansjorg Kretschmer were discussants of the report[53] that the European Commission included the necessity of reconciliation to its progress report, although with a limited approach:

> The issue of "reconciliation" is not addressed in the compensation approach in relation to past human rights violations committed against internally displaced persons – such as the burning and destruction of property, killings, disappearances and torture (European Commission 2006).

In terms of UN involvement, we can argue that as compared to the EU, UN does not have much of a "carrot and stick mechanism" due to the sovereignty issues involved in the conflict. However, from UN's other practices it is not wrong to argue that UN has a broader peace-building vision. What prevents the UN in establishing the same vision in this case seems to stem from the fact that the UN does not want to antagonize the Turkish state and lead to a total deadlock in the peaceful resolution of the problems that emerge in the issue. However, this very same approach also prevents it from establishing a broader vision with a long-term commitment.

4.7. Discussion

In Turkey, in the rhetoric of the NGOs, one can come across with such important themes like establishment of durable peace, restorative justice, truth-telling, apology, and re-establishing trust between the Kurds and the state. However, we need to emphasize that use of such themes are not devoid of one-sidedness, either. For many NGOs, need for apology is stated without a readiness to forgive, truth-telling is needed without necessarily acknowledging the need to ask PKK to come clean, etc. This, of course, can be seen as an

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[53] The event took place in Ankara on 10 June 2006.

outcome of a long history dominated by state discourse, where "Kurdish voices' are not listened to by the 'Turkish' public.

Secondly, other examples elsewhere indicate the necessity of dealing with such issues as building trust between the ex-combatants and the locals as well as the state officials in reconciliation and establishing durable solutions (See Çelik 2006; Kantowitz 2006; Weiss Fagen 2006). Macro political moves, in the absence of social and psychological support mechanisms in specific and reconciliatory moves by the conflicting parties, in general have a less chance to endure. With the exception of TESEV's new project to be held in Batman and Hakkari[54] and UYD's project in Tunceli[55], there is no NGO, which aims to undertake reconciliatory projects with the state and society at large. Such an approach produces *bonding* [among NGO members] rather than *bridging* [across societal divide] NGO actors[56]. That is, perhaps, the biggest handicap of the NGOs in the midst of a state, which does not acknowledge the political side of the issue. The 'humanitarian' can, in fact, become entrapped in 'political' if the conflicting parties try to address the issue from top-down. Best practices elsewhere show that the mobilization of IDPs on behalf of their own rights and forming regional federations to work with the state officials to represent their wishes, needs and interests make up the best model for return and durable peace (Çelik 2006).

Civil society organizations engaged in peacebuilding in Turkey mostly do advocacy and service delivery[57]. Because service delivery is recognized by the state as almost exclusively

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[54] TESEV's newly initiated Project, sponsored by the Ankara branch of the European Commission aims to strengthen the dialogue and cooperation between the civil society, local administrations, IDPs and the public sector through legal training seminar, training seminar on the human dimension of the problem (mainly pyshiatric trainings) and interactive workshops with the stakeholders.

[55] UYD's project sponsored by the European Commission in Ankara, aims to provide a common basis for addressing the legal, economic and social/cultural dimensions of the "return to villages" phenomenon. To do this, UYD first held a stakeholders meeting in Tunceli in October 2005, where it brought together the governor, state officers and the IDPs to introduce its project. Later, it undertook a survey of 266 IDPs in Ovacık and Hozat. It is planning to open up a public debate on how to address the various dimensions of return migration and mobilize IDPs for voicing their demands and taking action.

[56] These concepts are borrowed from Devotta 2005.

[57] Service delivery in this context should be taken as charity work and assistance rather than active involvement in services such as reconstrcution and health service, as is the case with Hezbollah in Lebanon.

the only realm, it is not surprising to see that most activities fall under this category. At the same time, as a reaction to this limited realm defined by the state, most human rights and women associations also do advocacy work. With passing of a recent law, many bar associations also became important actors through linking the internal displacement issue and human rights issues (mostly linguistic rights) with the Kurdish Question. However, civil society in Turkey lacks any activity that falls under intermediation and culture of peace. Ironically enough, in the midst of a possibility of escalation of violence, these are the activities that need immediate attention.

Thirdly, even though these NGOs do a good job in speaking on behalf of the IDPs and publicizing their demands, they themselves are trapped with what they criticize: they do not let the IDPs speak for themselves. With an exception of a few public gathering and a few archival studies, the voices of IDPs are lost. For examples, those NGOs, which helped IDPs apply to the Compensation Law did not gather the stories of the IDPs and created a social history and archive.

Lastly and most importantly, as Ayata and Yükseker argue (2007), in the last few years, the state with the help of the UN and EU has produced a policy discourse, and the civil society, even when criticizing the state, contributes to this discourse. It is this entrapment in the policy discourse that we do not see civil society effectively dealing with the IDP problems.

When the roles that the UN and the EU play in the process are examined, we see two different approaches. As the EU's approach to return mainly focuses on the protection of the political, cultural, social and economic rights of citizens of different ethnic origins, its solutions predominantly concern *rights* and *regional development*. Although involving multi-dimensional level, "return", when defined ambiguously and narrowly limits possibilities of effective solutions in the long term, but also does not sufficiently contribute to the process of

reconciliation, which requires a much longer time frame. However, EU's recommendations can play a complementary role when combined with the recommendations by the UN Representative. Especially after the development of reconciliation methods and solutions on specific subjects related to return, the protection of rights through these recommendations and the acceleration of regional development will contribute greatly to the achievement of durable peace. Therefore the EU's attitude on this matter can be considered a *complementary* one, rather than one which can *constitute a solution* by itself.

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter analyzed the problems related to forced migration and the return of the Kurdish IDPs and the actors involved in producing and applying policies concerning these issues. In this analysis, the research aimed to discuss the relevant theories on the extent of the role carried by different actors and the need for dialogue among them.

What makes reconciliation difficult in the aftermath of Kurdish displacement in the 1990s is that the clashes between the PKK and the Turkish military continue from time to time despite short-lived decisions of inactions by the PKK and the lowering level of violence. This creates a dilemma to whether reconciliation can be achieved in the shadow of clashes or whether clashes would give away for a more peaceful period in the absence of reconciliatory moves by the actors. Such a dilemma in fact lies in the two different positions laid in the introductory paragraph. Treating the internal displacement as a humanitarian issue per se, devoid of its political nature for the sake of *state security*, dissatisfies the Kurdish IDPs and NGOs, who would like to relate it to other issues such as justice, truth, reparations and *group security*. State's position of treating the issue as a 'humanitarian' one, ignoring issues pertaining to group rights and national matters in its agenda lacks a holistic policy. Yet, at the same time, while presenting a *more* -but not a totally- holistic and a politicized approach with an emphasis on group rights and broad human rights issues, NGOs lose some humanitarian

issues, such as re-establishing the trust between the communities at large, and transforming relations and breaking down a possible social polarization at the national level.

An important dilemma in establishing peace is whether reconciliatory moves can be initiated by the NGOs when the major actor - the state- does not recognize any actor as a "legitimate party" to the conflict. State's disregard of the PKK as a legitimate actor (rightly or not) coupled with its hegemonic control over the civil society by controlling, limiting and discounting its presence leaves no room for dialogue. This is perhaps the biggest criticisms of the NGOs towards the state and the biggest barrier for reconciliation. In fact, examples elsewhere show that in establishing a durable peace, a long-lasting return for the IDPs and preventing another wave of violence, NGOs become important actors for the representation of the needs and problems of the IDPs and policies excluding them do not produce long-lasting results (Çelik 2006). Moreover, in the Turkish case since Kurds and the Kurdish IDPs do not believe that their existence as a group is being acknowledged in any form by the state, even in cases, where the state perceives the issue as mostly humanitarian and security-oriented, deletion of their 'ownership' in the process dissociates them from taking reconciliatory moves (such as initiating dialogue groups at the local level). In fact, an understanding of conciliation/agreement (rather than a *re*-conciliation) between the state, the IDPs and the NGOs is needed since on many important issues, there has never been an agreement or a consensual relationship between them.

The results of this research point out that the scope of return and reconstruction of the conflict areas is broader than simply the social and cultural reintegration of those who want to return. Durable return and overcoming the legacy of forced migration require getting at the root causes of the problem through involvement of all parties in the conflict. In cases where there are major disagreements on the reasons and consequences of forced migration, third parties/actors/mediators, problem-solving workshops or community-based approaches

initiated mostly by international organizations can produce alternative and holistic solutions. Understanding the nature of conflicting issues and the points of view of the actors can facilitate return and create durable and viable solutions. Ideally, return should begin after mechanisms developed resulting from discussions held between the state, local NGOs and international organizations have been functioning properly and for a long period of time. A certain amount of preliminary work is therefore needed before physical resettlement can begin. Absence of such works can reverse the return migration and can even lead to reemergence of conflicts.

Within this context, there are two contradictory developments that need a brief mention. On the positive side, the recent developments such as the attempt to form a unit within the Ministry of Interior to deal with the issue, forming an action plan for return and referring to the NGOs and academicians for recommendation in this project can be considered as progressive steps to reach the above-mentioned suggestions. However, the post-2005 period, especially the summer of 2007 also witnessed an increase in violence and a halt in return. This negative development also points out that policies, aiming economic development without a reference to root causes, would be challenged by such reemergence of conflict. That is why there is a need for further research to study the extent to which this new state policy welcomes all actors, how their recommendations are taken into account and how and why this might not be supported by "radical" actors such as the PKK. Lastly, further research on to what extent the state and the NGOs will follow up on the results of the HÜNEE (2006) report is crucial.

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