

# Final remarks

by Fredrik Arthur

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*I should like to share with you a few impressions from a number of IDP conferences that I have attended over the last four or five years.*

There have been IDP conferences, symposia, seminars, round tables, square tables, all sorts of tables. I am not sure to what extent all these conferences have brought the issue of IDPs forward or upwards. Still, it has been and remains important that we all continue to participate in efforts to keep the IDP issue on the agenda.

What do we do after this conference? How do we keep the momentum going? While I do not have any final answers, I can give you an indication of three concrete actions that we in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs plan to take.

First of all, we want to engage and involve Norwegian NGOs in discussions related to internally displaced persons. When we discuss projects or financing of projects initiated by the Norwegian Refugee Council, Norwegian People's Aid, the Norwegian Caritas, the Norwegian Red Cross or others, we will, when it is appropriate and relevant to do so, ask them: "Is there an element or component that you should address which has something to do with IDPs? If so, bring it out!"

Secondly, we will put the IDP issue high on the political agenda in our humanitarian work as a member of

the UN Security Council. The Security Council as such may not be the most relevant forum for raising humanitarian issues but we believe that they should be a part of the agenda of the Security Council. When appropriate and relevant we shall bring the IDP issue into discussions in the Security Council.

I have today chaired a meeting in my ministry, with the participation of the five big Norwegian humanitarian NGOs, to initiate a process by which we can involve NGOs in our daily work in the Security Council. In order to keep IDPs high on the agenda of the Security Council we will bring the experience, knowledge and competence of Norwegian NGOs to their attention. IDPs will be high on our internal agenda when we assume the presidency of the Security Council. I cannot say here and now that we can commit ourselves to selecting the IDP issue as our theme but the fact that it is under discussion speaks for itself.

Thirdly, and lastly, we certainly welcome the establishment of Kofi Asomani's IDP Unit in OCHA. We believe that this indicates that the international community is taking seriously the institutional issues related to the IDP issue.

Mr Asomani, while we welcome your entity, we will not just confine ourselves to writing cheques, for we are your owners, we own the UN system, the specialised agencies and all the people working there. More than anything else, we want to support you on the political side. As we talked about in one of the coffee breaks, we shall definitely keep channels open. We will be here; we know that you are there. We are looking forward immensely to starting cooperation with you in order to maintain momentum and to move the agenda forward so that we can alleviate the problems and the disasters facing our internally displaced fellow human beings.

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