
PRESS RELEASE

Global internal displacement highest in a decade – report

New York, March 23, 2011 – The recorded number of people displaced within their country due to conflict or violence rose to 27.5 million in 2010, which is the highest in a decade, according to a report by the Geneva-based Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC).

The report, *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2010*, was today launched by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Valerie Amos, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Radhika Coomaraswamy, and the Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Elisabeth Rasmusson.

“Close to three million people in 20 countries across the world were newly displaced from conflict and violence during 2010, and large scale displacement continues,” Rasmusson said.

“As we speak, thousands of civilians in Côte d’Ivoire are fleeing to save their lives with the international community incapable of responding. More than half a million people there have been internally displaced since December, following the disputed presidential election, and more than 100,000 have fled to Liberia.”

“The report documents that state assertion of sovereignty has led in several countries to the arbitrary denial of access to displaced populations. I am also particularly concerned that, because of lack of security for aid workers and other impediments, civilians in many large-scale situations of internal displacement remain out of reach of urgent humanitarian assistance, for instance in Afghanistan, Somalia and Iraq,” she added.

According to the report, there is a great need for stronger national efforts and increased political engagement by the international community to address the many displacement crises in the world, both with regards to urgent needs as well as finding durable solutions. Many of those who have returned home continue to have considerable need of protection and humanitarian assistance. The particular needs of specific internally displaced groups, such as children, women, people with disabilities and elderly people, require further attention.

“In 2010, Colombia and Sudan had considerably the largest internally displaced populations, followed by Iraq, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Pakistan,” Kate Half, Head of the NRC Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, explained.

“In the Middle East, their number more than tripled in the last decade. In Mexico, some 115,000 people were displaced last year due to drug-related crime. Also, the report addresses widespread discrimination against displaced populations from ethnic minority groups, such as Afro-Colombians in Colombia, Half said.

Africa was the only continent where the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) fell, confirming a trend over several years. While the continent continued to host 40 per cent of the world’s IDPs, over 70 per cent of these were concentrated in Sudan, eastern DRC and Somalia.

Notes for editors:

Live streaming of the launch will be broadcasted at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/ipi-live> and a video will later be available at www.internal-displacement.org. Fact sheets and the report are also published at the IDMC web site.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) was established by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in 1998, upon the request of the United Nations. It is a leading source of information and analysis on internal displacement caused by conflict and violence worldwide.

The report *Internal Displacement: Global Overview of Trends and Developments in 2010* is the leading annual summary of the humanitarian and human rights situations of people internally displaced by conflict and violence. It offers detailed figures and global, regional and national analysis of the more than 50 displacement situations which IDMC monitors.

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