



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés



ICRC

To: All UNHCR Country Representatives
All ICRC Heads of Delegation

Date: 24 October 2018

Subject: Enhancing our cooperation on internal displacement

Dear colleagues,

UNHCR and ICRC have a longstanding partnership that covers a large spectrum of issues around forced displacement caused by armed conflict and other situations of violence. During our High Level Meeting on 27 March, and in light of the 20th anniversary of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the 10th anniversary of the Kampala Convention in 2019, we recognized the importance of stepping up in particular our cooperation on internal displacement.

A positive example of such cooperation so far this year has been the issuance of an *Aide-Mémoire* with jointly elaborated operational guidance on maintaining the civilian and humanitarian character of sites and settlements (<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5b55c6fe4.html>). More guidance of this kind can be expected in the coming years as both our organizations work together to capture and share operational practice in delivering protection to internally displaced people in situations of armed conflict and violence.

At the same time, and specifically related to the above mentioned anniversaries, UNHCR and the ICRC are committed to closer collaboration on providing expert advice to States on the development and implementation of national laws and policies on internal displacement. In Africa, our focus in 2019 will be on enhanced support to States for the ratification and operationalization of the Kampala Convention. We also intend to facilitate sub-regional and regional forums for States to share their experiences and practices in coping with internal displacement, and encourage other regions to consider doing the same.

Enhanced cooperation between UNHCR and the ICRC is also required to respond to the protection needs of the growing number of internally displaced persons in urban areas. In doing so, both our organizations can draw from our respective policies and research, which complement one another with their people-centered focus and engagement with local actors. We thus encourage staff in the field from both our organizations to familiarize themselves with UNHCR's *Policy on Alternatives to Camps* (<http://www.refworld.org/docid/5423ded84.html>) and the ICRC's recently issued study on people displaced in cities and its recommendations on effective responses: (<https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/4344-displaced-cities-experiencing-and-responding-urban-internal-displacement-outside>).

Finally, we ask our colleagues around the world working with internally displaced people to set up regular discussions on critical and current protection concerns, to share protection analysis in line with respective specific working modalities and, where appropriate, to align advocacy messages on protection. Focal points at working level are available to support and facilitate this collaboration: Caroline Dulin Brass, Senior Legal Advisor IHL (dulin@unhcr.org) from UNHCR and Angela Cotroneo, Global Adviser on Internal Displacement (acotroneo@icrc.org) from the ICRC.

Thank you for your work.

Filippo Grandi
United Nations High Commissioner
for Refugees

Peter Maurer
President
International Committee of the Red Cross