

Return, Remixing and Reconciliation: Lessons to Be Learned

**Saturday 26 November 2016
Home for Cooperation
Nicosia buffer zone**

Although the UNHCR has proposed resettlement, repatriation, or local integration as the three durable solutions to mass refugee movement, negotiated peace agreements usually prioritize return of displaced persons. This preference for repatriation, however, has not been accompanied by systematic study of the processes of remixing and reintegration after peace agreements. Indeed, the international community often views a successful referendum or democratic election and the creation of a new state of affairs or government as the end of a conflict, and begins to disengage after these have occurred. Media, too, immediately shifts its focus to new conflicts elsewhere, ignoring the fragile nature of the new arrangements. In Cyprus, we see that potential return of displaced persons is one of the most fraught aspects of the negotiation process and will need careful planning to ensure that it will contribute to a sustainable peace.

This conference will present case studies that offer both successful and unsuccessful examples of return in order to glean lessons for Cyprus. We will examine the management of reintegration, including obstacles encountered, and the ways and means utilized to overcome these obstacles. We know that conflict-induced displacement inflicts lasting wounds on individuals and communities, creating fears and security concerns concerning former “enemies.” As a result, we see that the return of property to persons and persons to their property is rarely successful unless accompanied by other efforts towards reconciliation that will help to allay those fears. Hence, our comparisons will focus on the types of reconciliation efforts that successfully facilitate remixing; aid in overcoming fears and mental barriers; and prevent the renewal of conflict in situations where former “enemies” are asked to live side-by-side again.

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PROGRAM

10:00 - 10:15	Registration	
10:15 - 10:30	Welcome and introduction	
	Harry Tzimitras	PRIO Cyprus Centre
	Hubert Faustmann	Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
	Rebecca Bryant	London School of Economics
10:30 - 11:45	Keynote speech:	
	Roger Zetter	University of Oxford
	<i>Refugee return? An unsettling question</i>	
11:45 - 12:00	Coffee break	
12:00 - 13:00	Panel 1: Heritage and history as elements of return	
	Didem Buhari-Gülmez	Istanbul Kemerburgaz University
	<i>From 'traitors' to 'strangers': Crimean Tatars' return to their ancestral homeland</i>	
	Mete Hatay	PRIO Cyprus Centre
	<i>Reclaiming the sacred: Cultural heritage and the diplomacy of return in Cyprus</i>	
	Discussant: Maria Hadjipavlou	University of Cyprus
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break	
14:00 - 15:00	Panel 2: Return and social transformation in Burundi and Bosnia-Herzegovina	
	Andrea Purdekova	University of Oxford
	<i>Respacing for peace? Post-war socio-spatial experiments and the micro-politics of return and integration in Burundi</i>	
	Sebina Sivac-Bryant	Independent scholar
	<i>Contested Return: constraints, lessons, and its potential for social transformation after conflict</i>	
	Discussant: Tone Bringa	University of Bergen
15:00 - 15:15	Coffee break	
15:15 - 16:15	Panel 3: Partial return in ongoing conflicts	
	Görkem Aydemir	George Washington University
	<i>Displaced or at Home? Border Crossings, Displacement and Return in the Georgia-Abkhazia Borderland</i>	
	Umar al-Ghubari	Zochrot
	<i>Imagining return within ongoing conflict as a tool for promoting justice</i>	
	Discussant: Rebecca Bryant	London School of Economics
16:30 - 18:00	Screening and discussion with filmmaker:	
	Tone Bringa	University of Bergen
	<i>Returning Home: Revival of a Bosnian Village</i>	
	Directors: Tone Bringa, Peter Loizos	
	The film is the sequel to <i>We are all Neighbours</i> , the 1993 Granada Disappearing World film, about the breakdown of relations between Muslims and Croats as war overtakes their ethnically mixed village in Central Bosnia. <i>Returning Home</i> follows the same Muslim families seven years later as they rebuild their lives in their devastated village. It illustrates the decisive role of the international community in facilitating returns, the steely determination of displaced villagers to return, and their surprisingly sympathetic attitude toward Croat refugees living in their homes.	