



Tbilisi, 14 April 2004

Round Table Meeting on a 'New Approach to IDP Assistance' Held

UNDP in Georgia has coordinated a 'New Approach to IDP Assistance', an innovative partnership with the Government of Georgia, UNHCR, USAID, World Bank, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and OCHA to help IDPs and their host communities to substantially improve their lives and self-reliance by reforming government policy and supporting through a special fund the implementation of innovative pilot programmes. This approach presents Internally Displaced Persons not as victims to be pitied, but ordinary citizens. While they maintain an inviolable right to return to their original homes, they should also receive all the usual social, legal and employment rights afforded to permanent residents. This will help to normalize lives that have been marginalised for the last ten years.

On April 14 the round table meeting between the donors and the Government within the framework of the New Approach to IDP Assistance was held at Hotel 'Sympatia'. The purpose of this Round Table was to jointly review the programme accomplishments, discuss the existing problems and priorities related to displacement in Georgia and set the framework for our renewed cooperation in the future.

In his speech Mr. Lance Clark, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative pointed out the progress achieved during the implementation of the program in the last two years and noted "UNDP is optimistic about the program implementation and we believe that the program could yield tangible results."

Mr. Giorgi Khaindrava, State Minister for Conflict Matters expressed gratitude to donors for the support in improving the lives of displaced persons in Georgia. The state minister focused on the structural changes to the program, the responsibility of the Government for its implementation, and prospects of drawing more donors.

Ms. Nana Gibradze, Program Analyst and Coordinator of 'New Approach to IDP Assistance' Program presented the program and focused on its priorities.

After the discussion, a project document of the pilot phase was signed, a future action plan and mechanisms of cooperation were outlined.

Mr. Steve Holtzman, the World Bank Lead Social Development Specialist, who has been working with UNDP on this initiative since 2000, also participated in the meeting.

For more information please contact:

UNDP

Nana Gibradze, Program Analyst, Coordinator of 'New Approach to IDP Assistance' Program
Tel: 995 32 25 11 26/28/31; email: nana.gibradze@undp.org