

PRESS COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE CO-CHAIRS OF GENEVA DISCUSSIONS

19.05.2009

The participants in the Geneva Discussions have just completed their fifth round.

Despite initial difficulties, all participants met again in two parallel working groups to discuss security and stability in the region and humanitarian matters. The discussions took place in a constructive spirit.

In Working Group 1, all participants recommitted themselves to the implementation of the joint incident prevention and response mechanisms agreed at the last round of Geneva Discussions. The mechanisms remain the best way for all sides to respond swiftly and adequately to security incidents on the ground. They are an important step in helping to foster and maintain stability and security.

Participants discussed a wide range of questions relating to security and stability, notably the non-use of force and modalities of international security regimes. Humanitarian cases were also discussed.

In Working Group 2, five concept papers were presented dealing with issues related to socio-economic rehabilitation programmes; property and housing rights; facilitating returns; the legal status of refugees, internally displaced persons and other displaced persons, and the rehabilitation of water supplies. There was a constructive first exchange of views on the substance of the papers, including on their human rights aspects, and participants agreed to the Co-Moderators' request to study and provide written comments on the papers one week before the next session at the latest, so that work on these issues can be pursued.

Relevant participants agreed to nominate experts to take part in a joint needs assessment study of repair needs to guarantee water supplies led by an independent expert under the auspices of the OSCE to start without delay. Participants also expressed a willingness to address any remaining technical challenges relating to gas supplies.

The participants have agreed to meet again on 1 July 2009.