

## **INFORMATION PAPER**

### **SCHR PROPOSAL - THE SEARCH FOR DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN THE GREAT LAKES**

#### **Context**

1. The cost of the vast relief effort launched following Rwanda's genocide between April and June 1994 now stands at more than \$2 billion. This humanitarian assistance has saved countless lives and provided support for those who have fled their homes. However, it cannot substitute for economic assistance that creates sustainable livelihoods for people. Nor can it compensate for the lack of political will in preventing renewed conflict and genocide. This failure, despite all the warning signs, is starkly illustrated by the multi-donor evaluation. Humanitarian assistance, while vital, cannot be a substitute for sustained political involvement to address underlying causes of conflict and suffering.

#### **The Basis of Durable Solutions**

2. Durable solutions to the crises in the Great Lakes region will only emerge if the underlying causes of conflict are addressed, namely poverty, the politics of exclusion and the denial of basic rights.
3. All members of the international community should demonstrate their commitment to the search for peace and stability in the region through sustained political, economic and diplomatic commitment to regionally negotiated durable solutions.

#### **Recent Initiatives**

4. The Cairo and Tunis summits, facilitated by the Carter Center, demonstrated the commitments of the regional governments to cooperate with one another and have given a new impetus to the search for a regional political settlement. Important agreements have been made, for example on repatriation and security. However, the search for durable solutions in this region is an ambitious goal. It demands engagement in the long term and addressing all the underlying issues of conflict in the region.

5. For this reason, SCHR recommends that the OAU should take this lead in coordinating regional negotiations, supported by the UN and the EU donor governments and agencies and local and international NGOs. SCHR further recommends broadening the agenda and consolidating the process through the involvement of other key actors. Investing such authority in the OAU would give substance to commitments towards increasing the capacity and role of regional organizations in conflict prevention, peace-keeping and peace-building. This will require that substantial technical and financial resources are given to the OAU and the willingness of the UN, EU, their members states and the Carter Center to assist and cooperate with the organization.

### **Recommendations to the IASC**

6. The IASC should act as a humanitarian advocate within the UN system by pressing for the adoption of measures contributing to regionally negotiated solutions.
7. The IASC should endorse the following statement to be sent to the UN Secretary-General and for the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs to pursue with the UN Secretary-General and other members of the UN secretariat.

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8. *Humanitarian assistance, while vital, does not represent durable solutions of the crises in the Great Lakes. Rather this demands a concerted effort of sustained political, diplomatic and economic commitments by all members of the international community to see that genocide never happens again. Because the fortunes of the Great Lakes countries are politically and economically interlocked, a regional approach, complementing national efforts, is vital in the search for durable solutions.*
9. *The IASC urges the member states of the UN to support and facilitate a series of regional political negotiations over the coming years under the auspices of the OAU and African leaders, with the support of the UN, EU donor governments and agencies and NGOs. The agenda should address the critical issues that must be resolved if durable regional peace is to emerge, including the need for justice and an end to impunity in the region, economic rehabilitation and regeneration, and the role of the IMF and the World Bank, approaching reparation as a political and economic issue, the possibilities for resettlement, citizenship and migration, regional insecurity and responsive and accountable government. This will be a long term process that should build on the important current initiatives in the region.*

## **The Continuing Need for Humanitarian Assistance**

10. In such a volatile setting, any process for peace must be accompanied by measures to ensure the protection of people's basic rights in any eventuality. Adequate emergency preparedness and contingency planning remain a necessity.

### **Recommendations to the IASC:**

11. The IASC members should agree to ensure that their actions as humanitarian agencies contribute to the overall aim of bringing about durable solutions to crises in the region.
12. To demonstrate the commitment to ensuring that their actions and assistance are designed and evaluated in the light of their contribution to a regional political settlement, the IASC should agree upon any additional mechanism required to ensure that UN humanitarian activities are determined by a common analysis of the underlying causes of conflict in the region, informed by political, social and economic processes such as the distribution of power and resources, and are part of a coordinated and integrated strategy towards durable solutions.

## **The Needs of Societies in Transition**

13. In situations of transition from immediate humanitarian need, problems of funding arise, both because of the slowness of disbursement procedures for development cooperation assistance (as well as political conditionality).
14. All members of the IASC should discuss how to work together to press donors to provide rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance designed to respond to the exceptional needs of each country deemed to be in the transition from emergency. This should include speeding up the disbursement of funds by easing design and approval requirements on reconstruction programmes.
15. We recommend that this be taken to the IASC proper.