



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR POLICY STUDIES



OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE

EKATERINA SOKIRIANSKAIA

Getting Back Home?
Towards Sustainable Return
of Ingush Forced Migrants
and Lasting Peace in Prigorodny
District of North Ossetia

2005/2006

EKATERINA SOKIRIANSKAIA

Getting Back Home?
Towards Sustainable Return
of Ingush Forced Migrants
and Lasting Peace in Prigorodny
District of North Ossetia

The views in this report are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Center for Policy Studies, Central European University or the Open Society Institute. We have included the reports in the form they were submitted by the authors. No additional copyediting or typesetting has been done to them.

Contents

1. The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict: Background of the Problem

- 1.1. Historical roots
- 1.2. Conditions for Violent Outcome

2. State Policy on Conflict Resolution and Return of IDPs

- 2.1. Armed Conflict of October-November 1992. The Ethnic cleansing of Prigorodny District
- 2.2. Conflict Ideologies of the Antagonists
- 2.3. Steps Towards Peace building and Return
- 2.4. The severe test of Beslan

3. Managing Displacement and Reintegration

- 3.1. Ingush IDPs from North Ossetia: Conflicting Statistics
- 3.2. Four categories of Ingush IDPs from North Ossetia
- 3.3. Social Costs of Protracted Displacement
- 3.4. State Assistance to Returnees
- 3.5. Reintegration: Success Stories and Conflict-Prone Solutions

4. Towards Lasting Peace and Sustainable Return: Evaluating the Options

- 4.1. International Normative Framework for Peace building and Sustainable Return of IDPs
- 4.2. Evaluating the Current Policy on Conflict Resolution, Return and Reintegration
- 4.3. Policy Options: Restricting Return and Creating Enclaves or Encouraging Return to Places of Origin?

5. Peace Plan and Recommendations

Abstract

The present paper is a policy research investigating the consequences of the Ingush-Ossetian conflict that took place in October-November 1992, in Prigorodny District (*Prigorodny Rayon*) of North Ossetia. The main focus of the study is the return of Ingush forced migrants, who fled the war zone in 1992 to the place of their permanent residence. The project aims to develop a policy proposal for lasting peace, sustainable return and the reintegration of the Ingush IDPs in North Ossetia and for the efficient reduction of other damaging socio-political consequences of the unresolved Ingush-Ossetian armed conflict.

Introduction¹

In the second half of the 20th century ethnic conflict was the most common reason for instability, war and humanitarian crises. In the post-cold war era the nature of conflict had changed: out of 82 armed conflicts which took place between 1989 and 1992 only three were inter-state, the rest were intrastate ethnic conflicts with 90% fatalities among civilians (Huff and Gurr: 24)², which caused mass forced migration outside and within the national borders. Ethnic violence, systemic human rights abuse and other disasters resulted in internal displacement reaching unprecedented scale, with estimated 20-25 million people forcefully dislocated around the world (Cohen, Deng: 1998: XIX).

The capacity to routinely resolve conflicts of various nature and intensity is a prerequisite for peaceful and sustainable development of any state. The Westphalian world order places responsibility for internally displaced on the national governments. Increasingly, however, the international community developed an understanding that the humanistic principles require it to assist innocent victims of warfare, who are denied access to food, medicine, shelter and/or are subjected to physical violence.

In early 1990s UN developed a working definition of the internally displaced persons and brought under its auspices a whole range of humanitarian, development and human rights organizations which provide relief to internally displaced migrants and assist them in return and reintegration. Since then the international community interfered in the emergency situations related to internal migration, in a selective case-by-case manner.

This paper offers analysis of a cluster of problems related to internal displacement caused by the only armed ethnic conflict in post-communist Russia – the Ingush- Ossetian conflict (*Ossetino-Ingushskij konflikt*). A small-scale regional conflict, which lasted for 7 days from October 31 to November 6 1992 and caused dislocation of 30-60,000 people received virtually no coverage in the media in 1992 and has been quickly forgotten about ever after. Tens of thousands IDPs from North Ossetia struggling for survival in the substandard conditions in Ingushetia with no aid from the state, slipped from attention of international humanitarian and development organizations, which arrived to the region two years later to assist IDPs from Chechnya. The international community became well aware of this “small emergency” after the hostage-taking tragedy in the North Ossetian town of Beslan.

In the first hours of hostage taking, when 1200 children and parents were captured by terrorists in school#1, the local media announced that this school is taken by members of ‘Ingush dzamaat’³. Later the choice of the school (during the Ingush-Ossetian conflict of 1992 the sport gym of Beslan school # 1 accommodated Ingush civilian hostages), and the fact that there were eight Ingush terrorists in the group, allowed local authorities and journalists, and echoing them Moscow-based experts to link the tragedy of Beslan to the Ingush-Ossetian conflict of 1992.

Although, the link between Ingush-Ossetian territorial dispute and the horrendous crime of Beslan has been constructed by nationalist politicians and incompetent ethnologists (the demands of the terrorists in Beslan school related to war in Chechnya and the terrorist group was

¹ Ekaterina Sokirianskaia is an International Policy Fellow, more details of her work can be found at <http://www.policy.hu/sokirianskaia/>

² Barbara Harff and TR Gurr “Victims of the State: Genocides, Politicides, and Group Repression from 1945 to 1995” in PICOOM Newsletter and Progress Report 7 □ 1 24 –38

³ Terrorist network

multinational), clearly, Beslan provoked another spiral of ethnic hatred between the Ingush and the Ossetians.

Moreover, in the recent years Ingush has turned into the area of intense combatant and terrorist activity, which suggests that protracted displacement, unresolved ethnic conflict and systemic discrimination of Ingush citizens in North Ossetia create fruitful soil which breeds extremism. Leaders of guerilla and terrorist networks, whose agenda is to spread the war to entire Caucasus, successfully employ local grievances to recruit young men.

This policy paper argues that when it comes to ethnic violence, there can be no ‘big’ and ‘small’ emergencies. ‘Frozen’ ethnic conflicts, systemic rights violation, discrimination and protracted displacement destabilize regions and radicalize youth. Terrorism and combatant activity in the parts of a country radicalize the population at large which becomes racist and intolerant towards minorities.

Russia, as the most multi-ethnic state of contemporary Europe should take responsibility for the destructive processes in the North Caucasus and adopt a problem solving approach to the nationality problems within its borders. International community should help Russia to tackle these problems, lest this largest Eurasian state should slip into large-scale chaos and violence.

Moreover, this project advocates international regime for IDPs, which will strengthen the international institutional arrangements to help dislocated within national borders. ‘Small emergencies’ can develop into major problems; this can be avoided by a more systemic approach towards people in flight.

I. The Ingush-Ossetian Conflict: Background of the Problem

1.1. Historical Roots

In his article on Ingush-Ossetian conflict a renowned Russian ethnologist Valerij Tishkov classifies the Ingush-Ossetian conflict as deeply rooted and large scale (Tishkov: 1997: 354). A researcher Chervonnaja, traces the roots of the conflict to Russian colonization of the Caucasus, when the Muslim peoples (including Ingushis) were treated with disproportional brutality, especially compared to their Christian neighbors (including Ossetians) (Chervonnaja: 1995). Of different opinion are an expert of North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian Research of the Russian Academy of Sciences Alexander Dzadziev and a Professor of Ingush State University Lejla Arapkhanova: both scholars see the roots of the conflict in post-second world war period, the Stalinist Deportation of the Ingush to Central Asia of 1944⁴ and annexation of the disputed Prigorodny District to North Ossetia.

While conceding the modernist views, my own position veers towards accepting the importance of some pre-Stalinist experiences, which created stable patterns of relations between two neighboring peoples in the Imperial and then Soviet States. Different experiences of imperial state-building resulted in that during revolutions and large scale social change, the majority of Ossetians and the majority of Ingush had different interests, supported different ideological positions and took antagonist sides. The tempests and turbulence of the Great Empire were

⁴ Alexander Dzadziev in an interview with the author - August 2005; Lejla Arapkhanova in a n interview with the author – August 2005

mirrored in the relations of Ingush and the Ossetian “societies”⁵ and the modern Ingush-Ossetian conflict was the result of inconsistent, non-neutral policy of the state.

The ‘official’ contacts between representatives of Ingush and Ossetian societies and the Russian administration became regular in the 1740s-50s (Kodzoev: 2002: 152; Tsutiev: 1998: 11). Both peoples sought Russian protectionism as a means to fight their way from the mountains to the fertile plain, occupied by the powerful *kabardine* princes. Especially in the case of Ossetians, who were still primarily mountainous people, Russian protectionism was the prerequisite of resettlement on the plain. The Ingush who were more successful in opposing *kabardines* and whose resettlement to lowlands was launched earlier independently of the Russian support sought Moscow patronage in securing their already existing settlements and expansion to new lands. Most previously pagan Ossetians and many Ingushis converted to Orthodox Christianity as they sought Russian military protectionism. In 1774 Ossetian societies officially became part of the Russian Empire; in 1810 so did the Ingush.

In 1801 when Georgia became the province of Russia, the Empire had to secure and strengthen its southern borders, which implied “pacification” of the indigenous Caucasus and creation of Russian colonial administrations. The resistance to Russian advancement by Ingush societies was stronger than by the Ossetians, but counter to common perception, less fierce than by their militant ethnic kin – the Chechens⁶. In the beginning of Caucasian Wars both the Ossetians and the Ingushis were classified by the colonial administration as “peaceful tribes”. Eventually, however, the advancement of the Empire on the Ingush territory alienated the majority of Ingush population and accelerated their adoption of Islam. In late 1950s Ingushis exhausted by military raids and suffering the deficit of land *en masse* converted to Islam.

The anti-colonial resistance of primarily mountainous Ossetians, who resettled on fertile plain due to Russian support and *en masse* converted to Orthodoxy, was weaker, thus the process of softer subjugation. The famous *Uprisings in Tagaur, Kurtat and Alagir societies* of 1830 were suppressed by the regular army, the organizers exiled to Siberia. The Ossetian Muslim nobility from Digorija opposed joining the Russian state, however, eventually they as well accepted the Russian rule (Bzarov: 2004: 43).

The real differences crystallized after the defeat of anti-colonial Muslim resistance in the Caucasian War. The framework of interaction within the colonial state was defined through new conceptual patterns of “loyalty” and “reliability”. In the end of the war the Orthodox Ossetians were graded on that scale much higher than the newly Islamized Ingush.

In late 1940s-1960s the policy of “pacification” implemented in the North Caucasus implied the creation of Cossack settlements inside and around indigenous settlements in the strategically important areas. The Cossacks were moved from other areas of Russia by entire settlements (*stanitsy*). Four Cossack settlements emerged on the territory of the Ossetian societies, while the Ossetian villages previously located on the sites of Cossack settlements were moved to the South and North of the Cossack line. In spite of Cossack advancement for the Ossetians the 19th century was the time of most intense resettlement on the fertile plain. Ossetians were encouraged to settle along the Military Georgian Road (*Voенно-Gruzinskaja Doroga*) - strategically the most important thoroughfare of the North Caucasus.

⁵ Russian historiography uses the term “Societies” in reference to North Causasian the communities before and during the colonial wars. I will likewise use this term, since I find it more precise and free of ideological connotations (unlike for example ‘tribes’)

⁶ Chechens and Ingush are ethnologically the closest peoples of the Northern Caucasus, share one ethnonym “the vainakh people” (lit. our folk)

Thirteen Cossack settlements were built on the sites of Ingush villages, which encircled Ingushetia and blocked the main thoroughfares, which connected Ingush mountains with the plains. Ingush societies were squeezed out of their most fertile lands, locked between the mountains and the Cossacks, and moved as far away as possible from the Military-Georgian Road. The entire central part of Ingushetia was forcefully resettled in 1859-1861, instead Cossack settlements with 200 families each were founded, which occupied most and best of the

Cossack settlements harmed the Ingush and the Ossetian settlements to a different extent: according to the Ossetian historian Tsutsiev “While the Cossack landline stretched through Vladikavkaz plain (without penetrating ...the “self-acquired Ossetian historical lands”) in a thin line, which left to the Ossetians significant parts of pre-mountainous plain, in Ingushetia the Cossack enclaves occupied all pre-mountain and part of mountain area. Ingushetia was fully divided into lowland and mountainous parts, which seriously impeded the functioning of the economy of the Ingush” (Tsutsiev: 1998: 29). Most of Ingush societies were unable to sustain their rapidly growing population, while the economy of the Ossetian societies was flourishing in the proximity of military settlements on trade and exchange.

Therefore the Ossetians were inclined to perceive themselves as the winners of the colonial state-building, while the Ingush as losers. The division between ‘reliable’ and ‘unreliable’ peoples was internalized by the respective communities, the Ossetians felt included into Imperial state-and identity-building and benefiting from it, while the Ingush experienced exclusion. The perception of Ingush as unreliable was based on two factors: their close ethnic relations to the Imperial outcasts-Chechens and their adoption of Islam. The perception of Ossetians as a ‘reliable people’ was based on few non-compliance problems and conversion to Orthodoxy.

Understandably, during the Russian Revolution of 1917 Ingush and Ossetians took different sides. Ossetians, especially the military elite, mostly remained loyal to *the ancien regime*, Ingushis were mostly against it. Between 1817-1920 recurrent armed ethnic clashes between the Ossetians and Ingushis and Cossacks and Ingush took place, which were both ideologically and ethnically colored.

The first decade of Soviet regime was progressive for the Muslim peoples, especially the Ingushis. The first Ingush administrative unit – Ingush Autonomous Okrug’, later upgraded to Oblast’, as a part of the Mountainous Soviet Republic included the current territories of the Ingush Republic and the adjacent area of Ingush settlement – *Prigorodny Rayon and the right bank of Vladikavkaz*. The only urban center for the Ingush - the city of Vladikavkaz - shared by the Ingush, Russians and the Ossetians (Ossetians inhabited the left bank and Ingushis the right bank of the Terek river) was made the capital of Mountainous Soviet Republic. Since then the Ingushis have considered these lands (present day Ingushetia, Prigorodny District, Right Bank of Vladikavkaz) as their historical territory.

Early years of Soviet rule had tragic consequences for the Ossetians. Pro-Imperial Ossetian elite was subjected to repressions and *en masse* emigrated.

After Lenin’s death the nationality policy of the USSR changed. Stalin saw national liberalism as a threat to his state. Kremlin curbed Muslim autonomy, closed national schools, forbid Arabic as public language, “advised” local alphabets based on Latin script being changed to Cyrillic. Collectivization and secularization were particularly mass scale campaigns in the Muslim regions. Both instigated fierce resistance on behalf of Ingushis, this in its turn resulted in a wave of repressions against them, including military suppression by the regular army, and the elimination of the best part of the Muslim religious elite, which at the time constituted the main intellectual capital of the Ingushis.

In 1934 Ingush Autonomous Oblast' was merged with Chechen Autonomous Oblast' into Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Oblast' (region), while Vladikavkaz was transferred under the jurisdiction of North Ossetia. *Prigorodny district* became part of Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Oblast', which was soon upgraded to Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Soviet Republic. Ingushis suffered the loss of Vladikavkaz, at the time their main economic and cultural center.

On February 23 1944, all the Ingushis, 85,000 were put on unheated cattle trains and deported to Central Asia on the accusation of "cooperation with Nazis". Thousands perished on the way or died subsequently in the inhuman conditions of the Stalinist exile. Prigorodny district was transferred under the jurisdiction of North Ossetia. The Ossetians were resettled there.

The resettlement of 25-30,000 Ossetians from North Ossetia and Georgia to Prigorodny district was "voluntary – enforced": each Ossetian district and *kolkhoz* was allocated a certain number of "volunteers", who had to be resettled to the "new districts". Refusal to go could entail administrative repressions; agreement entitled the settler to benefits: after 5 years of work on the Ingush farms, the Ossetian settler could possess of the house and cattle, which remained from the Ingushis.

After the deportation the return of Ingushis to Prigorodny area was discouraged: Moscow treated repressed peoples with suspicion, while North Ossetian authorities, anxious of territorial claims, created difficulties with employment and domicile registration. In 1982 the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued an edict (№ 183) «On limitations of registration of citizens in Prigorodny district of North Ossetian ASSR», which denied registration to certain categories of citizens in the area. This edict was *de facto* enforced only in respect of the Ingush in Prigorodny District.

Nonetheless, the Ingushis, whose tradition treats the land of the forefathers as sacred, returned to their villages anyway, bought the houses, which belonged to their families before deportation back from the Ossetians; lived illegally (without registration) or bribed officials into registering them. Many integrated well, studied and worked in Vladikavkaz, and in spite of relatively high tensions with the Ossetians, the percent of mixed marriages was rather high.

Until late 1980 the Ingushis remained on the black list. "The mark of citizens unreliable to the state was fully preserved in respect of Ingushis after 1956 – due to the activities of the ideological machine and the factual daily stereotypes", states Author Tsutsiev. A representative of Ingush nationality had problems entering higher educational establishment, encountered obstacles, when making career in the army or in the civil service.

The Ossetians, on the contrary were among the most Sovietized republics: "The ideology of state Socialism fully ruled the spiritual life of the Ossetians as a society", noted Zdravomyslov (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 38). Public consciousness accepted the official dichotomy of 'reliable' and 'unreliable' peoples. Quite a few Ossetians until now believe that Stalinist deportation was a justified measure against those disloyal to the regime. Unlike Ingushis, for whom the state has been mostly repressive, the Ossetian Republic benefited from Stalinism (the territory of North Ossetia had been significantly expanded⁷) and post-Stalinist regime, for them the state has been mostly supportive, and perceived legitimate. Stalin is still seen as a great figure by part of the Ossetian population. A new bust to Stalin was put in Beslan in 1992 and remains there until now. Portraits of Stalin can be found in the cafes and elderly men still

⁷ During the deportation North Ossetia annexed Achalukhsy, Nazranovskiy, Prigorodny (in 1994 - Ingushetia), Psejdashskiy ad Malgobekskiy (in 1944 Kabardino-Balkariya) districts.

wear 'stalinka' hats, a fashion symbol of the Stalinist era.

Thus, until late 1980s the Ossetians and Ingushis had different perceptions, relations and experiences with the Russian/ Soviet State. While both peoples suffered from colonization, collectivization, Stalinist repressions, the Ingushis seemed to suffer particularly. Continuous state endorsed discrimination of Ingush after the deportation, on the one hand, and state favoritism in respect of Ossetians, along with arbitrary redrawn borders, resettlements and created stable adversary patterns of interaction, based on ethnic prejudice, ideological divisions and rivalry. At the same time, although by late 1980s the tensions between the Ingushis and the Ossetians were conspicuous, positive patterns of interaction predominated: Ingush and Ossetians peacefully co-existed in the villages of *Prigorodny district*.

The Ingush had hardly forgotten the fact that they lost Prigorodny district in 1944. In 1972 a group of Ingush intellectuals in Grozny wrote an open letter to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR demanding to return Ingush the Prigorodny District. Ossetians felt threatened and reacted by strengthened nationalism. In 1982 a major anti-Ingush outburst took place in Vladikavkaz, after an Ossetian taxi driver was killed allegedly by the Ingush criminals. Episodes of violence on ethnic grounds have become frequent. At the same time under communism, the existence of strong regulating authority of the federal center allowed to tame ethnic tensions and maintain control in the region. As the regime weakened, the situation became increasingly difficult to manage.

1.2. Conditions for Violent Outcome

There were several clusters of social and political conditions, which created a situation conducive to breaking out of armed conflict. *"the nationalization" of politics in the region, power struggle between the leadership of the USSR and the leadership of the Russian Federation, inflow of refugees from Georgia, emergence of free market of arms.* The sufficient factor for breakout of violence was *weakness of forces countervailing spiraling confrontation.*

A. "Nationalization" of politics

The change of political regime in the USSR coincided with major economic transformations (from planned to market economy), deep economic crisis and deprivation, which caused an outburst of social protest and high mobilization. The transformation of the regime weakened the state and discredited official communist ideology throughout the country. This resulted in desynchronization of values, a legitimacy crisis and ideological vacuum filled by nationalist discourse.

In 1989 the ethnocentric discourse became dominant in the political space of then Chechen – Ingush Autonomous Republic. The issues most frequently addressed in the public debates were related to historical injustices committed by the Soviet state. Throughout 1989- 1990 the central daily of republic's Communist Party «Groznskii Rabochii» dedicated one full page in almost every issue to publishing lists of repressed /deported and subsequently rehabilitated (often posthumously) citizens of Chechen – Ingushetia (Groznskii Rabochii: 1989-1990). This steadily increased the awareness of the past grievances suffered as an ethnic collective and intensified anger and demand for redress with the Ingush population. Loss of Prigorodny District was among the major grievances of the Ingush under the Soviet rule; national intellectuals could now openly campaign for the return.

At the same time North Ossetia suffered a conflict of its co-ethnics in South Ossetia with the Georgians, which heated up the national feelings. In 1989 the first armed clashes happened between South Ossetians and Georgians, which by 1990 spilt into a full-blown ethnic war. Irredentism and armed conflict with Georgians unified and 'nationalized politics' in North Ossetia, who unified in the face of external threat. The usual support of the Kremlin was weakened. "The fact that the Russian troops had withdrawn from the /South Ossetian – E.S. / region was regarded by the Ossetians as a betrayal" (Nezavisimaya Gazeta: 29.04.92: page 3).

Increasingly assertive demands of the Ingush to return Prigorodny District were perceived by Ossetians as a threat. Especially so, since by late 1980s the demographic balance in Prigorodny district shifted in favor of the Ingush. High birthrates of the Muslim population made Prigorodny the area ethnically dominated by the Ingush (the population growth for 1000 people among Ossetian population equaled 6, 4; while among Ingush population 15, 6 (in Demet'eva:1994:12)) The Ossetian nationalists reacted to the growing threat by uncovered anti-Ingush campaign. Irina Demet'eva, a reporter of "Izvestia" newspaper who was closely following the events of and preceding the conflict of 1992 wrote: "The North Ossetian press was packed with articles justifying the deportation of vajnakhs /Ingush and Chechens- E.S. / by Stalin. The head of North Ossetian MVD press center Zaur Dzarkhokhov will mockingly suggest the Ingush to raise money and put a monument to the father of nations Stalin for sending the Ingush in the deep rear and this way giving them "a chance to survive, to preserve the genetic fund of the nation"" (Dement'eva: 1994:11). Hostility was on the raise.

B. Power struggle between the leadership of the USSR and the Russian Federation. Legitimization of territorial claims

The above mentioned events coincided with the period of intense power struggle between the leadership of the USSR and the RF. Although the struggle was very personalized and presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin proved more adversarial to each other than their policies, ideological differences existed: while Gorbachev embodied the reformed, but still old regime, Yeltsin was the symbol of new, revolutionary democratic ideology. Being its President, in nationality issues Gorbachev was on the side of preserving the USSR, while Yeltsin was rather indifferent to its future.

At the time when the centrifugal tendencies in the country gained enormous force, one of the easiest cards for new opposition to play against the old federal center was the nationality issue. Indeed, USSR which committed grave crimes against its peoples, lost legitimacy and remained the symbol of imperial thinking for many of them. In the conditions when ethnic minorities of the Gorbachev's state wanted separation, Yeltsin's aim was to garner as much support from the Russian minorities as he could.

Among the most obvious minorities try to win support from were the outcasts of the Soviet state - the repressed and deported peoples, especially North Caucasian Muslims, who had had long histories of grievances. In the months of the most intense struggle with Gorbachev, Russian Federal leadership supported the repressed minorities in their national strive; emphasized understanding of the injustices committed against them, and showed readiness to remedy evils.

On April 26, 1991 the Supreme Soviet of the RF adopted a law "On rehabilitation of the repressed peoples". The 3d and the 6th articles of the law stipulated "territorial rehabilitation", i.e. those peoples, whose lands were illegally annexed from them, had the right to claim them back. The law outlined no mechanisms for practical implementation of the "territorial rehabilitation".

“Undoubtedly, one of the main motifs for deliberating on and adopting this Law was the intention of the Supreme Soviet of RF to declare some kind of act, which with clearly demonstrative purpose would go further than the Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of USSR of November 14, 1989 “On declaring the illegality and criminal nature of the repressive acts against the peoples, who were subjected to forced resettlement, and on guaranteeing their rights” (Zdravomyslov: 1998:51) The Russian law "On repressed peoples", inspired by the ambition by to be “more democratic” than its Soviet counterpart and by the romantic aspiration to redress long-term evil by one decree, legitimized the Ingush demands to Prigorodny Rayon, drastically increased the feelings of insecurity with the Ossetians and catalyzed the breakout of conflict between them.

C. Inflow of refugees from Georgia

Mass inflow of refugees (according to different estimates, 80-100,000 people) from South Ossetia and inner regions of Georgia intensified demographic tensions in already densely populated Prigorodny Rayon, which became a heaven for thousands of refugees from Georgia. The refugees were not only an economic and social burden, but had a potential for conflict behavior: the social trauma of war with the Georgians, unemployment and uncertainty of refugee existence made some South Ossetian men easy victims of conflict entrepreneurs. "Over 80, 000 of refugees fled to North Ossetia from Georgia. This is a dangerously flammable force, which can be used by the opponents of peaceful settlement of the conflict", wrote *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in April 1992 (Nezavisimaya Gazeta: 3.04. 1992). South Ossetian fighters will play a prominent role in the war of 1992.

D. Privatization of Law Enforcement and Emergence of Free Market of Arms

"It is necessary to reduce the arrogance of the local leaders, who feel capable to resolve any problem, supported by weapons of their *spetsnaz*", - warned Valeriy Tishkov, the chairman of State Nationality Committee, before his voluntarily resignation in the summer of 1992. Indeed, in early 1990s a free market of arms emerged in the Caucasus, and most interviewees said they could buy almost every kind of weapon or ammunition in the markets of Grozny and Nazran.

The combination of the above analyzed factors intensified Ingush-Ossetian tension to conflict. However the most important fact, which was sufficient to result in the war, was the weakness of forces, countervailing developments towards violence.

E. Weakness of forces countervailing confrontation

The factor sufficient for allowing for spiraling confrontation was weakness of forces able to counterbalance the spiraling confrontation. The civil society in Russia was in its fetus, the authorities in North Ossetia were unable or reluctant to manage the growing tensions and episodes of ethnic violence by standing above the conflict, on the contrary they actively recruited and armed the national guard; in Ingushetia state institutions were non-existent, and at the federal level too busy with other more urgent issues. The only force which sent signals of early warning were individual Moscow-based human rights activists and journalists (e.g. Sergej Kovalev), who argued against legislation on territorial rehabilitation without due mechanisms of implementation, for which they were severely criticized by the supporters of the ‘historical justice’.

The full-scale armed conflict broke out at night of October 31. It was preceded by a series of armed clashes, killing both Ingush and Ossetian civilians.

At night of October 30/31 shooting broke out in the villages of Oktyab'rskoye and Kambileevskaja, Chermen, Dachnoje, Kurtat, Kambileevskoje, Komgaron, Chernorechenskoje, Terk, Redant, Yuzhny. Both sides used machine guns, grenade launchers, anti-aircraft guns, sniper's rifles.

In the morning of October 31st the Ossetian population of Prigorodny district gathered in front of the administrative buildings and demanded weapons for self-defense. Weapons were captured and distributed; groups of armed men were sent to all villages of mixed settlement for protection of the Ossetian population. In the afternoon the governmental delegation arrived from Moscow, represented by deputy prime-minister G.Khizha, chair of State Emergency Committee Shojgu and his deputy, and the commander of ministry of interior troops general-colonel Savvin.

On November 1, the official position of Moscow delegation was verbalized by General-Colonel Filatov on the Ossetian TV:

"Today at 12: 45 arrived the first plane with airborne troops, equipment and ammunition, which will be located on the territory of Ossetia. Russia has not forgotten its faithful sons, the Ossetians, who served it with faith and honesty for many years. Already today... the airborne troops together with interior forces of RF and Interior forces of North Ossetia will start military action against the aggressors...and every hour this resistance and pressure on the aggressors will grow...I want to warn all the rest, who find themselves in the zone of military action.. I think it will not take us long to cleanse here all those who wants or disrupts the peaceful labor of Ossetia...I want to warn them that they should leave this territory and not disturb those peoples, who live here, on this territory, and who have lived here before in peace and agreement for long years..." (Quoted in Zdravomyslov: 1998: 65)

On November 2 the state of Emergency was introduced in Prigorodny district. Several regiments of the Russian troops were brought to the region, with the mission to draw the warring parties apart.

November 3-6, the federal troops and the Ossetian interior forces pushed the Ingush combatants from Prigorodny Rayon. Together with them 40-60, 000 Ingush civilians were forced to leave Prigorodny district of North Ossetia and its capital Vladikavkaz. Ingush were entirely cleansed from North Ossetia, including the villages where there were no fights (with the exception of Majski village at the border of Ingushetia ad North Ossetia inhabited by the Ingush; the Ossetian families who lived there fled).

During the "peacemaking operation" over 3, 000 (mostly Ingush houses) had been destroyed. North Ossetian troops were supported by the federal army and the South Ossetia combatants. A South Ossetian military unit, headed by field-commander Teziev was especially notorious for their violent behavior (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 67).

Most of forced migrants who fled North Ossetia in 1992 found refuge in the neighboring republics of Ingushetia and Chechnya. In Ingushetia spontaneous residence centers emerged which accommodated IDPs from Prigorodny Districts; in Grozny families were hosted by relatives (Grozny had a very significant Ingush community, most of whom were Ingushis from Prigorodny District, who had been unable to return to Prigorodny Rayon after the deportation). IDPs who fled to Grozny subsequently experienced repeated migration: in 1994 and again in 1999 they fled the bombing of Grozny by the federal army, most of them to Ingushetia. Those who remained in Ingushetia stayed with the relatives or were accommodated in temporary residence centers scattered all around the republic. "No one expected our displacement to last long. We were sure that it was a matter of several days and we will go back home. Every day the

heads of the families went to the check point KIII- 105 in Chermen at the border to check when the return would be allowed. We could not have imagined in our worst nightmares that it is going to take so long,” – said Alikhan Kushtov, an IDP from Prigorodny District. Soon it became clear that the return was an extremely complicated issue and getting people back home was dependent on the multi-level process of conflict resolution.

2. State Policy On Conflict Resolution and Return

The policy of the federal authorities on the Ingush-Ossetian conflict can be characterized as “liquidation of consequences of the conflict” rather than conflict resolution. The approach of the federal center was to overcome the main challenge of this ethnic war for the Russian government – the problem of IDPs and destroyed infrastructure. Transforming hostilities and reintegration of returnees upon return were not identified as independent issues on the agenda.

Understandably, both parties to conflict had their own strategies in the post-military phase of the conflict. The Ingush side pushed for return of IDPs, while the Ossetian side came up with pretexts and excuses to restrain the return of the Ingush inasmuch as it was acceptable for the federal center.

2.1. Conflict Ideologies of the Antagonists

The official interpretation of the events of 1992 by Republic North Ossetia-Alania was fixed in a series of statements and statutes of the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic “On Treacherous Aggression of Ingush National Extremists against the North Ossetian Republic” of November 1992 and May 1993. In these materials the conflict is interpreted as a “*prepared in advance, carefully planned, technically equipped and supported by the majority of Ingush population of North Ossetia hostile aggression of band formations of Ingushis against sovereign North Ossetian SSR aimed at invasion and annexation of part of Prigorodny District and right bank side of Vladikavkaz to the newly created Ingush Republic*”⁸. (Underlined by me. E.S.)

There are several elements in this formulae which form the basis of the Ossetian ideology of the conflict: first, *the planned character of the conflict*, i.e. the conflict is viewed as a carefully prepared and well planned aggression of the Ingush on North Ossetia; second, *mass support of the Ingush militants by the Ingush people*, which presupposed mass hostility of the Ingush against the Ossetians, third, *“treacherous” behavior of the Ingush population of Prigorodny district during the conflict*: “they knew about the planed action and did not warn their Ossetians neighbors” , forth, *the illegality of Ingush claims on the Ossetian territory*, fifth, *illegitimacy of Ingush claims about discriminatory treatment of their minority in N. Ossetia* , which according to the Ossetian side are exaggerated and distort the reality. On the basis of combination of the mentioned ideological frames mass consciousness derived the ideologeme of ‘collective guilt’ formulated by the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic in the notorious thesis of the “impossibility of common residence with the Ingushis”.

⁸ The Edict of Supreme Soviet of North Ossetian SSR of May 28 1993 ¶ 177 «In political evaluation of tragic events of October-November 1992”.

“Having heard and discussed the findings of the commission of deputies of the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic on developing a political evaluation of the tragic events, which took place in October-November 1992, the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic resolves:

*...7. For the members of the mixed committee on developing a multifaceted resolution of the refugee issue to be guided by the demand of the population of the republic to **exclude the possibility of common residence with the persons of Ingush nationality** (emphasized by me E.S.).*

For a decade on the political discourse of the Republic would emphasize that the multinational people of North Ossetia, which consists of more than 100 ethnic groups, live in peace and good neighborly relations with all peaceful nations. Legally and at the level of mass consciousness, however, the Ingush were excluded from this ‘multinational people’.

The official ideology of the conflict became deeply embedded in mass consciousness, spiced up by the myths of atrocities, typical of ethnic conflicts elsewhere.

The Ossetian ideology of conflict is reflected not only in media, public discourse and mass consciousness but likewise in history books. New generations of Ossetian children have been socialized into the conflict by learning about the “treacherous aggression of the Ingush” from their school books, which remarkably contain no mention of the Stalinist deportation of Ingush and of the Ossetian resettlement to Prigorodny District whatsoever, but have strong patriotic passages about the events of 1992:

“A war which the defenders of motherland fight against the invaders is called the Patriotic War. In the summer of 1992 Russia achieved cease fire and the withdrawal of Georgian troops from Ossetia...But Patriotic War in Ossetia did not end up with the war in the South. The second front was opened in the East. At night of October 31 1992 units of criminals invaded the land of North Ossetia. They came from Ingushetia to invaded part of Prigorodny District.

For five days the fights in Prigorodny district and in the outskirts of Vladikavkaz continued. Thousands of volunteers rose to defend Ossetia. People of different nationalities got out to defend their homes and families, their common motherland.

Hardened in fights South Ossetian units rushed through the mountain range to help. The enemy was crashed and expelled from Ossetia. To prevent a new war, the Russian troops arrived to the North Caucasus.”.

As has been rightly noted by A. Zdravomyslov «The original term 'aggression', as well as the very style ... were borrowed from the vocabulary of the Great Patriotic War⁹. Its purpose is in the generalization of the event and upgrading the violent conflict to the level of the event comparable to the events of the world history scale. In this case an unambiguous analogy with the Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union is made». (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 95).

In my opinion, this allusion serves another purpose of re-emphasizing the total evil of «the Ingush aggression» (demonization) and glorifying the role of the Ossetian «defenders of motherland» (glorification). The fighters of the armed conflict of 1992 enjoy respect in Ossetia; many participants of armed formations during the conflict were glorified and promoted to public careers.

⁹ The Second World War in Russia is officially called “The Great Patriotic War”

The evaluation of the events of 1992 by the Ingush side was fixed in the documents of The Emergency Congress of the Ingush People (February 1993) and the Statute of People's Council-Parliament of Republic Ingushetia of September 21, 1994 № 47 "On Political and Legal Evaluation of the Events of October-November 1992 in Prigorodny District and Vladikavkaz, Republic North Ossetia". In these documents the conflict is referred to as "*forced deportation of Ingush population from the territory of North Ossetia, ethnic cleansing of Prigorodny District and Vladikavkaz of North Ossetia*".

The main speaker of the hearing in Nazran, the minister of Justice of the Republic of Ingushetia, formerly an associate professor of Vladikavkaz University, Dzagiiev Movlad-Girej defined the position in the following manner:

"The events of October-November 1992 is the continuation of the almost half a century long genocide, started by the Stalinist regime, continued after the return of the Ingush to the Motherland by the authorities of North Ossetia, encouraged by part of the leadership of the former USSR and contemporary Russian leadership; this is the most extreme and rough form of expression of this policy. It can be characterized as a murder of part of the Ingush people and ethnic cleansing of the territory of the remaining alive... Ethnic cleansing of the territory - this is a form of genocide, characterized by the deportation of the people beyond the borders of a particular territory exclusively on the basis of ethnic belonging". (In Zdravomyslov: 1998: 99). /Emphasis added by me. E.S./

The key elements of this formulae are characteristic of the Ingush "ideology of the conflict" are: first, *conflict as a genocide*, another tragic point in the chain of continuous repressions, second, *participation and consent of the Federal Center in this tragedy*, third, *the planned character of the conflict*, i.e. the conflict was planned by the Ossetians in order to change the ethnic balance in Prigorodny District by ethnic cleansing of the Ingush population. From the above mentioned ideological frames the Ingush side derives its ideology of conflict – that of a victim whose historical and constitutional rights have been brutally and treacherously abused. Article 11 of the Constitution of the Ingush Republic until now states that "return by political means of lands illegally detached from the Ingush territory and preservation of territorial unity of Republic Ingushetia is a most important goal of the state".

Thus, the goal of the Ingush was to return IDPs and the lands, the goal of Ossetians - to restrain the return and retain the lands. The Ingush framed their claims of in terms of justice, the Ossetians in terms of security. The Federal Centre had to balance the two, and, as has been already noted to retain its 'special' relations with its strategically important North Ossetia.

2.3. Steps towards Peace building and Return

The remarkable opportunity of this conflict was the existence of indisputably legitimate authority, which was accepted by both sides: the Federal center was in a very good position to mediate. However, throughout the 13 years since the conflict, the federal center was torn apart by two conflicting objectives: to function as a neutral mediator in the ethnic conflict and to maintain its 'special' relations with North Ossetia, which has historically been viewed by Moscow as the main partner of Russia in the Caucasus.

This tension had an obvious impact on the state policy on the issue of return. Although committed to ensure the return of forced migrants to the places of their permanent residence, the federal center did many concessions to the Ossetian side at the stage of implementation: numerous agreements signed by the two parties with participation of the federal authorities were

ignored to by the Ossetian side or indefinitely postponed with reference to the fact that “moral psychological climate” in certain settlements in unripe for Ingush return. Nonetheless, slowly and arduously the IDPs were returning to some settlements of Prigorodny District, and as they returned the conflict spontaneously transformed at the grass-root level in the villages where face-to-face contact occurred. In other villages the climate remained hostile, the ethnic cleavage remains deep, and the situation in general conflict prone.

Conflict resolution started two days after the breakout of violence: on November 2 1992 Boris Yeltsin signed his first decree on the situation in Prigorodny District – the Decree N 1327 of “On Introducing the State of Emergency on the territory of North-Ossetian SSR and the Ingush Republic.” The decree obliged the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Security to take measures for separating the parties, ensuring security of the citizens and introduced a provisional federal agency – *Temporary Administration*”, headed by the deputy chair of the Russian government G. Khiza.

The Temporary administration was aimed to ensure the implementation of the State of Emergency, primarily the separation of parties and security of the citizens. According to the article 3 of the Decree “The organs of executive power are directly subordinated to the Temporary Administration. Due to the lacking constitutional authorities on the territory of the Ingush Republic government in the conditions of the state of Emergency is carried out by the Temporary Administration. The State of Emergency stipulated 1) ban on demonstrations and other mass gatherings; 2) ban on strikes 3) disarmament of the population.

The decree provided necessary framework for primary emergency measures: *ensuring protection to the civilians, disarming combatants, banning nationalists from the public space*, taking steps towards controlling adversarial *political institutions*. The foundation of the Temporary Administration was a timely decision, which 1) acknowledged the importance attributed to the problem at the federal level 2) attempted to restore the impartial position of the state in the conflict 3) restored the parity of the warring sides in relations to Kremlin.

On the same day, on November 2 the Supreme Soviet of NO SSR adopted a statement “On the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of November 2 1992 “On Introduction of the State of Emergency on the Territory of NO SSR and IR”. The second article effectively contradicted the Presidential document: “In compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federative Agreement on the territory of North-Ossetian SSR full authority is executed by the Supreme Soviet of the NO SSR”. In fact, the Supreme Soviet of NO SSR appropriated the function of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, having challenged the constitutionality of the Presidential Decree and on its own abolished the prerogatives of the Temporary Administration before it started to function (Zdravomyslov: 1998:72). The North Ossetian Supreme Soviet demanded to bring the Presidential decree in compliance with the given statement by eliminating the article 1 of the decree.

In November 12, Boris Yeltsin adopted a new decree, which incorporated the demands of the Ossetian Supreme Soviet by limiting the geographic zone of authority of the Temporary Administration to the area of immediate settlement of the Ossetian and Ingush population. This way the authorities in Vladikavkaz restored their independence and limited the influence of the new federal agency in the republic, while Ingushetia remained under the domain of the Temporary Administration. The parity of the two parties restored on September 2 was effectively abolished 10 days later. Very soon the Temporary Administration was set up in the North Ossetian capital Vladikavkaz, which confirmed the conviction of the Ingush side that Moscow kept being biased in favor of the Ossetians.

The first meeting between the official representatives of North Ossetia and Ingushetia took place in 1993 in the town of Kislovodsk during the roundtable talks on Ingush-Ossetian conflict. The format of *Kislovodsk roundtable talks*, which took place in January-March 1993, was interregional: representatives of all North Caucasian Republics volunteered to mediate the talks and subsequently delegated their functions of the third party to the Republic of Dagestan and Stavropol Region. The first protocol had a symbolic function of a ‘peace treaty’ and was signed on January 24 1993 (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 78).

On March 20 the Chair of North Ossetian Supreme Soviet Askharbek Galazov and the newly elected President of the newly founded Ingush Republic Ruslan Aushev signed the “Agreement on Measures of Complex Resolution of Problem of Refugees and Forced Migrants on the Territory of the Ingush Republic and North Ossetian SSR”, which as the first stage matter stated the right of the Ingush IDPs who had documented domicile registration in Prigorodny District as of October 31 and who had not committed crimes during the events of October- November 1992 to return to Prigorodny district. The parties agreed to ensure security of the returnees and set up mixed committees with participation of the Temporary Administration aimed at compiling and verifying lists of IDPs who wish to return; and evaluating their documented right to return¹⁰.

In 1993 the Ingush IDPs returned to the villages adjacent to the Ingush-Ossetian border notwithstanding significant risk to their lives. Illegal armed formations on the territory of Prigorodny district were active and their disarmament ineffective. While all Ingush residents who were allowed to return were carefully selected, checked and disarmed, North and South Ossetian armed groups remained there and committed acts of violence. Moreover, joint militia in Prigorodny included Federal units, under the command of Temporary Administration, and Ossetian law enforcement, but excluded Ingush militiamen. Ethnically neutral security forces respectful of human rights were founded in Prigorodny District only in 1998. As a result the returning IDPs remained insufficiently protected and crimes committed against them remained unpunished.

I am in possession of the register of accidents compiled by the Republican Unified Headquarters (*Regionalny Respublikanskij Shtab*) of the Ministry of Interior of Ingushetia on the basis of applications from returnees of Ingush nationality from March 1993 until July 2004. The 1993-1999 chronicle still looks like a report from the war zone: every 4-5 days was an assault, a hostage taking or murder of Ingush returnees to Prigorodny district.

On June 24 1994 in Beslan Presidents Galazov and Aushev signed the so-called *Beslan Agreements*. The Beslan agreements outlined logistical details of IDP return to the four villages of Prigorodny District and responsibilities of the parties to guarantee security to the returnees, and contained lines which confirmed that both parties agreed that the returnees agree to “abide by the laws of the Russian Federation and North Ossetia, to recognize the territorial integrity of the Republic of North Ossetia in the current administrative borders. By the end of 1994 over a thousand of Ingush IDPs returned to their native villages.

On March 23 the President and the government of the Russian Federation signed the Agreement on “Delineating the subjects of jurisdiction and responsibilities between the state agencies of the Russian Federation and North Ossetia-Alania”, which included an article guaranteeing North Ossetia its territorial integrity (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 89). This was another success of the Ossetian diplomacy reached without negotiations with the Ingush side.

¹⁰ Agreement on Measures for Complex Resolution of the Problems of Refugees and Forced Migrants on the Territory of the Ingush Republic and the Republic of Ingushetia.

In 1994 the security situation in Prigorodny district remained very fragile. The Ingush village Majski located on the territory of North Ossetia was subjected to heavy grenade fire at least once a month. In the villages Chemen, Kartsa, Tarskoje the houses of Ingush returnees were burnt and subjected to fire on a weekly and during some months daily basis. Full-scale armed clashes took place throughout 1994, hostage-taking was continued by both sides, and sometimes hostages were executed.

In 1994 we can already observe the behavioral pattern which would become a typical strategy of the Ossetian side to impede Ingush return. Demonstrations, protest pickets, attacks on the returnees by Ossetian civilians aimed to disrupt the return were major signs of “unripe moral-psychological climate” which the Ossetian authorities used as a justification for restraining the return of IDPs.

From the Register of Republican Unified Headquarters, Ministry of Interior of the Ingush Republic

30.03.94 Near the village of Tarskoje citizens of Ossetian nationality with consent of the authorities of Prigorodny District attacked a funeral convoy using the stones, which had been prepared in advance in order to prevent the burial ceremony of a citizen of Ingush nationality Khautieva, born in 1962, who died on 29.03.94 at the family cemetery. The assault took place in the presence of head of Temporary Administration Lozovoi and generals Butyko and Shapovalov. As a result of the attack the bus was damaged and six Ingush received injuries. No one was held responsible for this attack.

23.08.94. The representatives of the Temporary Administration brought the Nalgiev family, born 1931, to the place of permanent residence in the village of Chermen, Lenina street N6.

At about 4 p.m. counter to the Decree on the State of Emergency a group of Ossetian nationality numbering 500-600 persons carried out a demonstration, they threatened to eliminate Nalgievs if they do not leave the place of their permanent residence. Then the crowd burnt the garage and the house of Nalgievs with all their property. The federal authorities brought Nalgievs back to the commandant office in Chermen and then returned them to Ingushetia.

Temporary Administration, whose principle obligation was to enforce the State of Emergency, which implied securing citizens in the post-conflict region and banning any mass gatherings and protest demonstrations in the conflict zone, did not have an effective policy for dealing with such episodes of protest and violence. Its strategy was to ignore the outbursts of hatred, no one has ever been held responsible according to law for attacking the returning IDPs, even when the perpetrators were known or easy to identify. Sometimes the protest gatherings took place in the presence of the representatives of the Temporary Administration. Impunity encouraged extremists and such protests became the main tactic used by the Ossetian side aimed at disrupting return. The reason for these attacks will be a matter of special scrutiny in the subsequent sections.

In 1994 return was going on into 4 settlements of Prigorodny Rayon. There rest of the villages remained closed, however, pressure was exerted by the Ingush side ‘to open up’ other villages as well. The next closest settlement to be opened was the village of Ir.

In 1994 the local administration of the village Ir initiated a statute stating that according to articles 6 and 8 of federal regulation “ On planning and construction works of municipal and rural settlements”(CH и П 2.07.01-89 of 1994), 89 houses of the village Ir fall into a 100 meter sanitary-protection zone adjacent to railroad. Out of these 89 houses 56 are Ingush, 9 Georgian,

23 Ossetian and one Tatar. The railroad which runs through Ir is not a regular transport thoroughfare but a side way from the railroad leading to the local factory, which was used for bringing cargo cars into the factory. The factory has not been functioning since early years of perestroika period and the railroad bridge leading to the factory has been destroyed. Nonetheless, the area was announced a closed area for Ingush returnees.

In December 1994 Russian troops entered Chechnya and the first Chechen war broke out. The Chechen war pushed the unresolved Ingush-Ossetian to the background of public affairs. Three months after the breakout of full-scale war in Chechnya, on February 15 1995 the State of Emergency was abolished; the Temporary Administration was renamed in the **Temporary State Committee for Liquidating the Consequences of the Ossetian-Ingush Conflict** (hereinafter 'Temporary State Committee').

“By 1995 the concept of return has transformed. If in 1992 we planned to return everyone and aimed to restore the pre-conflict ethnic map, in 1995 it became clear that not everyone wants to return, so we should think of providing IDPs with an opportunity to settle elsewhere”, - said Vitalij Smirnov of the Office of Special Representative of the RF (formerly of Temporary State Committee). Indeed, Prigorodny district remained insecure and social prospects of reintegration and access to jobs for Ingush returnees were limited. Moreover, IDPs themselves were not a homogeneous group and they responded differently to the post-conflict conditions. The option to resettle IDPs elsewhere was also appealing to the Ossetian side. The principle of voluntary return has been strictly observed by the Temporary State Committee; moreover, observed since 1995 a policy aimed to increase the number of IDPs who chose not to return to North Ossetia has become prominent.

On June 11 1995 Ruslan Aushev and Asharbek Galazov signed yet another protocol, which stated that “the parties give up on territorial claims to each other” and agree to accelerate the process of IDP return to North Ossetia. However, the following day, in an interview to the “Obshaja Gazeta” Aushev explained his position by saying that the statement does not mean that Ingushetia gives up on Prigorodny District, which was historically Ingush territory, but it had no claims on the Ossetian territory (Zdravomyslov: 1998: 91). This effectively brought the negotiations to a stalemate. At the same time, 1995 was the record year in the number of returnees.

In 1996 the 1st war in Chechnya was over and the federal center again concentrated on the problem of Ingush IDPs. The pressure to open up new settlements increased. On April 3 1996 the President of the Russian Federation gives an assignment (IIP-634) in three days to open the village of Tarskoje and to organize the resettlement of the Ingush families from the outskirts of the village into the village itself and to ensure security to the residents of both nationalities.

According to Temporary State Committee, 438 IDPs were resettled to Tarskoje in 1996, however, according to the State Committee for Refuges and Forced migrants of the Ingush Republic they were expelled in 1997 and returned back only in 1999.

On July 25, 1996 the Statute №186 of Government of RNO-A of 1996 prescribed that the next 4 villages of Prigorodny district in the delta of Terek river - *Terk*, *Chernorechenskoje*, *Balta (partly)* and *Redant-2* belong to the so called “zone of sanitary protection of sources of drinking water supply”. Households in this area were to be destroyed and their residents – resettled. 80% of the housing aimed for destruction belonged to the Ingush. Ingush families were banned from return to this area, and offered land slots at the border with Ingushetia if they agreed to sign documents that they did not wish to return to their places of permanent residence. Unlike Ir where the non-Ingush in the sanitary zone remained intact, the Ossetian houses in the water

protection zone were gradually resettled to the capital city of Vladikavkaz, and the 58th army was based in the neglected area.

On September 4 1997 “An Agreement on Improving Relations and Cooperation between Republic North Ossetia-Alania and Republic Ingushetia” was signed by the Presidents of Republic North Ossetia-Alania and Republic Ingushetia in Moscow. The sides agreed to adhere to human rights, abort the activity of illegal armed formations on their territory, to abide by the orders, decrees and assignments of the President of the Russian Federation and the earlier agreements. As a follow-up on October 1997 a Program of Common Action was signed by the government of the Russian Federation, North Ossetia and Ingushetia, which stipulated 1) return of IDPs to all settlements of Republic North Ossetia and the Ingush Republic, 2) development of a program for settlement and integration of IDPs who do not wish to return to North Ossetia and Ingushetia and 3) ensuring security to all citizens in Prigorodny district. If points 2) 3) have been achieved, point 1) has remained on paper.

On August 8 1997 the President of the Russian Federation issued the assignment (IIP-1322) to man the personnel of law enforcement in Prigorodny district so that it reflects the ethnic make up of the local communities in Prigorodny district. Joint militia units were formed in 1998.

On February 25 1999 the Chairs of Government of the Ingush and Ossetian Republics and the Executive Representative of the President of the Russian Federation signed another agreement which again confirmed the commitment of both parties to return all IDPs to the places of their permanent residence, to ensure that Ingush flats and houses illegally occupied by other citizens are freed, to ensure security to the returnees. None of the items has been implemented according to the agreement.

On November 1 1999 a working meeting of the Executive Representative with the Chairs of government of the two republics took place, which again confirmed in the protocol that the parties ensure return to the ‘closed’ settlements or parts of settlements – Kambileevskaja, Chermen, Yuzhny; that the real estate illegally captured by the refugees from Georgia and local residents should be freed, that ethically mixed schooling is reintroduced in the villages of Kurtat, Chermen and Tarskoje. Indeed, IDPs returned to one part of Kambileevskaja village, but not to Yuzhny and not to central part of Chermen, only 12 illegally occupied flats out of 116 were freed in Dachnoje village and only 113 in Vladikavkaz, the children of Ingush nationality can attend the Ossetian school in the village of Kurtat and Dongaron, in the rest of the villages education is separate.

The agreements and plans concluded in February, May and June 2000 concerning return of IDPs, ensuring their representation in state agencies, return of illegally captured property and ethically mixed education at schools were not implemented. Since 1999 not a single new settlement was opened for return.

On October 11 2002 under the Pressure of the Federal Center the Presidents of North Ossetia and Ingushetia signed an agreement “On Development of Cooperation and Good Neighborly Relations”. Officially the discourse of “conflict” was changed to “cooperation”. The publications in press and public statements became less confrontational, which significantly reduced the number of ethically charged crimes and reduced the level of hostility. However, this did not result in increasing the numbers of returnees, moreover by 2004 the return of IDPs to North Ossetia drastically declined, since the all those who wanted to return to the open settlements had done so and the rest of the settlements remained closed.

According to the Office of Special Representative, as of March 1st 2005 state assistance in return (partially or fully) was provided to 4,352 families of Ingush IDP, amounting to 21,823 persons. These IDPs were considered returned to their places of permanent residence in RNO-A. Thus according to the Office of the Special Representative, the state has already offered assistance to 80% of citizens whose registration or fact of residence in RNO-A before the conflict has been officially confirmed.¹⁶

These data differs significantly from the data provided by of State Committee of Republic Ingushetia (hereinafter 'State Committee of RI'). According to the figures made available by the State Committee of RI, as of January 1, 2003 in 11 988 persons returned to Prigorodny district of RSO-A.

This difference in figures is explained by the fact that the Office of Special Representative considers returned all IDPs, who have received state assistance for return, either via opening bank accounts and money transfers or by providing alternative temporary shelter. Their *de facto* return is not taken into consideration¹⁷.

The State Committee of RI considers returned only those citizens who *de facto* live on the territory of Prigorodny District. However, it is difficult to work out a reliable mechanism for registering civilians who actually reside in the area. Therefore, usually the figures provided by the Office of Special Representative are regarded official.

Table 2. Dynamic of Ingush IDPs return to RNO-A in 1994-2005. Source: Office of Special Representative of The President of RF on the issues of regulating Ingush-Ossetian conflict.

№№	Settlement	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
1	Vladikavkaz	-	-	-	-	18	210	136	47	19	20	-	-	450
2	Kartsa		2108	1492	285	326	566	443	422	139	123	86	-	5990
3	Chermen	549	3450	440	27	231	231	290	38	50	28	107	7	5448
4	Dachnoe	266	417	733	392	531	282	403	93	124	45	21	28	3335
5	Sputnik						64	72	72					208
6	Kurtat	403	26	183	94	190	516	500	388	354	157	30	-	2841
7	Dongaron	37	79	161	29	22	43	5	57	-	-	-	-	433
8	Kambileevskoje	-	-	-	-	7	28	132	25	64	7	-	-	263
9	Oktyabrskoje	-	-	52*	-	-	-	-	-	5*	-	-	-	57
10	Tarskoje	-	-	438	30	47	178	348	679	376	15	17	-	2128
11	Balta	-	-	-	-	102	138	29	29	28	-	-	-	326
12	Redant	-	-	-	-	28	170	-	17	42	3	-	-	260
13	Yuzny	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
14	Chmi	-	-	-	-	37	32	7	-	-	-	-2	-	76
15	Ezmi	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	-	-	-	-	-	27
16	Ir	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	-	-	10
	Total:	1255	6080	3499	857	1539	2462	2392	1867	1201	408	263	35	21858

Table 3. Dynamic of Ingush IDPs return to RNO-A in 1994-2005. Source: State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants.¹¹

№№	Settlement	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
1	Vladikavkaz	-	14	6	-	-	-	20
2	Kartsa	557	490	175	68	21	-	2586
3	Chermen	270	259	180	84	26	7	4475
4	Dachnoje	492	328	164	25	14	28	2009
5	Kurtat	519	329	215	153	24	-	1710
6	Dongaron	51	74	48	30	6		209
7	Kambilevskaja	75	70	34	15			194
8	Oktyabr'koje							0
9	Tarkoje	102	321	141	28			592
10	Balta	45	24	8				159
11	Redant		9	7				16
12	Chmi	10		21				53
13	Ir							
14	Yuzhny							
15	Terk							
	Total:	2121	1918	975	403	91	35	12023

From table 2 one can see that in the last years the dynamic of return to Prigorodny district has reduced compared to the previous years. A. Kulakovsky, the Special Representative of the President of RF for the issues of regulating Ingush-Ossetian conflict confirmed that “this is explained by the fact that the base of IDPs returning to “unproblematic” settlements is almost exhausted, virtually everyone who wanted to return there have already returned.

Dzadziev, the leading expert of North Ossetian Institute for Humanities and Social Research, Vladikavkaz Scientific Center of Russian Academy of Sciences, the reasons for this decrease in the fact that “there have not been created preconditions and possibilities for the return of Ingushis to a number of settlements with tense moral-psychological situation. In the consciousness of many Ossetians, living in the zone of liquidating the consequences of Ossetian-Ingush conflict, there continues to dominate the thesis of impossibility of mutual coexistence of Ossetians and Ingushis, verbalized at some point (but later withdrawn) by the leadership of the Republic and the All-Ossetian public-political movement “Alanty-Nykhas””

2.5. The severe Test of Beslan

On the morning of 1 September 2004 at School №1 in the North Ossetian town of Beslan the parade to celebrate Learning Day was due to take place at 10 a.m. The pupils and their families

¹¹ Гос. комитет предоставил разбивку по годам цифры только с 2000г, а также итоговые цифры.

gathered in the yard to await the start of the ceremony. The children had come to school in their ceremonial uniform, with flowers and balloons, everyone was in a festive mood, thus, when armed masked men burst into the schoolyard many at first thought that it was a prize-draw, and assumed the shooting was the sound of bursting balloons. When it became clear within a few minutes that this was no joke, the parents and children attempted to flee. Some managed to escape, but the majority were herded into the school building by the terrorists.

The terrorists allocated the hostages around the school buildings in the gym and the classrooms. So many people were herded in there that everyone had to sit on the wooden floor with their legs drawn in. It was not possible to lie down or move around the hall. My interviewee, a forty-four-year-old Zhanna Dzeboeva was located in the gym together with her daughter Diana. Her nephew, Alan Tsgoev, was sitting separately at the other end of the hall. Throughout the three days of captivity they were not allowed to approach each other.

During the first 24 hours the hostages were allowed to drink. Household buckets for washing the floor were filled with water from the tap and enamel mugs were used to allow the children to drink. On the second and third day water was not allowed. According to several of those I questioned, the children were made to urinate on their clothes and suck the urine. Alan Tsgoev related that he ate the leaves of a houseplant which happened to be nearby.

According to the hostages, the gym was mined around its entire edge. Explosive devices were attached to wires slung across the entire length of the hall from one basketball goal to the other. During the day of 3 September some of these devices exploded at the very beginning of the emergency storming, which caused death of 334 hostages, including 170 children.

The result of Beslan events was unprecedented growth of ethnic tensions in Prigorodny District. This was not an obvious consequence of the tragedy of September 1-3 in Beslan, because, firstly, the demands of terrorists had nothing to do with the Ingush territorial claims to Prigorodny district, moreover, in the terrorist group were Chechens, Ossetians, ‘individuals of Slavic nationalities’.

During the first hours after hostage-taking when I arrived to school, the relatives who gathered at the building of the palace of culture were discussing the information which was announced in media that the hostage-taking was carried out by the terrorists of Ingush dzamaat led by Magomed Evloev. By that time nobody saw terrorists in the face and it is totally unclear how this information could emerge and in the press. On September 2, after Aushev released 26 children from the school, the crowd near the Palace of Culture started to discuss the possible links between Aushev and the terrorists in the school.

The authorities did not try to disqualify these myths; moreover, during the days closely following the tragedy they supported the groundless myth of link between Beslan and the Ingush-Ossetian conflict of the last 12 years.

The leading federal and republican printed press –Izvestia, North Ossetia, Socialist Ossetia, Expert published interviews with political scientists and other experts who implicitly or explicitly linked Beslan with 1992. The next day after the tragedy, the president of the Institute for National Strategy said in an interview to Izvestia:

“The events in Beslan cannot be viewed out of context of the old Ossetian-Ingush conflict. Between Ossetians, on the one hand, and Chechens and Ingush, on the other there exists a heavy ethnic conflict.” (Izvestia, September 4)

“The main aim of this band was to raise Ossetia, so that a brother-killing conflict between the Ossetians and Ingush would start”, - said the head of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Science, Sergey Aroutunov.

Some journalists remembered that in Beslan School #1 Ingush hostages were kept in 1992, and even found the former hostages at the market in Nazran. This fact although indeed being in place had no explanatory power for the tragedy. Beslan had roots in a decade long unresolved armed conflict in Chechnya and school #1 was selected by terrorists due to its strategically convenient location.

Such speculations had deep resonance in the region. At the same time, the reaction to Beslan tragedy in Ingushetia received no coverage in press. The facts that the Ingush government during the first days expressed condolences to the Ossetian people and planned to attend the perishing ceremonies (which they were denied access to), that Ingush children collected money (2 mln. rubles) and toys to the children of Beslan (the convoy with humanitarian aid was stopped at the administrative border and returned back to Ingushetia), the employees of ministries of education and culture allocated their daily salaries to the victims of Beslan, the elite troops of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Ingushetia offered their assistance if storming was to become necessary during the hostage taking crisis, so that the Ossetian law enforcement did not lose their men, remained unknown to the Ossetian public. I was in Ingushetia in the evening of the September 3 and I know that the reaction of the people in Ingushetia - it was the same as anywhere in the world: shock, grief and anger.

Media manipulations resulted in that the myth of the ‘Ingush trace’ of Beslan became deeply imprinted in the minds of part of the Ossetian population. “Everyone has expressed us condolences except for our neighbors, the Ingush”, - is the popular opinion in North Ossetia. The Ossetians wanted apologies from the Ingush.

The tragedy of Beslan horrified the entire world and numerous international and Russian NGO workers got involved in post-trauma rehabilitation and aid for the victims. Some of the Russian NGO leaders tried to act as mediators and contacted the Ingush public figures and officials urging them to go to Ossetia and apologize for Beslan.

Understandably, in this flammable situation such efforts only incited aggression on behalf of the Ingush, and only deepened the mutual bitterness. “The Ingush people have nothing to do with Beslan. Those villains who were there along with Chechens, Ossetians, and Russians are not Ingush; they have no right to bear this name. They are terrorists”, - said a teacher of mathematics in the secondary school for Ingush children in the village of Chermen. “Ingush are tired of being held responsible for what we have not done. The terrorists in Beslan came with demands to stop the war in Chechnya” – said Kazbek Sultygov of the State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants in Ingushetia. In the fall and winter of 2004 everyone in the region was afraid of another war in Prigorodny District.

“Why do many Ossetians blame the Ingush for Beslan? The terrorist group was multinational and had no demands related to Prigorodny District?”, - I asked my colleagues NGO workers from Beslan: “It would be enough if there was just one Ingush there to blame the tragedy on the Ingush. This is how the public opinion works here”, - said Vissarion Aseev, a deputy of local parliament in Beslan. “There is a notion of collective guilt in the Caucasus and it is difficult to overcome it,” – said the Ossetian ethnologist Arthur Tsutsiev in an interview. “The names of the

Ingush terrorists in the school are known. Some of these families/ *familii*- E.S. /¹² reside in Prigorodny district. The situation is dangerous; they can become victims of blood-feud.” – said Elisbar Aroutunov, the principle of secondary school in Dongaron. “Do you mean entire families /*familii*/ can become victims of violence?” – I asked. “Could be so”, - expressed his anxiety Elisbar.

“Beslan has turned the situation back to 1993”, - said Author Tsutsiev of the North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian Research. Indeed, already on September 4-5 all Ingush and Chechen students were asked to withdraw from the classes. All Vajnakhs students were transferred to other regional universities. “All Ingush patients have been moved to the Republican hospital in Narzan” – said Kazbek Sultygov, the head of the State Committee of the RI: “I myself have driven the last lady from the hospital in Vladikavkaz”.

“The most painful thing is that people of culture and intellectual capacity became victims of anti-Ingush hysteria. When I brought the clinical tests to the laboratory in the regional clinic in Oktyab’rskoye my former colleagues shut the door on me and refused to develop the tests, saying “We do not need any Ingush sir names here. How dare you come here after Beslan?” – said Marietta Oskanova the senior doctor of the village ambulance in Majskij, an Ingush settlement in North Ossetia. “A woman with two very ill children (both boys have brain tumors - cancer) was abused by a group of women, when she tried to visit her doctor at a clinic in Oktyabr’skoje”, - said Oskanova. A resident of Kartsa, L’yanova Lida turned to human rights group “Memorial” with the story of how she was beaten by a doctor and then patients in a hospital of Vladikavkaz in October 2004.

At the same time as has always been the case, some Ossetian residents tried to bring to senses their hot-tempered co-ethnics. “I was taking a mini-shuttle bus from Chermen to Vladikavkaz with three other Ingush women when a young Ossetian man started swearing and abusing us as Ingushis. An elderly Ossetian gentlemen interfered. ‘Close your mouth, he said to the young man, it’s thanks to ‘heroes’ like yourself that we have been living like enemies for 12 years now.’ The young man blushed and stopped his insults” – said an Ingush literature teacher from secondary school in Majskoe.

On this wave the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin issued a degree # 1285 “On Measures for Improvement of the Activity of State Organs on Development of Relations Between the Republics of North Ossetia-Alania and the Republic of Ingushetia” of October 6 2004. This decree abolished the institution of Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation. The functions of this office were divided between the Executive Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Southern Federal Okrug; the Federal Migration Service and the Federal Agency for Construction and Housing. Together with the Office of Special Representative the decree abolished a number of previous statutes and decrees of the President of the Russian Federation. With the dissolution of the Office of Special Representative there remained no specialized federal agency responsible for return of Ingush IDPs, moreover there remained no document of the presidential level which would formulate the objective of returning Ingush IDPs to Prigorodny District. The mandate of the federal migration service does not oblige it to return IDPs home, but to provide for their needs where they are. Lack of a federal agency for conflict resolution signified that the problem ceased being an issue of federal importance, lack of documentary basis for the return downgraded the policy towards Ingush IDPs to oral assignments, orders, instructions with minimal transparency. According to former head of department for social issues and work with forced migrants, Vitalij Smirnov, at

¹² In Ingushetia and in Ossetia the society is fragmented into a number of families “*familii*”, which include in some cases dozens and in most cases hundreds of nuclear families who bear one name (eg. Kushtov, Sultugov – Ingush. Dzutsev, Kalojev -Ossetian)

the time of its dissolution the Office of Special a Representative had achieved its objectives by 50%.

After Beslan the return of Ingush IDPs was aborted for eight months.

In the meantime, after Beslan the Ingush-Ossetian conflict has attracted attention of both Russian and international press- a radical change from pre-Beslan situation. I have worked for human rights group “Memorial” since January 2003 and I personally urged every journalist (of whom there were many) who visited the organization to write about the problems of Prigorodny District. Before Beslan, not a single publication appeared. After Beslan, Russian and foreign press rushed into the camps of Ingush IDPs and were amazed at the poverty and misery there. Media coverage seemed to have helped to change the federal attitude to the problems of Ingush IDPs.

On April 1, 2005 on the order # 75 of the Executive Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Southern Federal Okrug Dmitry Cossack was founded an Inter-departmental working group on regulating the consequences of the Ingush-Ossetian conflict of October-November 1992. The working group is nominally chaired by Cossack himself and involves experts and specialists in various spheres related and not directly to the issue, among others deputy director of Federal Migration Services (Yunash), ministers for nationalities of both republics (Kesaev and Markhiev), leaders of republican political parties ‘Edinaja Rossija’ (Pachiev and Aushev).

In April-June on the order of the Federal Minister of Internal Affairs (MVD) Nurgaliev of 13.04.2005 a survey of Ingush IDPs who had the status of forced migrants according to the database of the Migration Service of Republic Ingushetia was carried out. The survey aimed at receiving an updated database on who had the right to return to North Ossetia. According to the survey, 8, 880 persons had the updated status of forced migrant: they and their 1110 children were considered eligible to state assistance in return. Clearly, this figure does not include all of the IDPs, hundreds of whom did not care or did not know that they had to care about prolonging their registration as a forced migrant, especially since this ID did not provide them with any immediate benefits. The database is open to additions, however, so the numbers of potential returnees will significantly grow. Out of these 9, 990 people 296 (61 families) expressed an intention to stay in the Republic of Ingushetia and not to return to Prigorodny District. These families will receive compensations and land slots in Ingushetia. On May 17 2005 a new plan of “Priority Joint Actions for Regulating the Consequences of Ingush-Ossetian conflict” was signed by Dmitry Cossack, which stipulates taking care of all IDPs before January 1 2007.

3. Managing Displacement and Reintegration

3.1. Ingush IDPs: Conflicting Statistics

The number of Ingushis forced migrants as a result of armed conflict in Prigorodny District (North Ossetia) and in Vladikavkaz ranges from 30,000 to a figure twice that amount. In its Statement “On the Political Assessment of the Circumstances of the Ingush-Ossetian Conflict”, the Security Council quoted the Federal Migration Service as registering 49,048 Ingush IDPs from North Ossetia. The Migration service of Ingushetia asserted that 61, 000 Ingushis had fled Republic North Ossetia – Alania (RSO-A) in 1992-93, while on November 10 1992 Galazov, the Chair of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet, put the figure at 32,782.

The difference in the figures is explained by the fact that before 1992 a significant percentage of the Ingush population lived on the territory of North Ossetia without domicile registration. Registration of Ingush was limited due to the republican policy of restraint. When the families and households expanded, the new houses were built or bought, neither the real estate nor the family members would be added to the register. Moreover, large numbers of Ingush men in any case spent several months a year working in brigades in other parts of the Soviet Union (either central Russia or Central Asia), often in the construction industry. Up to 10,000 Ingushis could have been in this category of “unregistered” citizens. These people, when they fled their homes, were unable subsequently to prove their residence or ownership of property in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania (RNO-A) and were not reflected in statistics on those eligible to state assistance in return.

As I was explained in the Office of the Special Representative, in 1993-1995 was carried out a campaign for collecting applications from Ingush families, who intended to return to RNO-A. The number of applicants amounted to 45, 000 persons. After verification of signatures, elimination of repetitions and errors, 40, 953 persons remained on the list. Further was done a thorough work of confirming the fact of residence for each family on the basis of address databases of Ministry of Internal Affairs, agencies of local self-government and republican executive authorities.

From the above described procedure the Office of the Special Representative derived the figure - **31.224 persons** and **5.515 families**, which is lower than the figure provided by the Ossetian chief executive Galazov in 1992. These citizens were acknowledged eligible for receiving state assistance in their return to RNO-A. In 1994-1998 the state assisted the returnees by building new houses on the territory of Prigorodny Rayon, providing transport for moving and security escort to the place of permanent residence.

3.2. Four categories of IDPs from North Ossetia

Four categories of IDPs remain in temporary residence facilities Ingushetia and North Ossetia

Category 1: Residents of the villages with "an unfavorable moral-psychological climate"

The return of Ingush IDPs is effectuated only to 13 out of 29 settlements where there was Ingush population before 1992. After the conflict the Ingush families from 19 villages applied to return. Those families who lived the predominantly Ossetian villages in a dispersed manner and in insufficient numbers did not apply for return. According to the Ossetian authorities, there remain 5-6 settlements with «an unfavorable moral-psychological climate" and "the climate for return of the Ingush is not yet ripe".

Such problematic villages are: *Oktyabrskoe, Ir, Yuzny, Chermen (partly), Tarskoe (partly), Kambileevskaja (partly) and the city of Vladikavkaz.*

The villages Chermen, Tarskoje and Kambileevskaja are open for return, however, in these settlements the population forms ethnic enclaves, and thus the return of IDPs outside their enclaves is restrained by the Ossetian authorities. The Central Part of Chermen, the left side of Tarskoje and part of Kambileevskaja remain closed for return.

In the city of Vladikavkaz the issue of tense moral-psychological climate is complicated by the fact that the flats owned by Ingush have been illegally captured by refugees from Georgia and

local Ossetians. With the assistance of the Office of Special Representative, 116 flats have been returned to the owners through court.

Category 2: Residents of the villages, which belong to the "water-protection zone" and "zone of sanitary protection of railroad"

Problematic villages include the settlements of the so-called "*water-protection area*" and "*zone of sanitary protection of railroad*".

According to Statute №186 Government of RNC-A of July 25, 1996, 5 villages (*Terk, Chernorechenskoje, Yuzhny (partly), Balta (partly) and Redant (partly)*) belong to the so called "zone of sanitary protection of sources of drinking water supply".

In the opinion of State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants of Republic of Ingushetia, the borders of water-protection zone have been intentionally expanded to prevent Ingush IDPs from return.

Bolat Kasaev, the head of local administration of Terk, Chernorechenskoje and Yuzhny village, told in an interview that the emergence of water protection zone was determined by the necessity to protect the water resources of the city of Vladikavkaz. "This is a purely environmental issue, which some people want to politicize. The idea to create such a zone existed already in the 1980s, but it was decided to implement the resettlement plan after the conflict because the Ingush population had left. Currently there will be a military base in the area"

The State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants of Ingushetia, however, insists that the villages are located over 600 meters from the river, moreover, a military base, along with limestone factory, a tuberculosis clinic and a military base are more dangerous to the water resources than peasant villages.

The final decision on the borders of water-protection zone is supposed to be taken at the federal level. In his report to the Parliamentary Hearings of the Russian Federation "On the measures take by the state agencies to return forced migrants to Republic North Ossetia-Alania" on October 9 2003, Vitalij Smirnov, the head of department for social issues and work with forced migrants of the Office of Special Representative said that in 2000-2004 "the Government of the Russian Federation issued 23 assignments to the federal ministries and departments, to the Government of North Ossetia and Ingushetia to resolve the issue of water-protection zone". In his opinion there is hardly an issue that deserved so much attention of the federal government.

According to the state committee, about 8,000 Ingush lived in the five settlements of water protection zone before the conflict of 1992. Taking into consideration high birth rates among Ingush this figure is much higher. The status of these IDPs remains uncertain, while most of them continue to reside in temporary residence facilities in Ingushetia in the conditions hardly meeting minimal standards of human shelter far below the poverty level.

Category 3. Citizens who used to reside in municipal housing

Citizens who lived in family dormitories at industrial enterprises and institutions of North Ossetia fall into this category.

Many families were on the waiting list to receive private cooperative housing or had a priority right for privatization of the municipal real estate, which they at the moment of conflict had

occupied. After the conflict the living spaces of these people was illegally captured and now they are denied their right to return or to receive compensation.

Category 4. Citizens who have received partial compensation for lost property, but failed to restore their housing

This is a category of the citizens who have received a part of their compensation transfers. These families started the construction but failed to use up the money according to the stipulated procedure and therefore lost their right to subsequent compensation installments. This category of people is the most problematic in the long run. Most of them are far below the poverty level and have spent their first installments to cover some of their immediate needs. Now they have lost their right to the subsequent installments and will remain homeless in the foreseeable future.

3.3. State Assistance to Returnees

According to Statute #274 of March 6 1998 «On State Assistance to citizens of the Russian Federation, who lost housing as a result of Ossetian-Ingush conflict of October-November 1992», the IDPs who have been acknowledged eligible for state assistance are provided with financial aid for construction, restoration or purchasing new housing.

The compensations are paid in three installments and are indexed in accordance with inflation rates. The size of financial assistance allocated by the state for construction, restoration and purchasing of housing, depends on the size and the value of lost property, number of family members, market prices of square meter of living spaces and of necessary construction materials. In order to apply for financial aid the family has to submit a set of documents to the Governmental Commissions for Allocating Resources to Forced Migrants who lost property in Ingushetia and Ossetia. The money from the federal budget is transferred to the Office of Special Representative, which makes transfers to the bank accounts of IDPs, upon decisions of the Governmental Commissions.

Counter to the usually practiced in the Russian Federation allocation of fixed sums in compensation for lost property¹³, the size of financial assistance to IDPs from the area of Ingush-Ossetian conflict is theoretically unlimited. According the Office of the Special Representative, several of families have opened bank accounts and will receive compensations, exceeding 1 million rubles each. Unfortunately, such IDP friendly scheme of determining the size of compensation impeded the implementation of aid program. The Federal budget line for Prigorodny District is fixed and amounts to 200,000 rubles a year. Growing prices and large size of compensations result in the situation when annual budgetary allocations appear insufficient. According to the Office of Special Representative, in 2003 the indebtedness for already opened accounts exceeded 600,000 rubles. In 2003 - first half of 2004 delays in payment of compensations for lost property is the main hindrance for return of Ingush IDPs to the so-called “unproblematic” settlements. Another problem with the existing scheme is that due to extreme poverty a significant number of families were unable to use properly their money and spent it for their immediate survival needs, this way becoming permanently homeless. The department for social issues and work with forced migrants of the Office of Special Representative developed an elaborate database on returnees who were eligible and were receiving financial aid, which contained updates on each IDPs reconstruction status, however, even this did not was an insufficiently effective mechanism to control the money used for reconstruction and

¹³ Eg. citizens, who lost their property during the military campaign in Chechnya are provided with a fixed 300.000 ruble compensation. Families, who lost property in the floods of 2002 received 50.000 ruble assistance.

rehabilitation of housing.

In addition the returnees have been provided with the following benefits:

- Transport for moving the property and family members from the place of temporary residence;
- Temporary residence facilities (caravans, wagons)
- Transport for bringing the evaluation commission to perform measurements and evaluation of the destroyed housing at the site;

In 1994-1998 the destroyed Ingush houses and blocks of flats were restored by contractors hired by the Office of Special Representative (624 private houses; 8 blocks of flats with 99 apartments). The houses were built by the local Ossetian workers, the quality of this housing was very low and after numerous complaints a decision was made to allocate money for families to do the constructions themselves.

Apart from housing the Office of Special Representative invested rehabilitation of infrastructure, public transport and schools (according to the statute 274 no more than 7% of the total budget). Thus, in the period of 1994-2004 64 objects of infrastructure were built: 14 schools, 6 kindergartens, 8 convenience shops, 5 regional palaces of culture, 4 medical stations and 2 boarding schools.

The Office of Special Representatives offered IDPs from the so-called “closed” settlements alternative options for resettling in Ingushetia or in North Ossetia, but in places other than their homes. Thus, the residents of the village Ir are offered land slots in the area adjacent to the same village. This area was previously prepared for refugees from South Ossetia, the land slots have infrastructure and conveniences (electricity, gas). The IDPs from the Tarskoje village (left, currently Ossetian side) are offered land slots on the Ingush (right) side of the village. The residents of the other ‘problematic’ settlements are offered land slots at the administrative border of Ingushetia and North Ossetia, near the village Majski. Those who agreed to settle in Ingushetia receive financial aid for constructing new houses. The rationale behind returning IDPs to places different than their original land slots was to create ethnic pockets of Ossetian and Ingush populations.

This scheme, however, has been unacceptable to most Ingush IDPs for cultural reasons. Family land and family cemetery rank among highest values in the Ingush cultural tradition; religious rites and holidays are inexorably linked to the family cemeteries; the socialization of young people is centered around family values and visiting grandfather’s house is among crucial element of ethnic upbringing, the status of the family in the society is likewise dependent on their reputation, which stipulates the ability to protect one’s family house and land. Therefore returning exactly to the site of their origin is a fundamental value for Ingush IDPs, in the name of this value they have been prepared to live in refugee caravans for over 13 years now.

The Ossetian government refuses to recognize the authenticity of the Ingush demands to return exactly to their family land slot. “This is a constructed political claim. They are not cavemen, these are nationalist politicians who manipulate them into these demands”, - said then Minister for Nationalities Sergej Tabolov in an interview with the author in November 2003. Nonetheless, the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the European Declaration on Human Rights stipulate freedom to choose place of residence for the Ingush IDPs from Prigorodny District.

A counter argument to the claim of the Ossetian politicians that the demands of Ingush IDPs to return to their land slots is a political construction can be the fact that in 13 years 584 families

accepted the alternative schemes to resettle outside places of their permanent residence. Living in such ramshackle conditions for 13 years in the name of constructed political claims is too much of a sacrifice, unless these constructions are strongly embedded in culture and social values.

It should be noted with appreciation that the Office of Special Representative has never exerted pressure on IDPs to accept the alternative schemes. Generally speaking, the performance of the Office of Special Representative on social issues can be ranked very high. State assistance to IDPs in reconstruction of housing has been user friendly, thoroughly scrutinized and well implemented. Having spoken to hundreds of Ingush IDPs through my research and human rights work during 3 years in the regions I have never heard of any complaints about corruption in the Office of Special Representative (which is quite unique for state agencies dealing with reconstruction and social problems in the Northern Caucasus).

3.4.Social Costs of Protracted Displacement

The social costs of protracted displacement for Ingush IDPs from North Ossetia have been very high. This is explained by the fact that the places of compact settlement for Ingush IDPs in Ingushetia were denied the official status of “centers of temporary residence”, that is why neither the federal nor the republican budgets stipulate any resources for assisting these settlements and IDPs living there. Since 1992 the Federal Migration Services and Ministry of Emergency Situations offered no aid to this category of IDPs.

A. Living Conditions

The living conditions in the 37 barracks and camps where IDPs live do not meet any minimal standards of human shelter. Most IDPs live in wood or iron refugee wagons (caravans) 9 x 3 и 6 x 2, 7 square meters², in plywood houses or in the wooden barracks. On the average a wagon is supposed to be used for 4 years, but most residents live there two-three times as long. Most barracks have not been repaired in 12 years. They have leaking roofs, dysfunctional sewage systems, decomposing floors. Thus, a settlement “Ryabinka” accommodated in the building of a former kindergarten N 2 in Karabulak suffers of unbearable humidity inside the building, dysfunctional sewage system pours water into the cellar, as a result bed sheets and carpets inside the building remain permanently damp and it is hard to breathe inside the rooms. The residents of ‘Ryabinka’ suffer of chronic respiratory diseases and pains in bones.

Clear water supply and waste management are not properly organized and all of the 37 compact settlements suffer of rodents which aggravates the already dramatic sanitary conditions. The most serious problem of IDP settlements, especially the “Majski” camp are frequent electricity cut offs.

Due to ambiguous status of Majski (located on the territory of Ossetia but actually under jurisdiction of Ingushetia), the migration service of North Ossetia does not pay bills for the consumed electricity, at the same time the State Committee For Refugees and forced Migrants of Ingushetia does not have a corresponding budget line to cover these expenses. Each time the government of Ingushetia has to find additional means, which is not always possible in time. Thus, the electric power is regularly switched off for debts. The overwhelming majority of the IDPs do not have the means to pay their electricity bills on their own.

In autumn – winter seasons of 2003, 2004, 2005 the camp "Majski" went without energy for days and even weeks, which put its inhabitants on the edge of survival. The wagons have no heating

systems and are being heated by electric appliances. In the wintertime the temperature in the wagons went down to the level of the temperatures outside, people slept in overcoats and winter hats. At night the drinking water was freezing in buckets.

B. Unemployment and Poverty

Ingushetia, the host republic of IDPs from North Ossetia, ranks among the most economically underprivileged regions of Russia. In 1992 Ingushetia had no government of its own, no capital, not a single higher educational establishment and 2-3 of functioning industrial enterprises. An agricultural country, with the level of unemployment over 80%, in the last 13 years Ingushetia has been caught between two conflicts – the Ingush-Ossetian conflict and the war in Chechnya. In 1994 and then again in 1999 Ingushetia received IDPs from Chechnya. Over 300,000 Chechen forced migrants remained in Ingushetia in 1999-2004.

Understandably, in such conditions, IDPs from North Ossetia have been an additional burden for the shattered republic, especially since the federal center allocated no resources for IDPs from Prigorodny Rayon. The social research on situation with IDPs from North Ossetia, which I conducted as part of the team with a Russian human rights Group “Memorial”, shows that for example in Majski camp out of 1, 235 population 17 people have permanent employment (Khantygov, Sokirianskaia: 2004). The main sources of income are pensions (30-200 USD per month) and children’s welfare (70 rubles- 2, 5 USD per child per month). Men look for seasonal jobs. The direct consequence of poverty is that up to 30% of children do not attend school because their parents have no means to buy then warm clothes and text books for school. Poverty results in deteriorated health by overwhelming majority of IDPs.

C. Health

Protracted displacement, absence of basic conveniences, means of subsistence, adequate health services and humanitarian aid, have undermined the health of the IDPs.

The main finding of the social research conducted by Memorial in the fall of 2004 was that most of the diseases of IDPs from Ossetia have not been diagnosed as a result to poverty and lack of due access to health care (Khantygov, Sokirianskaia: The Forgotten People [www. memo.ru](http://www.memo.ru)).

According Marietta Oskanova, the senior physician of the ambulance station in the village of Majski, IDPs from North Ossetia suffer from malnutrition and anemia. Inadequate nutrition and absence of vitamins result in low immunity and general weakness; dysfunctional families have destructive influence on mental health - the majority of children of “Majski” suffer of progressive neurosis (5). During the winter children get ill from respiratory diseases; many have chronic diseases of nasopharynx and sinusoids. "The most acute problem is that parents do not take their children to doctors. Drugs are expensive now; even for the purchase the basic pharmaceuticals for cold requires 100-200 rubles (3-6 euro). Mothers do not have this money, therefore they stop taking their children to doctors", - Oskanova has noted. "Anemia - is the basic problem for pregnant women. Even the cheapest vitamins costing 15 rubles (50 cents) a package appear too expensive. Almost everything is problematic".

D. Discrimination: Inadequate Identification Documents, Denied Freedom of Movement, Access to Healthcare and Education

In 1992 all IDPs from North Ossetia received identification cards of a forced migrant. However, during the conflict many of them had to flee without passports, certificates of birth and other important papers. Eventually most of these documents have been duplicated.

By 2001-2003 all citizens of Russia had to exchange their old Soviet passports for new Russian passports. In this period the Passport Service of North Ossetia (IIBC PCO-A) issued the Ingush IDPs new Russian passports without domicile registration, which makes their passports *de facto* invalid.

The State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants of the Republic of Ingushetia repeatedly raised the issue with the Federal Passport Services, as a result the Minister of Internal Affairs of Russia B. Gryzlov issued an order # 1/4097 of 25 June 2003 obliging the Passport Service of the North Ossetian Republic to ensure the proper documentation for every citizen of the republic of Ingush nationality, who temporary resided in Ingushetia. According to the State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants of the Republic of Ingushetia, in the period of 01.07.03 and 01.11.03 the registrations were stamped into the already issued passports and new passports with proper domicile registration was issued to almost 3, 000 IDPs.

However, starting November 2004 the Passport Service of North Ossetia again issued passports without domicile registration; some Ingush IDPs are not receiving passports at all. Currently, according to State Committee for Refugees and forced migrants over 500 persons are denied proper documentation. Oftentimes one member of the family would receive passports while his or her children and spouses cannot receive identification papers.

In Russia, access to school and healthcare is determined by one's domicile registration; moreover traveling to regions other than Ingushetia without registration is difficult, and for residents of North Caucasus, who are targets of close attention from the security forces throughout the country, is dangerous. The problem of access to education has been *de facto* solved by the Ministry of Education of Ingushetia - IDPs from North Ossetia are accepted to schools in Ingushetia without domicile registration. Healthcare is more problematic. Without domicile registration IDPs of categories 1-3 cannot get their medical insurance certificates, and therefore cannot receive any healthcare except for primary aid. This had a strong negative impact on the health of forced migrants from North Ossetia.

Legal assistance to IDPs from North Ossetia has been very poorly organized. The obvious cases of right abuse, such as illegal capture of property, denied freedom of movement, discrimination have not been challenged in court. The legality of post-1992 innovations such as water protection zone and the sanitary zone near the non-functional railroad have not been given due legal scrutiny. Most Ingush IDPs do not believe in legal remedies anymore and refuse to go to court.

E. Humanitarian Aid

Since places of compact settlement of the Ingush IDPs from the Republic North Ossetia-A, have no status of centers of temporary residence, federal migration services offer no assistance to the IDPs living there.

Until 2003 International and Russian aid missions did not target IDPs from North Ossetia. In 2004 -2005 ICCRC and Russian Red Cross, the Danish Refugee Council and HRC "Memorial" and Committee of Civic Assistance launched small scale projects of housing rehabilitation and medical aid for IDPs from North Ossetia. British organization CPCD, The Committee "Civic Assistance" and the State Committee for Refugees and Forced Migrants of Republic Ingushetia several times delivered food aid and clothes to Ingush IDPs.

F. Impact on Host Community: Public Disappointment, Radicalization of Youth, Emergence of Guerilla Networks

13 years of displacement without assistance from the governmental and non-governmental relief agencies turned IDPs from North Ossetia into an impoverished, discriminated against group. Young people, who grew up in such underprivileged conditions have not had due access to education and have experienced routine discrimination and injustice. According to Tseloeva Larisa, the deputy-principal of secondary school in the village of Majski, pupils from IDP families differ notably from the other pupils. "Nervousness, absent-mindedness, problems with memory, missed classes and weak motivation result to a low progress of these children...Many suffer of severe malnutrition".

In the unstable conditions of the Northern Caucasus such unhealthy environments turn children into disappointed and socially marginalized youth, who become fruitful soil for radical propaganda and extremism. "My son went to his 1st grade commencement at school from this wagon, last spring he went to his high school graduation ball from this wagon. What has he seen in his life? You are pushing our children to support radicals", - said an Elder from Majski camp at a protest piquet organized by the residents of Majski in May 2005.

Moreover, the problem of Prigorodny district forms the nucleus of Ingush national identity, which even before 1992 bore strong victimizing and anti-colonial features of a nation who lived through a genocidal deportation and was marked with the label of 'the unreliable people' for decades in the Russian state.

The unresolved Ingush-Ossetian conflict, favouritism of the federal centre to one of the parties to conflict, miserable conditions of Ingush IDPs discrimination of returnees in North Ossetia, impotence of the Federal Centre to insure equal rights to citizens regardless of their nationality, confirm bitter feelings of the Ingush citizens that they remain the second-rate citizens of the Russian state.

The disillusionment with the political regime of population who have been historically subjected to discrimination can have unpredictable consequences in the unstable conditions of the Northern Caucasus. Until 1999 although impoverished and politically fragile Ingushetia was a rather stable place security wise. On June 21-22, 2004 there was a major raid of 600-800 combatants to Ingushetia who controlled the republic for over 4 hours and executed over 100 representatives of security agencies. Many of the Ingush participating in the combatant and terrorist networks in the North Caucasus are from Prigorodny district. During the 1st Chechen War there was a special Ingush regiment fighting on the side of separatists, many of them were from Prigorodny District. Many more Ingush joined the guerrilla groups as a way of personal protest against discrimination of their co-ethnics. Thus, spill over of war from Chechnya and unresolved Ingush-Ossetian conflict were powerful factors contributing to Ingushetia being turned into a conflict zone, a most vulnerable region in Russia.

3.5. Peace-building and Reintegration: Success Stories and Conflict Prone Solutions

As has been mentioned in the previous sections the policy of the federal authorities on the Ingush-Ossetian conflict was that of "liquidation of consequences" rather than peace building and conflict resolution. Thus, the programs for rehabilitation and restoration of housing and significant numbers of returnees have been definitely the achievements of the federal policy and a result of consistent efforts on both sides. Peace building, protection, promotion of good

governance and economic solutions were seen as secondary tasks and therefore the results in these spheres are much more modest.

State Policy for Protection of Returnees and Ensuring Security

Demobilization of Ossetian combatants took far too long and until early 2000 some of the groups were still active on the territory of Prigorodny District. This accounted for numerous ethnically charged fatalities and casualties. Since 1999, when Alexander Dzasokhov replaced Askharbek Galazov in the post of chief executive in North Ossetia, the security situation was seriously improved; Dzasokhov managed to disarm reintegrate the combatant units.

The efficiency of the republican policy for reintegration of combatants aimed at returning them to peaceful live arises much doubt, however. Most active participants of the events of 1992 were employed in local security forces, which create unfavorable conditions for eliminating is violent and discriminative practices within local law enforcement. The introduction of joint security units (mobile units, which consist of Ingush, Ossetian and federal servicemen) have significantly improved the situation. Regretfully, they were not founded until 1992.

At the same time, by 2004 the level of ethnically based violence had been reduced to minimum, which is a major achievement of the current policy. Hostilities transferred into more covert shape of discrimination.

Discrimination is most vivid in the spheres of education, employment and healthcare, where chances of returnees to Prigorodny district to get equal services are seriously limited. Receiving due medical care, acquiring medical insurances are difficult for ethnic Ingush in North Ossetia.

In larger villages of Prigorodny District (Chermen, Tarskoje, Kartsa) is still practiced a discriminatory system of separate schooling. The decision to introduce separate education was taken by the authorities out of fear of possible clashes on national grounds. However, the teachers at schools with mixed classrooms (in villages Dongaron, Kurtat) explained that there have been no major ethnically colored conflicts in their schools. "Children do fight regardless of nationalities, my own two sons fight every day. I explained to the parents that we are not going to make politics out of children's nature. And there have not been problems ever since", - said Elisbar Arutuov, the principle of school with mixed education in the village of Dongaron.

Ingush residents of North Ossetia turn to human rights organization with complaints that they cannot fulfill their right to social benefits due according to the "Law o Rehabilitation of the Repressed Peoples" such as 50% discount for pharmaceuticals and the utility payments. In 2004 the North Ossetian Ministry for Social Security refused to recognize the identification documents of the repressed, issued in the Republic of Ingushetia.

At the same time, according to the Statute # 25 of March 1993 and then Statute # 259 of September 10 1999 of Government of Republic North Ossetia-Alania introduced social benefits to the victims of "Ingush aggression" and "terrorist acts on the territory of the Republic North Ossetia- Alania" which stipulate free housing where necessary, free special needs transport for handicapped, 50% discount pharmaceuticals, utility payments services, free dental care prosthetic, free wiring of telephone lines and seven other categories of benefits.

In the villages where Ingush and Ossetian communities form ethnic enclaves, villages' administrations, libraries, clubs are located on the Ossetian parts of the village, which means Ingush residents are denied access to them. In these villages Ingush population is confined to their part of the village, in a ghetto-like fashion.

State Policy for Good Governance and Conflict Transformation

The state policy had success in ensuring ethnically neutral judiciary decision on housing restitution. The Office of Special Representative provided free legal counseling for IDPs; reimbursed advocates for defending IDP interests in courts. Clearly, the Office of Special Representative monitored the work of Ossetian courts, which indeed passed decisions in favor of Ingush applicants in property disputes.

Political representation of the Ingush returnees has not been ensured. 21,000 Ingush are barely represented in local self-government or republican authorities. As of September 2005 only 3 settlements had Ingush deputy – heads of local administrations. Ingush are not represented in the Ossetian parliament or government.

State Policy for Economic Development

The agreements signed by the Ingush and Ossetian authorities have repeatedly emphasized the importance of creating jobs for Ingush returnees and allowing them equal access to the existing employment. However, unemployment remains a major problem of Ingush returnees. “No Ingush can find a job in Ossetian unless in agencies providing for Ingush needs – Ingush schools or militia. Ingush are trying to find jobs in Nazran and this is the only way we can exist here. Young men are all unemployed”, - said Sulambek Poshev, an Elder from Dongaron.

The problem of unemployment in previously agrarian Prigorodny district is very acute among the Ossetian population as well, especially among South Ossetians and refugees from inner regions of Georgia. Income generating programs have not been implemented by any of international agencies functioning in the area – UNHCR, UNDP, ICRC, Danish Refugee Council.

State Policy Towards Peace building

The state policy did not stipulate any consistent strategy at conflict transformation and reduction of hostilities. Nonetheless, the Office of Special Representative of the Russian Federation did initiate events aimed at restoring the horizontal links between the communities. Among the main achievements have been the acceptance of Ingush students to the universities in Vladikavkaz: 11 places per year were allocated to Ingush students with major in engineering at North Caucasian State Mechanical Institute, 9 places in North Caucasian Medical Academy, at North Ossetian State Universities – 1 place a year for each major requested by the Republic of Ingushetia.

Moreover, according to Vitalij Smirnov, “the State Television Companies “Alania” and “Ingushetia” established relations of cooperation, 4 filmed have been shot jointly and a number of news reportage. The editor’s-in-chief of the republican dailies “Serdalo” and “North Ossetia” are in good contact”. The Office of Special Representative initiated meetings of representatives of kin-families of the Ossetians and Ingushis (Zagievs, Kaloevs, and Khautievs). These families due to intense intermarriage are considered relatives.

Another mechanism employed by the Office of Special Representative has been to set up meetings between public figures, intellectuals and NGOs. The format of such meetings was usually official, initiated from top down and not very spontaneous. Moreover, the choice of the main actors of this peacemaking process was not very fortunate: thus the nationalistic organizations “Styr-Nykhas” and “Dajmokh” were allocated the leading roles. Thus the same people, who incited conflict, were involved in formal ‘peacemaking’. Their efforts were far from grass root authentic effort. The Russian and international civil society did not get involved in

helping two peoples overcome their post-conflict traumas. Apart from few actions at schools very little was done by the non-government actors.

The censorship introduced in press during the first years of Emergency situation did not bring the aspired results of banning nationalists from the public space. Although it allowed excluding some hate speech articles from the mainstream press, plenty hostile messages made their way to the public, and even more importantly, press controlled by nationalistic elites left little room for balanced analysis refuting stereotypes and myths. Except for handful publications by experts like Alexander Dzadziev, there were few balanced articles on the issue of Ingush-Ossetian Relations. This resulted in the conflict ideologies and mythology of both parties being deeply embedded in mass consciousness and have acquired the status of 'truth', which will be very difficult to change after so much time.

According to monitoring I regularly carried out in the villages of Prigorodny district in 2003-2005, the most favorable psychological climate is in the villages, where the return has happened, particularly, where the Ingush and the Ossetian settlements are not fragmented into ethnic enclaves, with each quarter having mixed Ingush-Ossetian population (e.g. Dongaron, Kurtat).

Interviews with the locals revealed that most easily the contact is established by middle aged generation of 40-50, who have previously had the experience of mutual communication, most infrequent contacts are among youth. Teenagers and youth, whose socialization was shaped by the conflict and post-conflict experience, avoid interaction.

The social environment in the district is complicated by large numbers of South Ossetian refugees, who live in substandard conditions in the same settlements in rather marginalized communities of acute poverty and social deprivation. Unemployment and lack of welfare benefits make this category of refugees a distinct group, increasingly seen by the North Ossetians as 'problematic.' The existence of two badly integrated groups makes the communities particularly vulnerable.

The story of reintegrating returnees to Prigorodny district has its successes and failures. Villages of mixed settlement, where Ingush have returned and live in a dispersed fashion next door to Ossetian neighbors turned into fine examples of post-conflict building: some hostilities and mistrust do remain, but the relations are put on the right track and moving towards final reconciliation. Villages, where Ingush and Ossetian communities form ethnic enclaves are conflict-prone solutions. The communication and thus reintegration of these communities is seriously impeded and the level of hostilities remains high. Yet, another category of villages are those, where return has not taken place, since the authorities of North Ossetia consider that the 'moral-psychological climate' there is not 'ripe' for Ingush return. Exploring the peculiarities of these particular settlements was a major puzzle of the research paper conducted in the framework of this fellowship.

Dongaron: A Success Story

The village of Dongaron is an example of very successful transformation of ethnic conflict. The process of return to Dongaron has been completed in 2004. There were 77 Ingush houses here, 77 submitted documents for return or resettlement; all of them were accepted by the local administration. Currently 33 houses have been re-build. In case Ingush families have been extended during the 12 years and they require additional land, slots of land are being allocated to the new families. All in all there are 147 families in Dongaron: 33 Ingush and the South and North Ossetian or Russian. Refugees from South Ossetia and Inner Regions of Georgia are accommodated in 34 flats converted from former prison. The village has a school of mixed

education, a medical station and a village club with new library.

The ‘moral-psychological climate’ seems very healthy, although understandably complete transformation of conflict requires more time. “We do not have any problems with the Ossetian neighbors; we visit each other for tea, and of course weddings and funerals. In the recent years there have been no clashes between youth, they communicate well, although do not yet party together. In the evenings the Ossetian youngsters get together in the club, and we keep out young people at home not avoid clashes”, said Elder Poshev. “We have a healthy environment, although some nervousness is created by all the additional security measures and press” – said the school principle Elisbar Arutunov. When one approaches the village administration, they do feel that ethic climate in the village is healthy. Ingush and the Ossetians queue together to see the head of administration Sozyr Bagalov, they laugh and crack jokes together, and greet each other in a very friendly way. “Our main problem is unemployment. I will tell you something: if you want peace, give us jobs. We do not need to put people at the round table in front of each other. We need to put them at the industrial factory, and if they sit at the table, let it be a kitchen table during the lunch breaks -” said Sozyr Bagalov: “when a person is unemployed he has much time to think about grievances and the status of Prigorodny District. Let him be busy and think about how to better sell autumn crops at the market in Vladikavkaz”.

Similar promising situation can be observed in the village of mixed settlement Kurtat.

However, other cases are less successful solutions. Enclave settlement impedes communication and reintegration, thus creating situations prone to repeated violence.

Tarskoje: A Conflict Prone Solution

The village of Tarskoje is an example of unsuccessful transformation of ethnic conflict in a village of mixed settlement. As a result of the policy of restraint the village was split into two ethnic enclaves and de facto two villages emerged instead of one: Ingush live on the right side and Ossetians on the left side of Tarskoje. Ingush and Ossetian children go to separate schools and communication between the communities is virtually nil. The Ingush try not to cross the dividing borderline unless absolutely necessary (the village administration is located on the Ossetian side), so do the Ossetians. The village library and club are located on the Ossetian side, so Ingush do not have access to it. In 2004 the Ossetian teenagers came to play football to the Ingush side. The boys played together for several weeks and then the Ossetian adults forbade them to do so. “We decided not to experiment. It will certainly end up badly” – said a teacher from the Ossetian school in an interview.

When one visits the village they feel that the atmosphere is extremely tense. Immediately after visitors appear on the Ingush side, the militiamen mushroom up from soil. When driving through the Ossetian side, an unknown car with Islamic prayer beads at the front window is closed followed by suspicious looks of the villagers. I myself was arrested in Tarskoje and kept for 3 hours in a militia station when attempted to take interviews with school teachers in Tarskoje together with a foreign journalist. The militiamen then brought two teachers to the militia station and gave 10 minutes to talk; then escorted us out Prigorodny district with the two military jeeps in front and behind. The interviews turned out interesting nonetheless “Ingush are not bandits or terrorists. Terrorists have no nationality”, - started cheerfully a teacher of literature from the Ossetian school: “All of us have guns in the backyard, we will sell our last cow to buy guns, they will never take us by surprise again”, she ended up in a less pacifist fashion. Notably, in October- November 1992 there were no fights in Tarskoje. All Ingush families left before the Russian and Ossetian troops had arrived.

Obviously, there is no lasting peace in Tarskoje, and the sustainability of return arouses doubts. Similar situation is in the majority of settlements where the return has taken place, and where Ingush and Ossetian communities form ethnic enclaves (Chermen, Kartsa, and Kambileevskaja).

“Closed” Villages with “Unripe Moral-Psychological Climate”

According to the authorities of North Ossetia in some villages of Prigorodny district the moral-psychological climate remains very tense, thus the return there is currently impossible. One of the empirical objectives of this study, which aims at developing recommendations for sustainable return of Ingush IDPs to Prigorodny District, was to go beyond the formulae of “unripe moral-psychological climate” and understand the main mechanisms of conflict dynamic in the region. A detailed description of hypotheses and their testing in the course of research is presented in the research paper. I will finalize the main findings below.

The main argument, used by North Ossetian authorities for justifying the impossibility of the return of Ingush IDPs to the places of their permanent residence in the closed settlements is “unripe moral-psychological climate”, i.e. high level of social protest associated with the return of the Ingush at the local level. Indeed, during the 13 years of conflict armed clashes and protest demonstrations against the return of Ingush forced migrants to North Ossetia have happened systematically, involved local actors and, according to the republican authorities, were organized with local resources, by local authorities, and groups.

The analysis of power distribution in North Ossetia showed that the local administrations are strongly dependent on the executive power. Generally the Soviet centralisation and hierarchy of power are still observed in North Ossetia. Many times when I wanted to interview a representative of local government or local law enforcement officer in North Ossetia, each conversation was preceded by a 'call to the boss', to co-ordinate with him the interview. When I asked why such co-ordination was necessary, I often heard “We, the Ossetians, are a very law abiding nation, you know.”

According to the experts in the Office of the Special Representative of the Russian Federation in the conflict zone, the return of Ingush to North Ossetia was not a priority of the republican administration in the last 13 years. Eventually the hypothesis of the local actors being the major stake-holders in the process of return is disqualified. The main stakeholders are the republican administrations, who during the last 13 years have ensured that ideologically relevant people occupy the positions in the local administrations and implement their policy of restraint.

Notwithstanding numerous declarations which obliged both parties to curb public nationalistic outbursts, in Ossetia or Ingushetia no one has been punished according to law for incitement of nationalistic hatred. Thus, in the central part of the village Chermen, which is otherwise an open settlement there lives a Second World War Veteran, an Ossetian Dudiev. Every time the Ingush IDPs from Chermen attempt to move into their villages, Dudiev makes a scandal, shouts and declares that until he is alive no single Ingush will live in Chermen. Due to him, the central part of Chermen remains a closed neighbourhood and its residents are IDPs in Ingushetia (including Ingush Second World War veterans Saadu Arsamakov who continues to live in miserable conditions in the wagons of Majski IDP camp).

The issue of why moral-psychological climate has been ripe in the villages of Chermen, Kartsa, Kurtat, and Dongaron and not ripe in Yuzhny or Ir located 10-15 kilometres from there was a major puzzle of this research. Trying to compare the intensity of fire and numbers of fatalities did not prove to be giving an answer to it either. The most intense fighting in 1992 was in Chermen and Kartsa; both villages were the first ones to be open for return. Mass protests

against Ingush return died out in these areas.

The key to this puzzle I found quite unexpectedly from an interview with the Ossetian member of local administration in Prigorodny district, whose name I do not quote here: “I will tell you how these protests ‘spontaneously’ took place. I remember one day we receive a notification from the Office of Special Representative that a group of Ingush returnees is supposed to arrive on a certain day. Mikhail Gioev, the head of Styr-Nykhas arrives with his men and tells the administration that I have to organise a mass protest: “lie on the ground, scream, and throw stones! We cannot let them settle here’. Gioev is an older man and I respect him, so I said ‘I will be first to be there, but are you coming as well? Your authority and support will be needed by people. No he said, we have to stay behind, we can’t appear there when they come. This is how it happened”. The hypothesis that the spontaneous protests were organised by the authorities through local GONGOs I heard from other Ossetian respondents. Here it was for the first time confirmed by a local politician.

All-Ossetian Peoples Movement “Styr-Nykhas” (also known as Alanty-Nykhas) is a North Ossetian GONGO, with mass membership in North and South Ossetia. Its well-furnished headquarters in Vladikavkaz are located in the building of the Ministry of social security, at Dzerzhinskogo street, 42. According to Sergey D’yakonov, the permanent employers of the organisation receive salary from the ministry. Styr-Nykhas has representatives in every village and municipal district. Thus, behind the anti-Ingush protests have been not local communities with local resources, but Ossetian executives acting with the indulgence or consent of the Federal agencies.

At the same time the official thesis that the local level is being the main impediment in the process of return, is used as assumption for developing conflict-resolution strategy.

Local informal institutions of self-government are being actively involved by the Ossetian authorities in their peacemaking efforts. Usually before a group of Ingush is to be moved to Prigorodny District the representatives of local administrations invite the Ossetian and Ingush Elders and offer them to deliberate on the situation. Usually such events take up a confrontational turn, the Ossetian Elders demands apologies for 1992, eventually an verbal abuse is breaking out, after which the head of local administration announces that moral-psychological climate for the return of the Ingush is not ripe and the meeting ends with that.

The scenario is the same at most of such peacemaking meetings. Such methodology of peacemaking efforts seems counter-productive. The main assumption of the discussion on the Ossetian side is that the Ingush have to earn the possibility to return, that time has to pass and wounds to heal. This approach produces an effect opposite to the desired: it stimulates hostility and frustration rather than transforms it.

Moreover, the structure of such a peacemaking effort is asymmetric. The Ingush Elders have a significant weight in their society while the Ossetia Elders do not. The negotiations of party’s unequal in their status will not bring a desirable effect.

Apart from local administrations and informal self-government, there are other stake-holders on both sides, who influence the process of conflict transformation. On the Ossetian side these are informal armed formations by 2004 partly dissolved and disarmed, partly restructured as the ministry of internal affairs units.

On the Ingush side, especially recently, there emerge radical Islamist networks, whose aim is not the return of Ingush to Prigorodny District, but destabilization of the situation in the North

Caucasus. Peacemaking efforts in the region cannot be successful without preventive measures which would countervail the recruitment of young people into such groups. This can be done by solving the problem of protracted displacement and eliminating discrimination on ethnic grounds.

4. Towards Lasting Peace and Sustainable Return: Evaluating the Options

4.1. International Normative Framework for Peace building and Sustainable Return of IDPs

Ethnic conflicts cannot be resolved overnight – along with devastated towns and villages they leave deep scars in the people's souls. Overcoming ethnic hostilities might take years and even decades. The case of Ingush - Ossetian conflict is instructive in many respects: in certain aspects it is a success story, and the experience gained from this situation can be useful for peacemakers working in other war-torn regions. Nonetheless, generally speaking conflict resolution did not create conditions for lasting peace and sustainable return.

According to UNHCR, *peace building* is «the process whereby national protection and the rule of law are re-established», i.e. social and political violence is gradually eliminated, effective judicial procedures are established, pluralistic forms of government are introduced, and equitable distribution of resources ensured (in Chimni: 198). To resolve a conflict is to transform a society «with high level of social conflict, violence, human rights abuse and large-scale population displacement» towards stability and reintegration (Crisp: 1998:2).

UNHCR defines *sustainable return* as a situation which assures returnees physical and material security and consolidates a constructive relationship between returnees, civil society and the state (in Chimni: 200). Sustainable return is possible as a result of elimination of causes, which brought about forced displacement and is an important ingredient of lasting peace.

According to Fransis Deng, the High Commissioner for Internally Displaced and author of the «Guiding Principles», peace building and solution of displacement problems cannot be efficient unless a comprehensive approach is adopted, based on four pillars: adequate humanitarian relief to victims, protection, political and economic solutions (Cohen, Deng: 240)

The bulk of international regulations, principles and peace treaties outlined the following steps towards achievement of the above mentioned pillars:

1. Adequate Humanitarian Aid to IDPs

Governments and non-state actors provide humanitarian assistance needed for survival of IDPs, such as food, water, medical care. In early 1990 UN's Administrative Coordination Committee developed a conceptual framework which aimed to provide for the basic needs of IDPs and at the same time prevent dependency and loss of working skills by the recipient population. Programs integrating relief aid with development, making IDPs active participants rather than passive recipients of aid have been widely implemented by international organizations, such as UNHCR, UNDP, ICRC, WHO, WFP.

2. Protection

Under international humanitarian law protection involves ensuring physical safety and human rights and dignity. Both Geneva Conventions and Protocol II stipulate protection to the civilian populations in armed conflicts. Protection is a prerequisite for efficient relief assistance and return. Return without due protection is prone to re-escalation of conflict and new displacement; relief aid without protections turns IDPs into “well-fed dead”. Presently, protection of internally displaced persons is thought to be the responsibility of the state and the international arrangements to increase protection are prescriptive in character. The primary international agencies which perform protection of IDPs are UNHCR and UNICEF (for children and women), whose methodology in most cases is “protection through presence”. As has been repeatedly noted by scholars and practitioners, unlike refugees, who are protected by substantial body of binding legal acts, a normative framework for protection of IDPs who differ from refugees by the mere fact of their not having crossed the national borders, contains significant gaps (Cohen, Deng). International organizations, UN General Assembly and Commission on Human Rights urged for creation of a consolidated document which would enhance protection for internally displaced persons, which was developed under direction of the representative of the secretary general. “The Guiding Principles” is a non-binding normative framework which serves as a standard for monitoring the treatment of the internally displaced.

Among practical measures usually recommended for ensuring security is the disarmament and reintegration of combatants. The UN Security Council has recognized that without effective ***disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants*** any peace enterprise can end in a failure¹⁴. It suggested that income-generation programmes should be devised for the former combatants to return to peaceful life. ***Creation of ethnically neutral (or ethnically balanced) security forces***, respectful of human rights is also seen as an important factor contributing to sustainable conflict resolution.

3. Political Solutions

Lasting peace is not possible unless deep underlying causes of the conflict are being properly addressed and political agreement is reached by the antagonists. In the absence of a political resolution the state or international institutions cannot prevent future displacement and recurrent conflict. While territorial disputes and identity conflict are hard to resolve, there are other steps which can be undertaken in order to stabilize situation before political negotiations take place.

Good governance is named among primary goals in post-conflict environment. Good governance stipulates installing effective institutions, capable of regulating relations among diverse racial, ethnic, cultural and religious groups, ensuring participatory democracy and respect of fundamental rights (Cohen, Deng: 244). Most ethnic conflicts are a result of inequitable and discriminatory governance, and although democracy is a rule of majority, minority rights have to be respected and minority voices channelled through institutions of representative democracy. In 1992 the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, or Linguistic Minorities. Similar treaties have been ratified by the members of the Council of Europe and OSCE. The UN Sub-Commission for Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities proposed the national governments to train mediators to help them respond to conflicts involving national, ethnic religious and linguistic groups.

¹⁴ UN Secretary General Report of the Secretary General on the Work of Organizations. 55th session Supp.no1 A/55/1 200 para 72

Efficient, non-discriminatory judiciary is seen as a crucial step towards conflict resolution and return of forced migrants, which guarantees redress of violations and discrimination and will gradually eliminate the conditions which caused displacement and allow for sustainable return. Installing efficient judiciary is part of the political resolution of conflict.

Housing and property restitution has been seen as major components of post-conflict reconstruction which fall in the domain of political issues (Cohen, Deng, Chimni, Fagen, Williams:2003: 267). In most conflicts property disputes are a major impediment to return of forced migrants; once IDPs depart, their flats and houses are occupied by other people. A coherent strategy for restitution of property, based on strict enforcement of property legislation is a major prerequisite for conflict resolution and sustainable return of dislocated populations.

In August 1998 the UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities adopted a Resolution 1998/26 on “Housing and Property Restitution in the Context of the Return of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons”, which stated that “right of refugees and internally displaced persons to return freely to their homes and places of habitual residence in safety and security forms an indispensable element of national reconciliation and reconstruction and that the recognition of such right should be included within peace agreements ending armed conflicts.¹⁵” The resolution urged the states to develop necessary mechanisms for resolving housing and property disputes in post-conflict societies.

Thus, in the Bosnian case, the Dayton Accords established the Commission on Real Property Claims of Refugees and Displaced Persons, moreover, a Property Law Reform was prepared, which obliged all 140 municipalities in the country to process claims on restitution of property and end illegal occupancy through evictions. At the same time, the legislation permitted the municipalities to declare the property not claimed within a specified period of time abandoned and allocate it to new inhabitants (Fagen: 239).

Banning nationalists from the public space as well as ***strict punishment according to law of those who commit acts of harassment, prosecution or discrimination especially on account of ethnic origin, religious belief or political opinion*** is another vital function of post-conflict executives and judiciary, reflected in peace studies literature and all peace plans and the Guiding Principles.

4. Economic solutions

In February 2001 UN Security Council issued a presidential statement, which determined that “the quest for peace requires a comprehensive concentrated and determined approach that addresses the root causes of conflicts, including their economic and social dimensions.” Lasting peace and sustainable return requires short and long term actions “fostering sustainable institutions and processes in areas such as sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and inequalities” noted the presidential statement (in Chimni: 213). Development and income generating programs, which would allow IDPs to retain their working skills and returnees to successfully re-integrate and post-conflict communities eventually achieve economic recovery and growth.

4.2. Evaluating the Current Policy on Conflict Resolution, Return and Reintegration

The interviews with ethnologists, public figures and policy-makers from Ingushetia and North

¹⁵ Economic and Social Council, Housing and Property Restitution in the Context of Return of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, Sub-Commission Resolution 26 E/CN.4/Sub.2/Res/1998/26 August 26 1998.

Ossetia carried out in May-September 2005 revealed full consensus of all major experts in the field in their evaluation of the current state of the Ingush-Ossetian conflict as unresolved. “The conflict has not been resolved and the situation will remain as it is for a long time. None of the sides worked for authentic conflict transformation”, - said Dr. Alexander Dzadziev of the North Ossetian Institute for Humanitarian Research in Vladikavkaz.

“The conflict is not resolved, it is frozen, the level of hostility remains very high, the mutually excluding positions are there”, - explained Dr. Arthur Tsutsiev of the same Institute. “This conflict has not reached positive resolution because the concluded agreements have not been implemented. The executives ignore the agreements reached between the parties. ”, - said Dr. Leila Arapkhanova of the history department at Ingush State University.

At the same time, quite impressive positive changes have been on the way – thousands of Ingush IDPs have *returned* to 13 villages of the Republic North-Ossetia-Alania. According to the Country-Wide Census of the Population in 2002, 21, 442 citizens who identified themselves as ‘Ingush’ reside on the territory of Republic North Ossetia-Alania. According to the Office of the Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the area of the Ingush-Ossetian conflict, *physical protection* of returnees has been significantly improving in the recent years. Indeed, according to Office, the numbers of crimes committed on the basis of ethnic hatred have stunningly reduced in the recent years – in 1999 there were 68 of such crimes registered by the law enforcement agencies of both republics; in 2000-19, in 2001 –19, in 2002-9, in 2003- 0. The state policy satisfactorily managed *disarmament and demobilization former combatants*. The strategy of their *reintegration* into law enforcement agencies arises many doubts. The infrastructure, medical and educational facilities have been restored and in some villages Ingush and Ossetian neighbors visit each other for funerals and weddings, just as 13 years ago. *Restitution of property* has been on the way, although after 13 years a significant amount of property of IDPs is still illegally occupied. The Ossetian *judiciary* played a major role in the process of restitution: courts did pass ethnically neutral decisions in favor of the IDPs.

At the same time, thousands IDPs still remain in Ingushetia in inhuman conditions without *humanitarian aid* from the state and humanitarian NGOs. The federal authorities did not assume responsibility for the internally displaced in Ingushetia, who in the last 13 years of living in substandard conditions and have turned into an underprivileged and impoverished segment of Ingush society, which increased the frustration of the Ingush population at large.

The level of hostilities between the two ethnic groups remains very high and Ingush returnees experience systematic discrimination in North Ossetia: their access to jobs, education and healthcare is seriously limited. In a mini-calendar of 2005 published by the Ministry for Nationalities of North Ossetia dedicated to multicultural Ossetia and the second largest ethnic group in the republic – the Ingush are missing. The calendar entitled “*In Ossetia – As A Unified Family*” mentions dozens of nationalities, including 610 avars, 232 poles, 114 turkmens, but totally ignores the 21 thousand Ingush.

The primary reason for this is lack of *political solutions* to the conflict. In the 13 years since the events of October-November 1992 the federal center did not attempt at addressing the underlying political causes to conflict - the territorial dispute. The policy of the federal center towards resolving the conflict was to focus on ‘liquidating the consequences’, i.e. rehabilitating the infrastructure and housing and returning the IDPs. Politically, the federal center preserved the post-conflict status quo, which was fully in favor of the Ossetian side. The fact that this status quo was achieved with the military assistance of the federal army makes the situation look even more unfair in the eyes of the Ingush community.

Moreover, the federal policy did not spare enough effort at ensuring *good governance* and political representation of Ingush. The fact that Ingush returnees have no representation in state institutions is a serious obstacle to re-integration of returnees. *Fighting discrimination* against returnees has been very inefficient in North Ossetia. The returnees are again, as in the post-deportation times treated as pardoned, but not forgiven, which certainly is extremely dangerous for the stability and social peace. Breach of agreements and non-compliance with regulations from the federal center by the Ossetian side, obstacles created to IDPs upon return were too often ignored by the federal center.

Interestingly, Kremlin especially during the Presidency of Putin, which is so conscious of subordination, centralization, and state integrity, continues to treat the two peoples not as representatives of the same nation – the Russians, but almost as two independent nations, one of which is friendly to Russia and the other is not. The division between ‘reliable’ and ‘unreliable’ people persists, and nationality policy within the state resembles international relations with allies and antagonists rather than the relations of the federal center with its regions.

Moreover, the region, overwhelmed with refugees and returnees from two conflicts, has not seen any economic solutions for development and economic revival. Development projects aimed at reduction of unemployment and creating conditions for common occupancy for the Ingush and the Ossetian working force, would have been a strong step towards conflict transformation. With the political will of Moscow decision – makers Ingush-Ossetian conflict could have become an unprecedented example of a resolved ethnic war.

4.3. Policy Options: Restricting Return and Creating Enclaves or Encouraging Return to Places of Origin?

The tragedy of Beslan was a severe test both for the two peoples and state policy towards conflict resolution and return. Although as has been previously mentioned hostage-taking in Beslan had nothing to do with the Ingush-Ossetian territorial dispute, the link between two has been consistently constructed in the regional press.

The manipulation has been successful, the return was terminated for 8 months, and, according to the deputy-minister for Nationalities of Republic Ingushetia, Kazbek Sultygov, the issue of opening new settlements for Ingush return has since then been seldom discussed.

The new plan, endorsed by the North Ossetian authorities, is to create a new settlement Novyy in the wasteland at the border of Ingushetia and North Ossetia on the Ossetian side but in close proximity of the Ingush largest town of Nazran, and resettle the remaining Ingush IDPs there. The federal center has allocated 100 mln. Rubles from the federal budget to build gas, electricity facilities for the area of 206 hectares. Originally it was planned that the IDPs who voluntarily refuse to return to their places of origin will be allocated pieces of land and paid compensations for the destroyed housing in order to have funds for building new housing in Novyy. This plan did not work out, since by the end of 2005 150 hectares of the allocated land have been distributed to Ingush citizens, but mostly not IDPs and reportedly for significant bribes allegedly to the head of administration Pavel Tedeev. A criminal case into the economic activities of Tedeev’s administration was instigated, Tedeev himself voluntarily resigned in early 2006, but the land had already been distributed to people other than IDPs.

According to Sultygov, the current plan is to close major IDPs settlements and move people to the remaining land slots and the ones adjacent to them (which will not have gas or electricity). Thus, the IDPs will not return to the places of their origin, but will be settled in an enclave-like fashion at the border with Ingushetia.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the proposed plan. Creating ethnic enclaves seems to temporarily solve the problem of security, which after Beslan has been again extremely vulnerable for the Ingush residents in Prigorodny district. In the long term this advantage seems to be rather questionable.

As I have argued in the previous sections, from the point of view of conflict transformation the most conflict prone solutions have so far been the villages where Ingush and Ossetian communities form ethnic enclaves. These settlements represent a conglomerate of insular districts, where ethnic communication is virtually nil, and hostilities remain high. The most favorable ethnic climate is where Ingush have returned to the places of origins and the two ethnic groups live in a dispersed manner, in the same street both Ingush and the Ossetian families. Schools of mixed education are a crucial institution for overcoming hostilities and preventing the socialization of new generations into the conflict.

Creating a patchwork of ethnic enclaves would institutionalize cleavage, perpetuate the conflict, and increase the frustrations of the Ingush population, who will take this solution as total a defeat for their cause. Not only will they lose the Prigorodny district, which “The Law on Rehabilitation of the Repressed Peoples” gives them the right to, but will see that the ethnic cleansing which happened in 1992 with support of the federal army as having permanent consequences, they will have been cleansed out of the area for good. This new grievance will be another blow on the legitimacy of the federal center, confirm the suspicion of the Ingush population that they are still being treated as ‘unreliable peoples’ and in the unstable conditions of the North Caucasus will provide fruitful soil for propagandists of combatant activity and terrorism.

5. Peace Plan and Recommendations

On the basis of arguments presented in this research I propose the following strategies for the government, national and international decision makers:

To all parties concerned:

1. To acknowledge the importance of resolving the Ingush-Ossetian conflict, which remains a strong destabilizing factor in the North Caucasian Region, threatens with recurrent armed clashes and creates conditions conducive for radicalization of youth.
2. To launch programs aimed at lasting peace and sustainable return of Ingush IDPs to Prigorodny District

To the federal policy-makers:

1. To look for political solutions of the Ingush-Ossetian conflict

I suggest one possible solution to the territorial dispute:

- Prigorodny District remains part of North Ossetia;
- All IDPs who wish to return are unconditionally returned to the exact places of their original residence. Those do not wish to return receive full compensation for their lost housing and land;

- Consociational system of local government is created in Prigorodny District, District Council uniting deputies from Ingush and Ossetian communities who represent proportionally their populations, has wide autonomy and sufficient budget from local taxes for its needs. The District Council elects the head of district administration on the basis of rotation, from representatives of Ingush and Ossetian nationalities. In the villages of mixed settlement create village councils.
- Ingush get due representation in the state institutions of North Ossetia, including government, parliament, ministries and law enforcement.
- Former combatants do not occupy leadership posts in the local government.
- Amendments are made to the “Law on Rehabilitation of the Repressed Peoples”, which change ‘territorial rehabilitation’ for ‘property rehabilitation’ and prescribes a mechanism of return or compensation for property lost as a result of Stalinist repressions. The law is implemented in Prigorodny District.
- Enlightening programs in the Ossetian media are carried out dedicated to crimes against humanity committed by Stalinism; Stalin’s statues and portraits are banned from the public space.
- A unified federal agency for resolution of Ingush-Ossetian conflict is re-established, which continues to carry out return and strictly monitors the concluded agreements;
 1. To allow for honest investigation of the tragedy of Beslan and strictly punish according to law those whose actions allowed to the tragedy to take place. To make public the demands of terrorists which they delivered to the headquarters through Ruslan Aushev.
 2. To define the borders of “water protection zone” as soon as possible on the basis of expert, politically neutral opinion and to start the process of return to this area or develop a compensation scheme for those houses, which fall into the water protection zone.
 3. To speed up resolution of property dispute concerning illegally captures flats in Vladikavkaz, Oktyabr’skoje, Yuzhny, and Ir.
 4. To stop the practice of separate education in schools of Prigorodny district.
 5. To stop keeping Ingush prisoners charged with ‘terrorism’ in Vladikavkaz and prosecute instances of illegal treatment of Ingush prisoners in preliminary detainment in North Ossetia.
 6. To transfer the tax inspection for Prigorodny district from Beslan back to the administrative center of Prigorodny District Oktyab’rskoye
 7. To ban discriminatory practices in North Ossetian institutions, including banks, where Ingush residents have to receive money transfers in separate banks.
 8. To provide humanitarian assistance to Ingush IDPs remaining in temporary residence facilities in Ingushetia: to give these facilities official status of temporary residence centers, provide assistance according to the usual scheme practiced by the Ministry of Emergency of the Russian Federation and the Migration Services.
 9. To launch income-generating programs, especially encouraging enterprises with ethnically mixed personnel.

10. To develop programs aimed at youth vocational training and employment in Ingushetia and North Ossetia.
11. To create recreation centers for youth, including sport gyms in Prigorodny District.
12. To encourage exchange in the spheres of culture, sport, education, and economy between the two republics.

To humanitarian and development organizations

1. To urgently provide medical and humanitarian assistance to IDPs remaining in Prigorodny district and Refugees from North Ossetia and Inner Regions of Georgia in Prigorodny District of North Ossetia.
2. To launch development and income generating programs in Prigorodny district, targeting Ingush, Ossetian and North Ossetian communities. Specifically, programs aimed at creating small collective enterprises, which would involve Ingush and Ossetian employees (kibbutz-like small collective farming, fish farming, and bird factories)
3. To support Caucasus-wide higher educational programs for students from conflict zones, including creation of western-type liberal university (possibly located in Georgia).
4. To launch programs counting youth idleness in Prigorodny District.
5. To continue providing medical and psychosocial help to victims of Beslan tragedy

To human rights and peacemaking organizations

1. To monitor situation with human rights and discrimination in Prigorodny District
2. To assist victims of rights abuse in finding redress through judicial institutions
3. To launch programs aimed at conflict transformation and reconciliation, especially targeting youth. Methodology of peacemaking-through activity will be most successful.
4. To launch human rights education programs aimed to promote tolerance, civic and democratic culture targeting media reporters, judges and law enforcement officers from Prigorodny District, from Ingushetia and Ossetia.