

Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons -

International Standards

The [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement \(E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2\)](#) ([other languages](#)) restate and compile human rights and humanitarian law relevant to internally displaced persons.

Background to the Guiding Principles

In 1993, at the request of the Commission on Human Rights, prior Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons Francis M. Deng prepared his first study ([E/CN.4/1993/35 Annex](#)) of international standards relevant to internally displaced persons (IDPs). In a more comprehensive two-volume study presented in 1996 ([E/CN.4/1996/52/Add.2](#)) and 1998 ([E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.1](#)), Representative Deng concluded that existing law provided broad protection for the rights of internally displaced persons, but that there were also certain gray areas and gaps in coverage.

With the encouragement of the Commission of Human Rights (E/CN.4/RES/1996/52, para. 9) and the General Assembly, Representative Deng proceeded to develop a document setting out the relevant law and addressing the gray areas and gaps, with the help of a team of international legal scholars chaired by Mr. Walter Kälin (now Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons). The resulting [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement \(E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2\)](#) were presented to the Commission on Human Rights in 1998.

The Commission has expressed its appreciation of the Guiding Principles as an important tool for dealing with internal displacement, and has welcomed the fact that an increasing number of States, United Nations agencies and regional and non-governmental organizations are applying them as a standard (E/CN.4/RES/2004/55, operative paragraph 6).

A [handbook*](#) and [legal annotations*](#) (the latter authored by Mr. Kälin) were subsequently developed to make the Guiding Principles more accessible.