

Welcome to the **Fall 2016 Speaker Series** of the  
**Indian Ocean World Centre**

Speaker: **Prof. Jon Unruh**  
Department of Geography, McGill University  
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5:45 pm Peterson Hall Rm 116

**Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Restitution in ISIL  
Liberated Areas of Northern Iraq: UN and Iraqi  
Government Cooperation**



As Iraqi and supporting forces seek to retake areas controlled by ISIL in northern Iraq, the return of approximately three million internally displaced persons (IDPs) to their lands and properties will constitute a significant peacebuilding and recovery problem. ISIL sold properties that were confiscated or abandoned in order to fund its civilian and military engagements. As a result, returning IDPs will find a great deal of HLP to be occupied by others, which together with widespread damage and destruction will necessitate returnees seeking permanent or temporary residence elsewhere, usually on someone else's property, thereby compounding the difficulty of overall return. Effective return and restitution will be further complicated by a high degree of informal property rights prior to dislocation, the presence of land mines, destruction of property records, continued sales of abandoned and confiscated HLP, the creation of a new land and property rights system under ISIL, and a lack of institutions able to support return. With the default reaction of returnees to finding others in their HLP being to rely on armed kin, the Iraqi government and the UN-International Organization for Migration are working to put together a state sponsored HLP restitution programme tailored to the specific problems of ISIL liberated areas. This presentation reports on the author's experience assisting this effort, focusing in particular the process of restitution programming, and options for remedies.



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