and procedures or introducing obstacles to arrival; whether to go beyond the precedents; whether to support international humanitarian relief; whether to promote solutions, and which ones; whether to try to deal with causes.[10]

Second, a deeper political understanding will benefit many of the actors involved in trying to redress the security problems of refugees and others living in RPAs. Knowledge of the political agendas and backgrounds of the actors responsible for security threats is surely a first step in working towards solutions. For example, in the northwestern Ugandan RPA bordered by Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), refugees and others face attacks by a variety of rebel groups (the Lord's Resistance Army, West Nile Bank Front, Uganda National Rescue Force, etc). Yet relatively little is known about these groups, in terms of their origins, agendas, supporters, and how they fit into the broader security and political context of the destabilized region.[11] This kind of knowledge is surely an important part of addressing the security problems.

Third, in the case of NGOs, a critique often levelled against them is that they become politicized, despite the time-honored principle of political neutrality, as observed by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Some NGOs have countered that certain conflicts in Africa require political involvement by NGOs. Whatever the truth of the matter, increased political awareness of the context in which they are working willl enable NGOs (and UNHCR) to make more informed decisions about how to proceed, and will make them less likely to be unwittingly politicized.

A deeper understanding of the politics of RPAs is warranted both for policy and political reasons, but the subject has been relatively understudied. Most research and writing on the subject has focused either on the legal and institutional responses to protection problems, mainly from the perspectives of UNHCR or the ICRC,[12] or has explored potential solutions to protection problems: 'safe areas', temporary protection, etc.[13] There is no dearth of literature on the politics of conflict and complex emergencies,

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[10] Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, "Refugee Identity and Protection's Fading Prospect," (Revised, expanded and updated version of a paper presented at the Conference on 'Refugee Rights and Realties', University of Nottingham, 30 November 1996).

[11] See Lina Payne, *Rebuilding Communities in a Refugee Settlement: A Casebook from Uganda.* (Oxfam U.K.1998) for a discussion of the Oxfam-funded Ikafe refugee settlement in northern Uganda.

[12] See for example, Krill, F, "ICRC action in aid of refugees", in *Refugees and conflict situations,* Meurant, J. (ed.), Geneva : ICRC, 1988. p. 328-350; Othman-Chande, M., "International law and armed attacks in refugee camps," *Nordic Journal of International Law ,* v. 59(2/3) 1990. pp. 153-177; Mtango, E.-E ., "Military and armed attacks on refugee camps", In *Refugees and international Relations,* Loescher, G. & Monahan, L. (eds.) Oxford University Press, 1989. pp. 87-121; Maluwa, T. "The Concept of asylum and the protection of refugees in Botswana: Some legal and political aspects," *International Journal of Refugee Law,* v. 2(4), 1990. pp. 587-610.

[13] Franco, L., "An examination of safety zones for internally displaced persons as a contribution toward prevention and solution of refugee problems," in N. Al-Naumi and R. Meese (eds), *International Legal Issues Arising under the United Nations Decade of International Law,* Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1995; Frelick, B., "Unsafe havens: reassessing security in refugee crises," *Harvard International Review,* Spring 1997; Frelick, B, 'Safe haven: safe from whom?', *World Refugee Survey 1995,* US Committee for Refugees, Washington DC, 1995; Ginifer, Jeremy. 1998. "Protecting Displaced Persons Through Disarmament," *Survival,* 40(2) Summer, pp. 161-76; Jaeger, G, 'The recent concept and policy of preventive protection', *Refugee Participation Network,* no 14, 1993; Landgren, K., "Safety zones and international protection: a dark grey area," *International Journal of Refugee Law,* vol. 7, no. 3, 1995; Clarance, W., "Open relief centres: a pragmatic approach to emergency relief and monitoring during conflict in a country of origin, *International Journal of Refugee Law,* vol. 3, no. 2, 1991.