

## Man of Peace Flies In

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Martin McGuinness has been in Baghdad promoting peace. Southern African and Northern Irish politicians and negotiators have been sharing their learning to help Sunni and Shia leaders to establish principles and mechanisms to move forward.

The presence of Martin McGuinness points to some important lessons for peace processes:

That all the key players have to be included

That there has to be a realisation among the key players that there is no military victory

That there has to be external support

That there are long transitions and complex political processes before we get some sort of stability and acceptance of the rule of law

That there is no point moralising about the 'men of violence'; there is a bigger peace picture which has to be attended to – all of this may be difficult and painful for many people. It remains to be seen whether Iraq is ready for these lessons (or whether they are even applicable). Certainly Northern Ireland politicians should feel at home in Baghdad – the Iraqi capital has become a city of concrete walls (and checkpoints).

**David Stevens**