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**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER  
FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND REPORTS OF THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH  
COMMISSIONER AND THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**Operations of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture**

**Note by the Secretary-General\***

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\* Late submission.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Submission of the report**

1. The present note was prepared in accordance with the arrangements approved by the Human Rights Council in its decision 2/102. It presents updated information on the activities of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, and in particular the recommendations adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Fund at its twenty-ninth session, held in Geneva from 13 to 17 October 2008. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights approved the recommendations on behalf of the Secretary-General. The present note will be complemented by the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Fund, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, detailing the outcomes of the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the Board of Trustees.

### **B. Mandate of the Fund**

2. The Fund receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals. In accordance with the practice established by its Board of Trustees in 1982, the Fund provides grants to non-governmental organizations that submit projects involving medical, psychological, social, financial, legal and humanitarian or other forms of assistance to torture victims and their relatives.

### **C. Board of Trustees**

3. The Secretary-General administers the Fund through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with the advice of the Board of Trustees, composed of five members acting in a personal capacity and appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard to equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with their Governments. In October 2008, the Secretary-General reappointed: Krassimir Kanev (Bulgaria), Savitri Goonesekere (Sri Lanka), Joseph Oloka-Onyango (Uganda) and Derrick Pounder (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) for a final period of three years, and appointed Mercedes Doretti (Argentina) for a three-year term, renewable once.

### **D. Admissibility criteria**

4. Project admissibility criteria are outlined in the guidelines of the Fund. They require a project to be presented by a non-governmental organization. The beneficiaries must be direct victims of torture and/or direct family members. Priority is given to projects providing direct assistance to torture victims, which could consist in medical or psychological assistance, help with social or financial reintegration through vocational training for victims, legal assistance for victims or members of their families seeking redress or for processing asylum-seekers' claims. Depending on the funds available, the Fund may finance projects to organize training programmes, seminars or conferences to allow health-care professionals or other service providers to exchange best practices. However, grant requests for projects involving investigation, research, studies, publications or similar activities are not admissible. The Fund can provide emergency assistance to individuals in countries where no project is receiving support. This type of request is examined according to a specific procedure outlined in the guidelines.

## II. TWENTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### A. Financial situation of the Fund

5. The table below shows the contributions received between 1 January and 3 December 2008, including contributions received since the last report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Fund (A/63/220). It should be noted that only contributions received up to 12 October 2008 were allocated to grants recommended by the Board at its twenty-ninth session.

#### Contributions and pledges received from 1 January to 3 December 2008

Donors	Amount (in United States dollars)	Date of receipt
Algeria	5 000.00	10 January 2008
Andorra	32 038.60	20 November 2008
Argentina	3 000.00	22 July 2008
Belgium	151 284.24	31 March 2008
	129 364.81	17 November 2008
Canada	60 036.02	2 January 2008
Chile	15 000.00	14 July 2008
Czech Republic	16 288.92	21 August 2008
Denmark	423 433.76	9 June 2008
Finland	227 060.65	3 June 2008
France	302 571.86	7 March 2008
Germany	788 643.53	18 April 2008
Holy See	1 000.00	21 February 2008
Hungary	7 440.48	15 August 2008
Iceland	24 588.15	29 July 2008
Ireland	378 214.80	12 March 2008
Israel	2 500.00	22 January 2008
Italy	167 130.92	8 September 2008
Liechtenstein	23 923.45	20 June 2008
Luxembourg	29 585.80	11 February 2008
Malta	984.96	22 January 2008
Monaco	11 664.07	10 June 2008
Morocco	4 000.00	28 March 2008
Netherlands	1 119 970.00	14 November 2008
Norway	197 238.66	19 May 2008
Republic of Korea	70 000.00	25 November 2008
Republic of Moldova	1 000.00	15 July 2008
Saudi Arabia	25 000.00	27 May 2008
Serbia	2 500.00	24 June 2008
Slovenia	15 000.00	23 May 2008
South Africa	12 142.23	31 March 2008
Switzerland	95 238.10	13 August 2008
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2 000.00	7 January 2008

Donors	Amount (in United States dollars)	Date of receipt
Turkey	10 000.00	29 August 2008
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	99 403.58	11 March 2008
United States of America	6 943 300.00	29 September 2008
Total contributions	11 397 547.59	
Pledges		
Canada	48 504.00	22 October 2008
Spain	439 238.65	7 October 2008
Total pledges	487 742.65	

6. The amount available for distribution to projects was calculated after deducting programme support costs, operating cash reserve and expenditure for non-grant activities from the total amount of funds made available in the form of contributions received between the twenty-seventh session of the Board of Trustees, held in October 2007, and the twenty-ninth session of the Board, held in October 2008, and the operating cash reserve of the previous cycle.

7. In accordance with United Nations financial regulations, programme support costs will be charged to the Trust Fund at the rate of 13 per cent of total annual expenditure. In addition, the United Nations requires that an operating cash reserve of 15 per cent of annual estimated expenditure be maintained to cover exchange rate fluctuation, any shortfalls and to meet final expenditure, including any liquidating liabilities. The operating cash reserve will be left unallotted and carried forward from year to year, until required. Expenditure for non-grant activities include travel expenditure for Board members, expenditure for monitoring and evaluation of projects by United Nations staff and technical assistance for the further development of the grant management system.

### **B. Recommendations adopted by the Board**

8. At its twenty-ninth session, the Board of Trustees made recommendations for grants for the period from January to December 2009 for 195 projects in more than 65 countries, for a total amount of \$10,200,950, after deduction of the programme support cost and the operating cash reserve. The High Commissioner for Human Rights approved the recommendations on 27 October 2008 on behalf of the Secretary-General.

9. In spite of the limited resources available, and in accordance with recommendation 3 of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the evaluation of the Fund (E/CN.4/2005/55, para. 76), the Board continued its practice of financing training and seminars, thus allowing health professionals, social workers, lawyers and other service providers to exchange experiences and develop new strategies to address the needs of torture victims. The Board recommended an allocation of \$136,400 to nine organizations for training sessions to be organized in seven countries in 2009.

10. The Board reviewed information prepared by its secretariat concerning 225 projects, including the analysis of narrative, financial and audit reports on the use of grants paid in previous years. It considered requests for new grants amounting to \$15,265,197 for more than 197 ongoing and 28 new projects to be implemented in 2009.

11. The Board recommended that \$9,694,550 be paid in January 2009 and \$506,400 be disbursed after its thirtieth session in February 2009, upon receipt of satisfactory information by applicants. In addition, in accordance with the guidelines of the Fund, the Board decided to maintain for 2009 the remainder of the amount set aside in 2008 to finance projects, in priority regions, identified by OHCHR field presences during the intersession period.

12. Further information on the activities of the Fund, including detailed information on, inter alia, the distribution of grants by region, policy decisions, meetings of the Board with Member States and relevant actors in the field of assistance to victims of torture will be available after the thirtieth session of the Board, to be held in February 2009.

### **III. ESTIMATED NEEDS FOR 2010**

13. On the basis of the requests received for 2009, it is expected that approximately \$16 million will be requested by organizations for 2010.

### **IV. MAKING A CONTRIBUTION**

14. Contributions to the Fund should always be marked “payee: United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, account CH”. Payments may be made either by bank transfer (a) in United States dollars to the United Nations Geneva General Fund, account No. 485001802, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, International Agencies Banking, 1166, Ave. of the Americas, 17th floor, New York, NY 10036-2708, United States of America (Swift code: CHAS US 33; ABA code: 021000021); (b) in euros to the United Nations Office at Geneva, account No. 23961901, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, 125 London Wall, London EC2Y 5AJ, United Kingdom (Swift code: CHAS GB 2L, sorting code: 60-92-42, IBAN: GB25 CHAS 6092 4223 9619 01); (c) in sterling pounds to the United Nations Office at Geneva, account No. 23961903, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, 125 London Wall, London EC2Y 5AJ, United Kingdom (Swift code: CHAS GB 2L, sorting code: 60-92-42, IBAN: GB25 CHAS 6092 4223 9619 03); (d) in Swiss francs to the United Nations Geneva General Fund, account No. 240-C0590160.0, UBS, rue du Rhône 8, Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSW CH ZH 12A; IBAN: CH65 0024 0240 CO59 0160 0); (d) in other currencies to the United Nations Geneva General Fund, account No. 240-C0590160.1, UBS, rue du Rhône 8, Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSW CH ZH 12A; IBAN: CH65 0024 0240 CO59 0160 1); (e) or by cheque payable to the United Nations addressed to Trésorerie, Nations Unies, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. Donors are requested to inform the secretariat of the Fund and the Resource Mobilization Unit of the OHCHR when a payment has been made (a copy of the bank transfer order or of the cheque would be appreciated) to facilitate effective follow-up on the official recording procedure and preparation of reports of the Secretary-General.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**15. Pursuant to the calls by the General Assembly and the Board of Trustees of the Fund, donors are invited to pay their contributions to the Fund before the thirty-first session of the Board (19-23 October 2009), to enable the latter to take them into account in October 2009.**

**16. The General Assembly and the Board have also urged regular donors to increase their contributions if possible in order to provide the Board with the resources to meet the growing needs of torture victims and the members of their families.**

**17. The Board strongly encourages Governments that have not yet contributed to the Fund to do so, preferably before September 2009.**

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