

## PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION  
CONCLUDES ITS SIXTY-SEVENTH SESSION AND PAYS OUT US\$300 MILLION

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission, under the Presidency of Ambassador Christian Strohal (Austria), has today concluded its sixty-seventh session. At this session, the Council elected Austria as President, and Japan as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Governing Council. Austria and Japan replace Belgium and Indonesia, which held the presidency and vice-presidency of the Governing Council for the period 2007-2008. Costa Rica currently holds the other vice-presidency.

Representatives of Kuwait and Iraq addressed the fifteen-member Governing Council at its opening plenary meeting.

At the session, the Council considered a number of reports and information notes prepared by the secretariat on the activities of the Commission since the last session; distribution by Governments and international organisations of payments to successful claimants; the transparency of the distribution process, and the return of undistributed funds.

The Council also heard a briefing from the secretariat on the progress made to date by participating claimant Governments under the Follow-up Programme for Environmental Awards as established by decision 258 (2005). That Programme was established to monitor the implementation of approximately \$4.3 billion of environmental remediation and restoration projects being undertaken by the Governments of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia with funds awarded under the F4 category of claims to ensure financial transparency and technical reasonableness. The Governing Council recalled that decision 258 (2005) provides for the withholding of funds from environmental awards under the Follow-up Programme. While the withholding of fifteen per cent of the value of all awards subject to the Follow-up Programme is a mandatory withholding, the Council noted that there is also a discretionary withholding mechanism under decision 258 (2005) that allows the Council to determine the timing and level of withholding from those awards valued at greater than \$50 million and subject to a phasing plan requirement. In considering the progress made by participating claimant Governments under the Follow-up Programme for Environmental Awards, the Governing Council adopted decision 266 (S/AC.26/266(2009)) concerning withholdings and the administration of funds under decision 258(2005).

The Council decided to hold its next regular session from 10 to 11 November 2009.

Today, the United Nations Compensation Commission also made available a total of \$300,000,000.00 to the Government of the State of Kuwait for distribution to 10 successful claimants. Payment is being made in respect of 5 claims in category E (claims of corporations and public sector enterprises) and 5 claims in category F (claims of Governments and international organizations, including environmental claims).

The present round of payments is being made in accordance with the second phase of Governing Council decision 256 (S/AC.26/Dec.256 (2005)), which gives priority of payment to claims with outstanding amounts less than \$500 million and environmental remediation claims. With this payment, the nine claims with outstanding amounts greater than \$500 million will be paid a fixed amount of \$2 million, while the remaining claim with priority of payment will be paid up to \$282 million.

Following this round of payments, 10 claims in categories E and F remain to be paid to the Government of the State of Kuwait in future upon the availability of funds, two of which are environmental claims, and one of which is subject to decision 258. In accordance with the withholding provision of decision 258 and decision 266 (2009), a portion of one of the outstanding awards is being withheld for release at a later date.

This payment brings the overall amount of compensation made available to date by the United Nations Compensation Commission for successful claims of individuals, corporations, and Governments and international organizations to \$27,194,607,654.59.

Further information about the Commission, including the text of Governing Council decisions and reports and recommendations of the panels of Commissioners, can be found on the United Nations Compensation Commission website located at [www.uncc.ch](http://www.uncc.ch).