

24 June 1999

PRESS RELEASE FOR THE CLOSING OF THE THIRTY-SECOND
SESSION OF THE UNCC GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission concluded its thirty-second session today under the Presidency of Ambassador Hans Heinemann of the Netherlands. The delegations of Kuwait, Iraq, India (on behalf of nine claimant countries) and Bosnia and Herzegovina addressed the 15 member Governing Council at its opening plenary meeting.

The Council considered five reports and recommendations of the Panels of Commissioners. Three of the reports concerned claims filed by individuals, and a total award of US\$1,940,475,090 in respect of 68,092 successful claims was approved:

In the report on individual claims for damages up to US\$100,000 (category "C" claims), it was recommended that 67,079 claims receive compensation, in the total amount of US\$1,918,413,948. The approval of this report marked the conclusion of the review of over 1.6 million category "C" claims;

In the report on individual claims for damages above US\$100,000 (category "D"), it was recommended that 377 claims receive compensation, in the total amount of US\$19,502,642;

In the special report on individual claims for departure from Iraq or Kuwait (category "A"), it was recommended that 636 claims receive a total amount of US\$2,558,500.

The Council also considered and approved two reports and recommendations by the "E1" Panel of Commissioners concerning the second and third instalments of oil sector claims filed by corporations:

The second instalment of "E1" claims involved five claims filed on behalf of corporations by four Governments, with three claims from two Governments recommended for compensation, with a total award value of US\$2,837,091,980;

The third instalment of "E1" claims involved 14 claims filed on behalf of corporations by six Governments, with twelve claims from five Governments recommended for compensation, with a total award value of US\$26,348,087.

The Council discussed a progress report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission. The report addressed the processing and payment of claims.

The Council continued and finalized discussion on the issue of priority of payment and the payment mechanism to successful claims from individuals, corporations and Governments for the second phase of payments. The first phase of payments, with priority given to individual claimants in accordance with Governing Council decision 17, involved initial payment of US\$2,500 to each successful claimant in categories "A" and "C" and payment of the full amount to all successful claimants in category "B" (death or serious personal injury). The first phase of payments is scheduled to end in July 1999 with over US\$3 billion having been paid out to successful individual claimants.

The second phase of payments is expected to commence in August 1999. The Council decided that in accordance with its decision 17, the Commission will continue to give priority to individual claimants with claims up to US\$100,000 (categories "A" and "C") with the aim of achieving full payment of all claims in these categories by the end of 2002, while also providing meaningful compensation to individual claimants claiming over US\$100,000, corporate entities and Governments (categories "D", "E" and "F"). It was also decided that the Executive Secretary will make payments, on an instalment basis, of US\$25,000 (or the unpaid principal amount of the award if less) to each successful claimant. Once this amount has been paid, a second payment of US\$75,000 (or the unpaid principal amount of the award if less) will be made. The Council also expressed its willingness to consider at a later stage the special circumstances pertaining to successful environmental monitoring and assessment claims and, in this context, to consider addressing the level and priority of payments to be made in respect of such claims.

The Governing Council decided to hold its thirty-third session from 28-30 September 1999.

The text of all Governing Council decisions and reports and recommendations of Panels of Commissioners can be found on the UNCC website located at <http://www.uncc.ch>
