

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION
HAS CONCLUDED ITS FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission, under the Presidency of Ambassador Tassos Kriekoukis (Greece), has concluded its fifty-fifth session today and approved awards of US\$265,472,128.47 for compensation. Representatives of Kuwait and Iraq addressed the fifteen-member Governing Council at its opening plenary meeting.

The Council approved five reports and recommendations of the panels of Commissioners concerning claims in category "A" (claims of individuals for departure from Kuwait or Iraq), category "C" (claims of individuals for losses up to US\$100,000), category "D" (claims of individuals for losses over \$100,000) and category "E" (claims of corporations, other private legal entities and public sector enterprises).

The special instalment of deceased detainee claims filed pursuant to Governing Council decision 12 involved 605 category "D" deceased detainee claims and two category "D" claims relating to personal injuries suffered as a result of landmine explosions. Of these claims, 604 were approved by the Council for compensation, with a total award value of US\$161,140,801.39. The report also included one remaining "F3" claim, for which no compensation was awarded.

The late-filed category "A" and category "C" claims programme involved 3,785 claims filed on behalf of individuals by four Governments. Of these, 3,195 category "A" claims, with a total award value of US\$22,327,500.00 and 461 category "C" claims, with a total award value of US\$7,752,162.04, were approved by the Council.

The fourth instalment of Palestinian late claims in category "C" involved 19,364 claims filed by the Palestinian Authority. Of these, the Panel of Commissioners determined that 4,724 claims satisfied the threshold eligibility requirement for review, namely whether the claimants had a full and effective opportunity to file their claim, as set out by the Governing Council. Of these, 4,417 claims were approved by the Council for compensation with a total award value of US\$70,221,890.04.

The thirtieth instalment of “E4” claims involved “stand alone” claims filed by the Palestinian Authority on behalf of individuals seeking compensation, pursuant to decision 123, for direct losses sustained by 20 Kuwaiti companies. Of these, 10 claims were approved by the Council for compensation, with a total award value of US\$3,688,055. The report also involved one “E2” non-Kuwaiti corporate claim for which no compensation was awarded.

The Governing Council also approved the “Fourth special report and recommendations made by the merged ‘E4’ panel of Commissioners concerning overlapping claims”, prepared pursuant to its decision 123, involving adjustments to four claims with a net increase in the recommended amount of US\$341,720.

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

The Council also discussed the report of the Executive Secretary on the distribution by Governments and international organizations of payments to successful claimants, the transparency of the distribution process, and the return of undistributed funds.

The Council concluded its discussion on the issue of payment of interest to successful claimants and decided that no awards of interest will be paid.

The Council decided to hold its next regular session from 28 to 30 June 2005.

To date, the Commission has awarded compensation of approximately US\$52.1 billion, including the awards approved at the fifty-fifth session, out of which approximately US\$19 billion has been made available to Governments and international organizations for distribution to successful claimants in all categories of claims. In addition, pursuant to Governing Council decision 227, up to US\$200 million will be made available for distribution to successful claimants in April 2005.

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.