

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION
HAS CONCLUDED ITS SIXTY-THIRD SESSION

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission, under the Presidency of Ambassador Alex Van Meeuwen (Belgium), has today concluded its sixty-third session. Representatives of Kuwait, Bangladesh, India and Jordan addressed the fifteen-member Governing Council at its opening plenary meeting and Iraq addressed the Governing Council at its closing plenary meeting.

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.

During the session, the Council also heard a briefing from the secretariat on the status of the implementation of the follow-up programme to monitor the technical and financial aspects of the environmental remediation projects approved by the Council at its fifty-eighth session in December 2005. The Council took note of the expert candidates that have been assembled by Kuwait to serve on its Independent Reviewer team under the Guidelines for the follow-up programme annexed to decision 258 (S/AC.26/Dec.258 (2005)).

The session just concluded was the last session under the present format of the UNCC. As of 1 July 2007, the UNCC secretariat will be downsized to a residual format in line with the decision taken by the Governing Council at its fifty-eighth session in December 2005 to maintain the Compensation Fund under the continuing oversight of the Governing Council, supported by a small secretariat, while keeping open the longer-term option of transferring responsibility for continuing payments to the Government of Iraq under the supervision of the Security Council. The Commission will focus its work on payments of awards to claimants and the Follow-up Programme to monitor the technical and financial aspects of the environmental remediation projects approved by the Council at its fifty-eighth session in December 2005. The transition to a small residual secretariat will also mark the departure of the Executive Secretary of the UNCC, Mr. Rolf Knutsson, as well as a number of staff of this Commission.

The Council decided to hold its next regular session on 30-31 October 2007.

The next payment to successful claimants pursuant to decision 256 is scheduled to be made in July 2007. There are now 39 approved claims (in categories E and F), with a total outstanding balance of approximately US\$30.3 billion, that have not been paid in full. The overall amount of compensation made available to date by the United Nations Compensation Commission is approximately US\$22.1 billion.

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.