

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION
CONCLUDES ITS SEVENTIETH SESSION

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission, under the Presidency of Ambassador Christian Strohal (Austria), has today concluded its seventieth session.

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

The Council also considered a report from the Executive Head of the UNCC Secretariat on the activities of the Commission since the last session; and a report on 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 Governments under the Follow-up Programme for Environmental Awards as established by decision 258 (2005). The 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.

At present, \$21.7 billion remains owing to Kuwait for distribution to nine successful claimants. Claims are paid with funds drawn from the United Nations Compensation Fund, which currently receives 5 per cent of the proceeds generated by the export sales of Iraqi petroleum and petroleum products. The Council encouraged the Governments of Iraq and Kuwait to resume their consultations as soon as possible on this outstanding balance, under the auspices of the UNCC. The Council also indicated its readiness to assist the Governments in moving the consultations forward.

The Council decided to hold its next regular session from 5 to 7 April 2011.

The session just concluded was the last session for the delegations of Austria (President), Japan (Vice-President), Mexico, Turkey and Uganda, whose terms of office end on 31 December 2010. As of 1 January 2011, the new members of the Security Council, Columbia, Germany, India, Portugal and South Africa, will be joining the Governing Council for two-year terms.

Further information about the Commission, including the text of Governing Council decisions, can be found on the United Nations Compensation Commission website located at www.uncc.ch.