

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UNITED NATIONS COMPENSATION COMMISSION
CONCLUDES ITS SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION

The Governing Council of the United Nations Compensation Commission, under the Presidency of Australia, has today concluded its seventy-sixth session held in Geneva from 19 to 21 November 2013.

Delegations from Iraq, including the Head and members of Iraq's Committee of Financial Experts, Jordan and Kuwait addressed the fifteen-member Governing Council at its opening plenary meeting.

With regard to the UNCC Follow-up Programme for Environmental Awards, the Governing Council adopted decision 271 (S/AC.26/Dec.271 (2013)) and the President of the Governing Council issued the following statement:

“It is recalled that following a request from the Government of Iraq and the positive response from the participating governments of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the State of Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the UNCC Governing Council established the UNCC Follow-up Programme for Environmental Awards under decision 258 (2005). The mandate of the Programme was to ensure that \$4.3 billion in funds awarded for certain environmental remediation and restoration projects are spent in a transparent and appropriate manner on implementing those projects.

At this, the seventy-sixth session, by adopting Decision 271, the Governing Council declared the Programme mandate fulfilled in the cases of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the State of Kuwait, upon the receipt of signed assurances from their respective Governments. At its seventy-fifth session, the Governing Council adopted Decision 270 declaring the Programme mandate fulfilled in the case of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, upon the receipt of signed assurances, and deciding that the Programme is considered closed in respect of the Islamic Republic of Iran. With the adoption of these two decisions, subject to the receipt of assurances, the entire mandate under this \$4.3 billion environmental programme has now been fulfilled. The environmental damage sustained as a result of Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990-91 was extraordinary in scale and the awarding of compensation for post-conflict environmental reparations is unprecedented. There is still much work to be done by the Governments of Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia as they move forward with the implementation of their complex and challenging environmental remediation and restoration projects. The Governing Council invites them to share their experiences, best practices and lessons learned, both regionally and with the international community, to ensure a lasting legacy for policymakers, environmentalists and the general public in the years to come.

While the environmental programme mandate has been fulfilled, the UNCC continues to focus on payment of compensation awards and ensuring that the \$8.9 billion that remains outstanding of over \$52.4 billion awarded, is paid in full."

The Council also considered reports on the activities of the Commission since the last session with respect to the current levels of income to the Compensation Fund, arrangements for ensuring continued deposits into the Fund, payment of outstanding compensation awards and audit related activities. The Council noted its continued satisfaction with the Government of Iraq's commitment to meeting its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Council decided to hold its next regular session from 29-30 April 2014.

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.