

MANDATE

The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture was established by General Assembly resolution 36/151 of 16 December 1981 to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, organizations and individuals. The Fund extends financial support to non-governmental organizations which provide humanitarian, psychological, medical, social, legal and economic assistance to victims of torture and members of their families.

ADMISSIBILITY

Grant applications should relate to projects which provide medical, psychological, social, economic, legal, humanitarian or other forms of assistance to victims of torture and members of their families.

Subject to the availability of funds, a limited number of grants may be distributed for the training of professionals or the organization of conferences and seminars with a specific focus on the treatment of victims of torture.

Projects which campaign against torture or provide financial assistance to other projects are not admissible. Only non-governmental organizations can apply for grants from the Fund. Applications from Governments, national liberation movements or political parties are not admissible.

As a rule, the amount of the grant requested cannot exceed one-third of the annual budget of the programme submitted. The staff of the project should have experience in direct assistance to victims of torture and the programme should be fully functioning.

Organizations which have not submitted satisfactory narrative and financial reports on the use of previous grants will not receive a new grant.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Fund is administrated by the Secretary-General who is advised by a Board of Trustees composed of a chairperson and four other members representing each of the five regional groups. The members serve in their independent capacity.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

Psychological assistance is provided to enable victims of torture to overcome the psychological trauma they have experienced. Individual therapy, whether based on clinical, psychoanalytical, behavioural or other therapy, seeks to assist victims with their gradual reintegration into society. Psychiatric therapy may be combined with medication to alleviate physical and psychological symptoms.

Medical assistance treats the physical after-effects of torture. Following diagnosis by a general practitioner, treatment is provided by medical specialists in the fields of orthopaedics, neurology, physiotherapy, paediatrics, sexual health, urology as well as traditional healing and complementary medicine.

Social assistance complements the above-mentioned forms of assistance by providing various services to reduce the sense of marginalization that many victims experience. Social assistance ensures that victims have access to a minimum of basic services, including housing, health care, education, language classes and employment training.

Legal assistance may be provided in a number of ways including covering the costs of lawyers, courts, translations and legal proceedings. For torture victims seeking asylum, legal assistance can be crucial in the preparation and follow-up of asylum applications in a host country. The Fund also contributes to combating impunity where grants are used to seek reparation and compensation for victims through claims before competent national, regional and international bodies.

Financial assistance enables victims to meet their basic needs and to gain access to other types of assistance, such as health care. In some cases, nominal assistance is distributed to unemployed victims, particularly when they are unable to work as a result of the serious physical and psychological effects of torture. Financial assistance may also be used to offset the costs of educating their children.

FUNDING CYCLE AND ALLOCATION OF GRANTS

Requests for funding should be submitted following the Guidelines of the Fund. Applications are received by 1st April every year to be considered by the Board of Trustees in October. During the session, the Board reviews the narrative and financial reports on the use of previous grants, adopts recommendations on applications for new grants, meets with donors and project leaders, and adopts other relevant recommendations on the activities of the Fund. Grants awarded in October will be used during the following year, between January and December.

PROGRAMMES APPROVED

Over the past few years, the Board of Trustees has received an average of US\$14 million in funding requests per year and has awarded about US\$9 million in grants on an annual basis to support about 190 projects in more than 60 countries.

REPORTING ON THE FUND'S ACTIVITIES

Annual reports on the activities of the Fund and its Board of Trustees are presented to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. The latest reports are available at <http://www.ohchr.org/english/about/funds/torture/index.htm>.

26 JUNE

The General Assembly proclaimed 26 June as the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. 26 June is an occasion to highlight the unambiguous and absolute prohibition on torture and to express solidarity with the suffering of torture victims and their families, as well as to reaffirm the need for a global commitment to rehabilitate all victims of all such abuse.

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FUND

Contributions to the Fund should be marked as follows:
“payee: United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture,
account CH”. Payments may be made by

Bank transfer:

(a) in United States dollars to “United Nations Geneva General Fund”, account No. 485001802, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, New York, NY 10004, USA (Swift code: CHASUS33, ABA code: 021000021);

(b) in euros to “United Nations Office at Geneva”, account No. 23961901, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, London, P.O. Box 440, Wollgate House, Coleman Street, London, UK (Swift code: CHASGB2L, Sorting code: 60-92-42, IBAN: GB25 CHAS 6092 4223 9619 01);

(c) in sterling pounds to “United Nations Office at Geneva”, account No. 23961903, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, London, P.O. Box 440, Wollgate House, Coleman Street, London, United Kingdom (Swift code: CHAS GB 2L, Sorting code: 60-92-42, IBAN: GB25 CHAS 6092 4223 9619 03);

(d) in Swiss francs to “United Nations Geneva General Fund”, account No. 240-C0590160.0, UBS, rue du Rhône 8, Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSWCHZH12A);

(e) in any other currency to “United Nations Geneva General Fund”, account No. 240-C0590160.1, UBS, rue du Rhône 8, Geneva 2, Switzerland (Swift code: UBSW CH ZH 12A; IBAN: CH65 0024 0240 CO59 0160 1);

Cheque payable to “United Nations” addressed to: Trésorerie, Nations Unies, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland.

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTARY FUND FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE



CONTACT US

For additional information, please contact the Fund’s Secretariat

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