



Eightieth Session
6 – 9 October 2015

EC-80/DG.12
C-20/DG.10
9 September 2015
Original: ENGLISH

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT NETWORK FOR VICTIMS OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

1. The Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter “the Conference”) at its Sixteenth Session endorsed a proposal for the establishment of the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons and the establishment of a voluntary trust fund for this purpose (C-16/DEC.13, dated 2 December 2011). The decision requests the Director-General to report biennially on the status of implementation. Accordingly, this report covers the period from 1 September 2013 to 31 August 2015.
2. The Conference decided that all activities undertaken in the context of this network should be financed solely from voluntary contributions, without any financial implications for the regular budget, through the Trust Fund for the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons (hereinafter “the Trust Fund”), to be established for this purpose by the Director-General. In 2012, the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter “the Secretariat”) established the Trust Fund in accordance with decision C-16/DEC.13. At the beginning of the reporting period, the Trust Fund stood at EUR 15,000.
3. Following the decision of the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize to the OPCW, the Director-General announced that the OPCW would transfer EUR 20,000 from the cash prize to the Trust Fund. In addition, Dr Robert Mathews of Australia, as one of the winners of the 2014 OPCW-The Hague Award, elected to donate his cash prize of EUR 45,000 to the Trust Fund.
4. As at 31 August 2015, the Secretariat had therefore received contributions totalling EUR 80,000 in favour of the Trust Fund, of which EUR 10,900 has been spent on activities in support of the network. As such, the Trust Fund currently stands at EUR 69,100.
5. The Secretariat has established a page on the OPCW public website dedicated to the Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons. An oral history of survivors of chemical warfare and links to useful relevant resources are currently available on this webpage. The page is also intended to serve as a platform for the exchange of information and ideas on the issue of chemical weapons victims. Further plans for the development of the page include its conversion into a stand-alone website, with video profiles of chemical weapons victims and interested individuals, as well as links to the OPCW YouTube channel and the “Fires” Project, as part of education and outreach efforts.



6. In 2015, the Secretariat consulted a number of experts and relevant institutes to determine how best to use the limited amount in the Trust Fund to support all victims of chemical weapons—past, present, and future—regardless of their nationality or the circumstances of how they were affected by the use of such weapons. Several proposals were received and considered.
7. The Secretariat elected to develop a practical guidebook on the medical management of chemical casualties, to be used as a practitioner’s guide for medical personnel. To this end, a group of pre-eminent medical experts from around the world were invited to draft the guidebook. This panel of experts had its first coordination meeting on 29 and 30 April 2015 at the OPCW Headquarters, and the draft of the guidebook was collated in the intervening months. The panel is currently conducting a peer review of the various chapters and expects the electronic version to be launched during the Twentieth Session of the Conference.
8. In order to further implement this decision, the Secretariat continues to encourage all States Parties in a position to do so to actively support the network, inter alia, by:
 - (a) providing financial contributions to the Trust Fund;
 - (b) providing medical treatment to victims of chemical weapons in their countries;
 - (c) organising events to raise awareness at the national level of victims of chemical weapons;
 - (d) exchanging information on experiences related to the treatment of victims of chemical weapons, by for example providing research scholarships to the developing States Parties in the field of the treatment of victims of chemical weapons; and
 - (e) facilitating material and equipment-related assistance to States Parties to assist and support the victims of chemical weapons.