

**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 2017 to 31 August 2019.
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.
3. At the beginning of the reporting period, the Trust Fund stood at EUR 179,500. Since the previous report in 2017 (EC-86/DG.15 C-22/DG.13, dated 6 September 2017), Andorra has provided a voluntary contribution of EUR 5,000 to the Trust Fund.
4. Since its inception, the Secretariat has received contributions totalling EUR 217,474 in favour of the Trust Fund, of which EUR 107,685 has been spent on activities in support of the network. As such, the Trust Fund currently stands at EUR 109,789.
5. The Secretariat has established a page on the OPCW public website dedicated to the International Support Network for Victims of Chemical Weapons (<https://www.opcw.org/our-work/supporting-victims-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. Future plans for the development of the page include adding further video profiles and accounts 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. Since the previous report, the Practical Guide for Medical Management of Chemical Warfare Casualties, which was developed by the Secretariat in December 2015 and updated in April 2016, has been translated into three more of the official languages of



the OPCW (Chinese, French, and Spanish), and is currently available on the OPCW website in five of the official OPCW languages, as well as in German and Turkish.

7. On 28 and 29 June 2018, the Secretariat organised the “International Symposium on Medical Treatment of Chemical Weapons Victims: Challenges and Hopes” in The Hague. This symposium was attended by over 50 experts from around the world and provided a forum for participating scientists, clinicians, and experts, as well as representatives of academia and civil society, to share experiences and exchange ideas in this field, with a view to identifying priorities for victim assistance projects and future scientific research. The symposium also provided an opportunity for the experts to discuss the latest findings on the long-term health effects of exposure to chemical warfare agents and to identify challenges and gaps in treatment provision. The symposium also aimed both to promote international scientific collaboration in order to fill gaps in knowledge and to improve treatment in this field, resulting in improved outcomes for all victims of chemical warfare.
8. As a tangible outcome of the symposium, participants developed a declaration containing recommendations on how the OPCW, other relevant international organisations, and States Parties can most usefully provide medical support for victims of chemical weapons. The document was subsequently finalised and published on the OPCW public website, to serve as a roadmap for future scientific activities in this field.¹
9. Following the Secretariat’s efforts to establish contacts, as appropriate, with international, regional, and non-governmental organisations relevant to the Support Network, a number of proposals on victim assistance projects have been submitted and some support is being provided to the most relevant ones through the Trust Fund.
10. 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.

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¹ https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019/03/OPCW_Medical_Symposium_Declaration.pdf