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### 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 2019 to 31 August 2021.
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. During the reporting period, Andorra has provided two voluntary contributions of EUR 5,000 to the Trust Fund. Since the Fund’s inception, the Secretariat has received contributions to the Trust Fund totalling EUR 227,474, of which EUR 107,878 has been spent on activities in support of the network. As such, the Trust Fund currently stands at EUR 119,596.
4. 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.
5. An updated version of the Practical Guide for Medical Management of Chemical Warfare Casualties, originally published by the Secretariat in 2015, was made available in 2020. As a result of the generous support of interested States Parties, the Guide is currently available on the OPCW website in five of the OPCW’s six official languages, as well as in German and Turkish.



6. In 2018, the Secretariat organised an international symposium on the medical treatment of chemical weapons victims. This symposium, attended by over 50 experts from around the world, provided a forum for participating scientists, clinicians, experts, and victims, 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 scientific research. The participants drafted 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 is available on the OPCW website, to serve as a roadmap for future scientific activities in this field.<sup>1</sup>
7. Following one of these recommendations, the Secretariat gathered a group of State Party experts to initiate the drafting of a companion to the Practical Guide, which will address the long-term effects of exposure to chemical weapons. The drafting committee has made significant strides towards the completion of this important medical resource and aspires to complete the project in the first half of 2022.
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 of victims of chemical weapons at the national level;
  - (d) exchanging information on experiences related to the treatment of victims of chemical weapons by, for example, providing research scholarships to developing States Parties in the field of the medical treatment of victims of chemical weapons; and
  - (e) facilitating material and equipment-related assistance to States Parties in order to assist and support the victims of chemical weapons.

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[https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019/03/OPCW\\_Medical\\_Symposium\\_Declaration.pdf](https://www.opcw.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019/03/OPCW_Medical_Symposium_Declaration.pdf).