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## REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT  
OR PUNISHMENTUnited Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of TortureReport of the Secretary-General

1. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture was established by General Assembly resolution 36/151 of 16 December 1981 for the purpose of receiving voluntary contributions for distribution, through established channels of assistance, as humanitarian, legal and financial aid to individuals who have been tortured and to their relatives. The Voluntary Fund is administered in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the United Nations by the Secretary-General, with the advice of a Board of Trustees, composed of a chairman and four members with wide experience in the field of human rights who act in their personal capacity. They are appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard to equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with their Governments. The membership of the Board of Trustees is as follows: Mr. Hans Danelius (Chairman), (Sweden); Ms. Elizabeth Odio Benito (Costa Rica); Mr. Waleed Sadi (Jordan); Mr. Ivan Tosevski (Yugoslavia); and Mr. Amos Wako (Kenya).
2. The Secretary-General has received from the Chairman of the Board of Trustees the information on the Board's activities annexed to the present document. The previous reports of the Secretary-General on the Voluntary Fund are contained in documents A/37/618, A/38/221 and A/39/662.
3. Pursuant to recommendations of the Board of Trustees, 36 grants, totalling \$817,400, have been made to 30 projects. The projects are from 16 countries from four continents. Since the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session (A/39/662), the following contributions have been made by Governments to the Voluntary Fund during the period from 14 November 1984 to 14 November 1985:

<u>Government</u>	<u>Contribution</u> (United States dollars)
Australia	12 816.00
Belgium	10 000.00
Brazil	5 000.00
Canada*	44 129.94
Denmark	93 187.96
Finland	87 596.36
France	26 315.78
Germany, Federal Republic of	64 277.68
Greece*	10 000.00
Ireland	7 080.50
Kenya	400.00
Netherlands* <u>a/</u>	60 750.00
United States of America	100 000.00

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\* In two contributions.

a/ The Government of the Netherlands earmarked its first contribution (\$14,415) for special assistance to female victims of torture.

4. On 13 November 1985 the Federal Republic of Germany informed the Secretary-General of its pledge of an additional DM 200,000 to the Voluntary Fund for 1985.

5. During the period since the last report a contribution has been received from the International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council) and from a number of individuals. Many non-governmental organizations have provided their members with information on their publications about the Voluntary Fund and have encouraged contributions. The United Nations Association of the United States of America has agreed to receive contributions from within the United States and to channel them to the Voluntary Fund.

ANNEX

Information on the activities of the Board of Trustees of the  
United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, provided  
by the Chairman of the Board

1. The Board of Trustees has held four sessions: in March 1983, October 1983, August 1984 and April 1985. At each session the Board has scrutinized carefully a growing number of projects submitted to it and, as necessary, has requested further information or clarification from the sponsors. The Board also reviews the reports submitted by the sponsors on the use made of each grant; these reports include a description of how the project was carried out and an accounting of the use made of the funds. The Board also meets with representatives of the sponsors of projects to discuss new projects and those already under way. Generally, the Board recommends grants for one year and decides whether further grants should be recommended after reviewing the reports and accounting relating to the preceding grant. In most cases grants from the Voluntary Fund cover only a part of the particular project; the remaining funds are sought by the sponsors from other sources.

2. In the three years since it began operations, the focus of the Fund's grants has shifted in response to the increased number and variety of projects presented. Therapy and rehabilitation projects have accounted for an increasing share of funds allocated (98 per cent in 1985; an average of 74 per cent for the three years) and the projects are carried out increasingly in places where resources for rehabilitation in general are limited (98 per cent in 1985).

Therapy/rehabilitation projects

3. The therapy/rehabilitation programmes supported by the Voluntary Fund vary in character according to local circumstances, the needs of the victims and their families and the extent to which help can be obtained from already existing sources. Generally the programmes adopt a comprehensive approach, dealing with the wide range of problems consequent to torture (medical, psychological, social and economic) and with the persons in their overall context of family, society and employment. They undertake an initial screening to determine a victim's exact needs, and he or she is referred to existing services if they are available. Where adequate care is not available, the programmes try to provide medical treatment, physiotherapy, psychiatric and psychological help, as well as social assistance and economic relief to the victim and his family. Certain projects contain specialized programmes for children, and some include workshops which are income producing and assist in social reintegration. The purpose of these projects is to enable the victim and his family to return to a productive and normal life within the community.

4. The projects are usually carried out by humanitarian organizations which are often related to churches or religious bodies. In some cases the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) serves as an implementing channel for projects supported by the Voluntary Fund. Programmes based on co-operation between the Voluntary Fund and the UNHCR have been drawn up and implemented for refugees in

Costa Rica and in other countries of Central America. They have been aimed primarily at assisting refugees who had been subjected to torture in their home countries.

5. The therapy and rehabilitation programmes supported by the Fund relate to many different countries in different parts of the world. As examples, the following projects may be mentioned.

(a) In Argentina a number of projects have been drawn up by various religious and humanitarian groups in order to give help to persons who were tortured during the previous régime in Argentina, and to relatives of persons who were tortured or disappeared during that period. The Fund has supported several such projects involving, for instance, psychological help to children, workshops for families and medical assistance in a province town where otherwise the available resources are scarce;

(b) In Uruguay the present Government, beginning in March 1985, released the large number of prisoners who had been detained and tortured during the previous régime. The Fund has given grants to a number of projects involving medical treatment of the tortured persons themselves, psychological treatment of the families of disappeared persons, family group therapy and the operations of so-called pilot farms in the country for those ex-detainees who wish to start an entirely new life;

(c) In April 1984 a change of government took place in Guinea which resulted in the release of a large number of prisoners who had been tortured, and detained sometimes for many years in bad conditions. In co-operation with the Guinean authorities, a French medical team provided assistance to the former prisoners. The grants given to this project by the Fund has made it possible to finance a mission of doctors from France to Guinea and to continue the assistance by keeping a doctor, on a rotating basis, in the country.

#### Training projects

6. The Voluntary Fund has been called upon to finance the training of medical professionals in the specific techniques required in the treatment of torture victims. The Fund underwrites the travel and living expenses of a number of doctors, psychiatrists and psychologists from developing countries to enable them to take part in training courses organized in Copenhagen by the Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims in that city. The Fund has also supported teaching missions by doctors from that Centre to other countries. More recently the Voluntary Fund agreed to support a teaching seminar in Buenos Aires organized by specialists from Latin America.

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