UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture 2017

Artwork by a victim of torture supported by the UN Torture Fund
The UN Fund for Victims of Torture

- Was established by **GA resolution 36/151 in 1981**;
- Has a **global outreach** (present in 79 countries in 2017);
- Provides **direct assistance to victims of torture and their family members**;
- Assistance to victims can take the form of **humanitarian, medical, psychological, legal, social and financial aid**;
- Awards grants to civil society and other channels of assistance, including **NGOs, rehabilitation centres, victim associations and family members, private and public hospitals, legal clinics, public interest law firms and individual lawyers**; and
- **Average size grants of USD 40,000** are awarded yearly on a competitive basis, and can be renewed if conditions are met. A call for applications is issued every year in January.
Victims of torture assisted include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights Defenders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prisoners of conscience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detainees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex-detainees</td>
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<tr>
<td>Undocumented migrants</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internally displaced persons</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victims of sexual violence in conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<td>Asylum seekers</td>
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<td>Refugees</td>
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<td>Journalists</td>
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<td>Victims of enforced disappearance</td>
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<td>Persons with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minorities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indigenous Peoples</td>
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<td>LGBTI</td>
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Securing redress through legal assistance

Justice Centre Hong Kong, China
Mission statement of the Fund

The UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture:

- Promotes a victim-centred approach;
- Has an impartial, universal mandate;
- Is a tool to address accountability as part of the victims’ healing process;
- Is not a substitute for the obligation of States under international law to support victims of torture;
- Responds to new and emergency situations wherever they occur;
- Forms partnerships with both grass-roots initiatives and well-established rehabilitation centres;
- Complements and co-ordinates its work with OHCHR Programmes and other UN torture-related mechanisms; and
- Enables the collection and dissemination of expertise and best practices.
Empowering women through group counselling

Corporación Vínculos Colombia
Management of the Fund

- The Fund is subject to UN Rules and Regulations;

- The Fund is managed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General, with the advice of a Board of Trustees;

- The Board of Trustees is composed of five members with experience in human rights, representing each of the five geographical regions and acting in their personal capacity;

- The Fund reports annually to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.
Since 1981, the Fund has provided financial assistance to more than 630 organizations worldwide for over US$ 180 million.

For 2017, the Board awarded a total of 173 projects under the Fund’s regular cycle. Of those, 166 are projects for direct assistance (US$ 6,877,000) and 7 are projects for the purpose of training and capacity building (US$ 240,500).

47,961 victims of torture and their families will be assisted with grants from the UN Torture Fund in 2017 in 79 countries in all world regions.

In 2017, an additional US$ 300,000 is set aside to support inter-sessional emergency projects and capacity-building projects.
Room to Heal - United Kingdom

Rebuilding lives through alternative therapies
Accountability

The Fund Secretariat applies a well-established monitoring and evaluation methodology to ensure accountability in the use of grants:

- As a rule, first-time applicants are visited in order to verify admissibility and feasibility of the project;
- Awarded grantees are visited every 3 to 5 years by OHCHR staff, other UN staff and Board members;
- Grantees are required to provide yearly narrative and financial reports on the use of the grants;
- Grants of US$50,000 and above are subject to a mandatory audit by national external auditors and grants below US$50,000 are audited regularly on a random basis; and
- If the need arises, ad hoc audits are conducted, in collaboration with the UN Office of Internal Oversight.
New England Survivors of Torture and Trauma (NESTT) USA

Assisting victims of torture to relieve their suffering and to build new lives
Financial situation of the Fund

Voluntary contributions received by the Fund from 2003 to 2016

- 2003: $7,156,264
- 2004: $8,103,925
- 2005: $10,202,469
- 2006: $11,654,025
- 2007: $11,178,365
- 2008: $10,752,566
- 2009: $9,419,007
- 2010: $7,991,223
- 2011: $8,320,134
- 2012: $8,168,000
- 2013: $7,429,770
- 2014: $8,168,000
- 2015: $8,254,000
- 2016: $8,476,735
The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) Jordan

Restoring human dignity through psychological assistance and trauma counselling
Appeal for Funding

- Torture practices remain prevalent worldwide; donations do make a difference;

- The UN Fund is the only grant-making mechanism specifically mandated to respond to the plight of torture victims everywhere;

- The UN Fund is universal, neutral and impartial in dealing with victims;

- The Board of the UN Torture Fund estimates that the Fund requires a minimum of US$ 12 million in voluntary contributions yearly from Member States to fulfil its mandate; and

- The UN Torture Fund, like all UN Trust Funds, can only receive earmarked contributions.
CONTACT

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