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Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [36/151](#) and [70/146](#). It describes the activities undertaken by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, in particular the outcome of the fifty-fifth session of the Board of Trustees of the Fund, which was held in Geneva from 21 to 25 March 2022.

* [A/77/150](#).



I. Introduction

A. Submission of the report

1. The present report was prepared in accordance with the arrangements approved by the General Assembly in its resolution [36/151](#), by which it established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. It presents the activities undertaken by the Fund, in particular the outcomes of the fifty-fifth session of the Board of Trustees of the Fund, which was held in Geneva from 21 to 25 March 2022. The report complements the report of the Secretary-General on the Fund, which covered the outcome of the fifty-fourth session of the Board, held remotely from 4 to 8 October 2021, which was submitted to the Human Rights Council at its forty-ninth session ([A/HRC/49/63](#)).

B. Mandate of the Fund

2. The Fund receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and individuals. In accordance with its mandate and the practice established by its Board of Trustees, the Fund provides grants to established channels of assistance, including non-governmental organizations, associations of victims and members of their families, private and public hospitals, legal clinics and public interest law firms, that submit project proposals for the provision of medical, psychological, social, financial, legal, humanitarian and other forms of direct assistance to victims of torture and members of their families.

C. Administration of the Fund and Board of Trustees

3. The Secretary-General administers the Fund through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with the advice of a Board of Trustees composed of five members acting in their personal capacity and appointed by the Secretary-General with due regard for equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with their Governments. During the reporting period, the Board was composed of Sara Hossain (Bangladesh), Vladimir Jović (Bosnia and Herzegovina/Serbia), Juan Ernesto Méndez (Argentina), Lawrence Mute (Chair, Kenya) and Vivienne Nathanson (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

II. Fifty-fifth session of the Board of Trustees

4. The fifty-fifth session of the Board of Trustees was held in Geneva from 21 to 25 March 2022 and was chaired by Lawrence Mute (Kenya). In line with its programme of work, the Board covered five main policy issues: (a) emergency grants and humanitarian and human rights crises; (b) restricted civic space, including reprisals; (c) coordination and strategic partnerships; (d) the fortieth anniversary of the Fund; and (e) grant management, including on-site visits to evaluate project applications and monitor implementation.

A. Emergency grants and humanitarian and human rights crises

5. Since 1990, the Board has used an intersessional granting mechanism to respond to emergency situations that could not have been anticipated during the annual grants cycle to provide rapid, flexible and responsive funding in exceptional circumstances to organizations assisting torture victims. In 2006, the Board further defined the

criteria for emergency grants for the purposes of responding to sudden and urgent human rights or humanitarian situations, including situations of armed conflict, mass displacement, natural disasters, widespread arbitrary detentions, political strife or uprising and deteriorations of civic space. Since 2006, under the emergency grants procedure, the Board has awarded more than 90 grants to 70 organizations assisting more than 20,000 victims of torture and their families in more than 58 countries for a total amount of \$3,627,000. Emergency grant applications are considered by the Fund on a rolling basis or through special calls for applications. Special calls for emergency grant applications were received in 2020, 2018, 2015, 2013 and 2012 to respond to the increased needs of victims for services owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic or specific situations in the region or country. Emergency grants have been awarded on a rolling basis in 2022 (see para. 29).

6. In the light of a possible call to respond to the needs of torture victims in the context of the war in Ukraine following a confidential online meeting held on 21 March 2022, the Board recommended continuing to apply a flexible funding approach towards the management of annual grants provided to grantees that are implementing projects in 2022 in countries impacted by the war in Ukraine, by allowing for budget adjustments,¹ no-cost extensions² and temporary postponement of payments upon the request of grantees. The Board and the secretariat will continue to consider emergency grant applications from the region on a rolling basis and to monitor the situation closely.

B. Restricted civic space, including reprisals

7. The Fund is able to fulfil its mandate to channel direct assistance to victims of torture when there is a safe and enabling environment in which civil society organizations can operate. Restrictive and retaliatory measures, including reprisals owing to collaboration with the United Nations, faced by civil society may limit or even prevent organizations from obtaining access to the Fund's grants and from implementing their projects to assist victims of torture. Addressing the impact of restricted civic space on the Fund's operations, in particular on the effective and safe delivery of assistance to torture survivors, remains a priority for the Board of Trustees. Owing to the impossibility of implementing projects under such circumstances, the Fund was forced to cancel a number of awarded annual grants in 2022 (see para. 28).

8. During the fifty-fifth session, the Board held a confidential dialogue remotely with some of the Fund's grantees providing support to victims of torture in the context of shrinking civic space, who shared testimonies about challenges faced on the ground by project beneficiaries and staff practitioners negatively impacting their capacity to implement the grants awarded by the Fund. Challenges cited by grantees include raids on premises, arrests and arbitrary detention, disbarments of lawyers, liquidations of organizations, harassment, threats, defamation and smear campaigns.

9. The Board discussed means of collaboration, including building channels for protection referrals for the Fund's grantees who are victims of reprisals, sharing information, and organizing geographical consultations with relevant special procedure mandate holders.

¹ See para. 101 of "United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture: guidelines for the use of applicants and grantees", adopted by the Board of Trustees during its fifty-first session, on 7 July 2020, and amended intersessionally on 1 October 2020, available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Torture/UNVFVT/Call/Guidelines_UN_Torture_Fund_2020_EN.pdf.

² Ibid., para. 53.

10. The Board recommended the adoption of procedures to respond more systematically to incidents affecting grantee organizations as a result of shrinking or restricted civic space, including reprisals as a result of their collaboration with the United Nations. The Board adopted a specific procedure to process payments more securely and agreed to better track and report on incidents when these limit the Fund's mandate to channel funding to civil society organizations to assist victims of torture and recommended corresponding amendments to the guidelines of the Fund for the use of applicants and grantees, including guidance on how to submit allegations of restrictive measures affecting project implementation, intimidation, or reprisals as a consequence of project implementation supported by the Fund and on how to submit an emergency grant application for additional support to continue to ensure service delivery to torture survivors in such contexts.

C. Coordination and strategic partnerships

1. United Nations anti-torture mechanisms

11. The Board continued its collaboration with the other United Nations anti-torture mechanisms. On 24 March 2022, the Board met with the Chair of the Committee against Torture, Claude Heller; the Chair of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Suzanne Jabbour; and the then Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, Nils Melzer. The objective of the dialogue among the mechanisms was to share updates on the recent activities undertaken in the framework of their respective mandates, as well as priorities for 2022. The anti-torture mechanisms expressed concern about the impact of closing civic space on the access of victims to rehabilitation services. They agreed to focus their joint statement³ to commemorate the United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, on 26 June 2022, on the role of health professionals in preventing, combating and addressing the consequences of torture.

2. Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity

12. On 23 March 2022, the Board met remotely with the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, Victor Madrigal-Borloz. During their first official meeting, the experts discussed means of cooperation and agreed to conduct further outreach and information sessions on the work of the Fund with civil society organizations assisting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons who are victims of torture.

3. United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

13. On 23 March 2022, the Board met online with members of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, Danwood Mzikenge Chirwa (Chair, Malawi), Suamhirs Piraino-Guzman (Honduras), Ecaterina Schiling (Republic of Moldova) and Georgina Vaz Cabral (France). The purpose of the meeting was to learn about their respective areas of work and discuss common challenges, possible synergies and funding overlap. The synergy and intersectionality between the two voluntary funds were acknowledged by both Boards. They underscored the need to develop an outreach strategy for countries and subregions from where no applications have been received. The members of the two Boards discussed means of ensuring the protection of the Fund's grantees working in

³ Available at www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/06/un-experts-healthcare-professionals-are-essential-torture-prevention.

environments with shrinking civic space. They also agreed that organizations may submit project applications to both Funds simultaneously and that those applications would be considered on a competitive basis in view of needs and merit, while ensuring no overlap in budget lines.

4. Group of Friends of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

14. On 24 March 2022, the Board gave a briefing to members of the Group of Friends of the Fund about its work. The briefing was attended by representatives of the Co-Chairs of the Group, Denmark and Peru, as well as representatives of the other founding member States, namely: Georgia, Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and United States of America. The Group was established in March 2019 with a mandate to champion the right to redress, including rehabilitation, of torture victims and to raise the visibility of and increase support for the Fund. The Board members and representatives of the Group of Friends discussed the planning of activities to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Fund (see paras. 17–26), as well as priorities for the 2023 call for applications. The Co-Chairs of the Group enquired about the situation of grantees of the Fund in Ukraine and in neighbouring countries, as well as the impact of shrinking civic space on the implementation of projects by the Fund's grantees. The Group of Friends underscored the crucial lifeline provided by the Fund to many torture survivors and their families for the past 40 years and committed to continued engagement and collaboration with the Board to raise the visibility of the Fund, in particular for the organization of events taking place in the framework of the commemorations for the Fund's anniversary.

5. Convention against Torture Initiative

15. On 22 March 2022, the Board met with representatives of the core States of the Convention against Torture Initiative during a working lunch hosted by the Permanent Representatives of Chile and Denmark to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, as well as representatives of Fiji, Ghana and Indonesia. Through their annual dialogue, they continued to exchange ideas on issues of common interest related to the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,⁴ notably article 14 thereof, on the right to redress, including compensation and rehabilitation. The representatives also expressed ongoing concerns about the impact of restricted civic space on the work of grantees of the Fund and conveyed their strong support for the activities organized to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of the Fund.

6. International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture

16. On 23 March 2022, the Board met remotely with the members of the Executive Council and the secretariat of the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture to continue to exchange ideas on issues of common concern, in particular the recent developments in the field of rehabilitation of torture victims. The Board took note of the adoption of the Global Standards on Rehabilitation of Torture Victims by the Council at its sixth General Assembly, on 6 October 2020. The Board and the members of the Executive Council exchanged views about the practical use of the Global Standards by grantees of the Fund to strengthen certain areas of their work. They also discussed the launch and outreach strategy of the revised edition of the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) (see paras. 38–39).

⁴ Available at www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading.

D. Fortieth anniversary of the Fund

17. The Fund was established by the General Assembly 40 years ago, through its resolution [36/151](#), adopted on 18 December 1981. In accordance with the recommendation of the Board of Trustees, the commemorations of the fortieth anniversary will last for one year, beginning and ending on 26 June, the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

18. The fortieth anniversary celebrations were launched through a webinar on 25 June 2021, entitled “Fostering civic space to obtain redress and accountability for victims of torture”, organized jointly by the anti-torture mechanisms. The webinar received support from the American University Washington College of Law.⁵

19. Following the webinar, a social media campaign was implemented with a view to raising awareness of the ongoing needs of victims of torture and the unique role of the Fund in addressing them. Campaign materials including multimedia products such as videos and illustrations, were disseminated on social media platforms. To highlight the transformative impact of the Fund on the lives of beneficiaries, 40 profiles of torture victims and the civil society practitioners accompanying them on the road to redress were released in the 40 days following 26 June 2022. Donors, grantees of the Fund and other stakeholders were invited to share these materials, accessible in a campaign kit, to mobilize further support for victims of torture and for the Fund.

20. As part of the commemorations, during the fifty-fifth session of the Board, the Fund organized a panel discussion on 25 March 2022, entitled “Universal jurisdiction as a path to redress from torture: legal and psychosocial perspectives”, which took place in Geneva as a side event of the forty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council. The event was focused on the impact of the landmark judgment for torture and other crimes against humanity committed in the Syrian Arab Republic, handed down by the Higher Regional Court in Koblenz, Germany. The first ever verdict against a high-level Syrian official with the use of universal jurisdiction was accomplished through a strategic litigation process led by the European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights, with funding from the Fund. The keynote speakers were Wassim Mukdad, a project beneficiary and co-plaintiff in the al-Khatib trial, and Patrick Kroker, Senior Legal Adviser of the Center, who shared testimonies to illustrate the impact of the Fund.

21. The anniversary celebrations were concluded on 24 June 2022 with a public panel, entitled “Road to redress: 40 years supporting victims of torture”, held in the Museum for Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, as a historical reminder of the establishment of the Trust Fund for Chile, the predecessor to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture, in 1978. The ceremony was organized jointly by the Fund, the OHCHR Regional Office for South America, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Chile and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of Chile.

22. The ceremony was opened by the Executive Director of the Museum for Memory and Human Rights, Francisco Estévez Valencia, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet (via remote participation). The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile, Antonia Urrejola Noguera, and the Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Chile, Marcela Ríos Tobar, stressed the importance of learning from the past and including victims, family members and civil society organizations in the design of reparation mechanisms.

23. During a segment on legal framework and regional perspectives, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Fund, Juan Ernesto Méndez, and, Regional

⁵ For more details, see [A/76/301](#).

Representative for South America of OHCHR, Jan Jarab, highlighted the importance of the work of the Fund in supporting civil society organizations that provide different types of assistance to torture survivors to obtain redress. Through these projects, victims not only participate in the design of the reparation process but also contribute to monitoring States' compliance with their legal obligations through the development of strategic litigation procedures. Both panellists also underscored the need to prevent and put an end to the practice of torture, which persists in many countries of Latin America, despite the emergence of democracies over the past 40 years. They also underscored the vulnerability of certain groups, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, persons of African descent and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, who are particularly at risk of being subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

24. During the part of the panel discussion related to the role of the State, the Subsecretary for Human Rights of Chile, Haydee Oberreuter Umazabal, and the Ambassador of Denmark, Co-Chair of the Group of Friends of the Fund and member of the Convention against Torture Initiative, Jens Godtfredsen, considered the responsibility of the State in the search for truth, justice and reparation. The two panellists identified four basic elements that constitute the obligations of the State: acknowledgement of State responsibility, recognition of victims, availability of resources, and establishment of reparation mechanisms.

25. Representatives of five organizations receiving support from the Fund in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Guatemala and Mexico⁶ highlighted the importance of the financial and technical support provided by the Fund, which enables them to provide comprehensive rehabilitation treatment to torture victims. They also underscored the importance of addressing the practice of torture, which affects the community as a whole, from a social perspective and highlighted that the struggle for redress, including reparation and justice, should be a collective process.

26. Prior to participating in the panel discussion, representatives of the five grantee organizations were invited to an exchange of good practices with the working group established in 2022 to develop a comprehensive reparations policy for victims of human rights violations in the context of the social protests in Chile in 2019. The discussion was focused on the experience of representatives working on similar issues to guarantee the access of torture victims to the right to reparation in their respective countries.

E. Grant management, including monitoring visits

27. At its fifty-fourth session, held remotely from 4 to 8 October 2021 (see [A/HRC/49/63](#)), the Board reviewed a total of 231 admissible annual project applications (totalling \$13,256,740 in funding requests) received through its 2022 call for applications. The Board awarded a total of 184 annual grants for 2022 (totalling \$8,879,000) to assist over 46,600 torture survivors and their families in 92 countries. Owing to a shortage of funding, 47 project applications (totalling \$4,377,000) could not be funded.

28. Of the projects to be implemented from 1 January to 31 December 2022, 177 are for the delivery of direct assistance services to victims of torture and seven are for strengthening the capacity of the beneficiary organizations to deliver such

⁶ Emma Bolshia Bravo, Instituto de Terapia e Investigación sobre las Secuelas de la Tortura y la Violencia Estatal (Bolivia (Plurinational State of)); Tânia Kolker, Instituto de Estudos da Religião (Brazil); Vilma Abarzúa Cortés, Centro de Salud Mental y Derechos Humanos (Chile); Maudi Tzay Patal, Equipo de Estudios Comunitarios y Acción Psicosocial (Guatemala); and Norma Ledezma Ortega, Justicia para Nuestras Hijas (Mexico).

services. Nevertheless, the Fund has had to cancel three of these grants at the request of grantees who were no longer in a position to implement their project owing to restrictive measures related to shrinking civic space.

29. The Board also decided to set aside \$775,000 to respond to requests for emergency grants in 2022. From 1 January to 30 June 2022, through an established intersessional procedure, the Board awarded four emergency grants (totalling \$318,976) to provide services to approximately 326 victims of torture and their families.

30. Under its 2023 call for applications, open from 15 January to 1 March 2022, the secretariat of the Fund received 260 grant applications from civil society organizations for projects to be implemented from 1 January to 31 December 2023. Project applications were screened for admissibility by the secretariat of the Fund in March and April 2022. A total of 254 project applications were found admissible, amounting to a total of \$14,610,557 in requests for direct assistance to victims of torture. The Board is expected to make grant recommendations about these applications at its fifty-sixth session, scheduled to be held from 10 to 14 October 2022 in Geneva. The following thematic priorities established by the Board for the 2023 call for applications will be taken into consideration during the decision-making process: gender-based violence amounting to torture; denial of medical treatment or care, forced or improper medical treatment, including in places of deprivation of liberty; excessive use of force amounting to torture, notably in the context of peaceful protests; and attacks amounting to acts of torture against human rights defenders working under restrictive or retaliatory measures, including reprisals.

1. Enhanced working methods

31. Project admissibility criteria are outlined in the guidelines of the Fund for the use of applicants and grantees,⁷ which were comprehensively revised at the fifty-first session of the Board of Trustees, held remotely from 30 March to 3 April 2020. In recent years, the Board, with the support of the secretariat of the Fund, has improved the efficiency of the management of its project portfolio not only by working towards refined criteria but also by setting policy targets. At its forty-third session, held in Geneva from 4 to 8 April 2016 (A/71/289), the Board recommended streamlining, through a competitive review of project proposals, the volume of grants for direct assistance to the aspirational target of 150 annual regular grants of an average of \$50,000 by 2019.

32. After a thorough analysis, the Board decided to replace this aspirational target and to limit instead the total number of grants in relation to the staff capacity of the secretariat and the amount of contributions received. The Board also recommended adjusting the grant size in relation to the total number of grants awarded and to the sum of contributions received; as well as considering continued funding of projects beyond the maximum limit of 10 consecutive years, on an exceptional basis, when the projects supported provide essential services to victims of torture in areas in which no other organization offers similar services. In order to prevent dependency on the Fund, the Board recommended the gradual decrease of the grant amount awarded after 10 consecutive years of funding. Against this background, the Board recommended amending paragraphs 19, 20 and 49 of the guidelines of the Fund for the use of applicants and grantees to reflect those changes. Lastly, the Board agreed to allow the possibility of awarding both direct assistance and capacity-building grants to the same organization subject to a competitive review process, which includes a satisfactory

⁷ Available at www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/Guidelines-UN-Torture-Fund2021_EN.pdf.

evaluation of the project, and availability of funds, and to prioritize financial support to organizations with limited funding and fundraising capacity.

2. Monitoring and evaluation

33. On-site visits to applicant organizations are undertaken before a grant is awarded for a new project proposal. Periodic visits to monitor ongoing project implementation and impact are also conducted for applications seeking renewed support from the Fund. Following a two-year suspension of on-site visits due to COVID-19-related travel restrictions in 2020 and 2021, the Board, its secretariat and OHCHR field presences have resumed on-site visits to over 145 project applicants in more than 76 countries. From 1 January to 30 June 2022, visits were conducted to more than 30 projects in Belgium, Chile, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Montenegro, Nepal, Peru, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Rwanda and Spain.

III. United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

34. On 24 June 2022, a joint statement⁸ was issued by the Committee against Torture, the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and the Board of Trustees of the Fund. The experts highlighted the unique and central role played by health-care professionals in fighting torture and healing its consequences, as well as in preventing and holding States accountable for torture. Health-care professionals, including general practitioners, forensic doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists and physical therapists, are often the first to detect signs of torture or may at times be the only ones in a position to prevent torture.

35. In the statement, the Chair of the Fund noted that professionals were providing services to survivors, sometimes at the risk of their own safety in contexts of shrinking civic space or armed conflict. Drawing on the 40 years of experience of the Fund, the Chair of the Fund reiterated the life-altering and often chronic consequences of torture on the mental and physical health of survivors, which can persist through generations, and the need for providing long-term specialized health care to rebuild connections and overcome trauma. Lastly, the experts of these United Nations anti-torture mechanisms called upon States parties to eliminate risks of reprisals and ensure protection, in law and in practice, to the health practitioners when performing their duties. States are to provide education, training and the material and legal conditions required to health personnel to enable them to fulfil their professional responsibilities, in particular to ensure that persons deprived of liberty are guaranteed prompt access to a medical examination from the very outset of their detention. The mechanisms further called upon States to involve health-care professionals and their representative bodies and associations in developing and implementing anti-torture strategies and policies, as well as to respect and protect medical staff in times of armed conflict.

36. In the statement, the Chair of the Committee against Torture underlined that medical professionals must be able to assist victims of torture without being exposed to undue pressure or reprisals. The Chair of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture recalled that the fight against impunity is one of the most relevant elements of torture prevention and pointed out that it is fundamental to make perpetrators accountable for their acts and to provide justice and rehabilitation to the victims. The experts also underscored the importance of the Manual on the Effective Investigation

⁸ Available at www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/06/un-experts-healthcare-professionals-are-essential-torture-prevention.

and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol), which guides States parties and their officials on conducting effective torture investigations and gathering evidence in view of establishing redress for victims.

37. On 24 June 2022 the closing ceremony of the Fund's fortieth anniversary commemorations, entitled "Road to redress: 40 years supporting victims of torture", was held in Santiago (see paras. 21–22).

Revised edition of the Istanbul Protocol

38. On 29 June 2022, OHCHR published a revised edition of the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol). Originally published in 2001, the Manual sets out international standards for documenting acts of torture and ill-treatment, providing essential guidance for medical, law enforcement, prosecution and other relevant professionals, including many of the Fund's grantees. The revised version reflects the most recent jurisprudence on torture prevention, accountability and redress, as well as lessons learned from using the Protocol over the past 20 years. It offers additional guidance for health professionals in documenting torture and ill-treatment in different contexts and guidance for States on how to implement the Protocol effectively. The revision is the result of a six-year process involving 180 experts from 51 countries, including United Nations independent human rights experts, in their personal capacity, such as members of the Fund's Board of Trustees.

39. The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights hosted the launch of the revised edition of the Istanbul Protocol on 29 June, with the online participation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet. Board member of the Fund, Vivienne Nathanson, closed the event by emphasizing the impact of the use of the Protocol on the lives of torture survivors around the world who are able to obtain redress with the use of the medico-legal reports drafted by practitioners with the use of the tool.

IV. Financial situation of the Fund

40. In 2021, the following 19 Member States contributed a total of \$10.5 million to the Fund:

Contributions received from 1 January to 31 December 2021

(United States dollars)

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
States		
Andorra	11 627	12 October 2021
Austria	17 835	17 August 2021
Canada	46 699	9 March 2021
Czechia	9 138	6 October 2021
Denmark	799 098	24 March 2021
France	116 279	5 October 2021

<i>Donor</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Date of receipt</i>
Germany	465 116	8 October 2021
	48 824	6 December 2021
India	50 000	21 June 2021
Ireland	154 816	18 November 2021
Italy	30 266	10 May 2021
Liechtenstein	80 558	28 October 2021
Luxembourg	17 201	19 November 2021
Mexico	10,000	22 December 2021
Norway	343 104	16 July 2021
Portugal	6 134	31 December 2020
	5 630	24 December 2021
Qatar	30 000	3 June 2021
Saudi Arabia	80 000	5 October 2021
Switzerland	200 000	21 December 2021
United States of America	8 000 000	3 August 2021
Individual donors	4 090	
Total	10 526 415	

41. In order to be able to support the admissible project applications received, the Fund established a target of \$13 million of income in 2022. As at 30 June 2022, the Fund had been able to secure \$1,006,393 from eight Member States.

V. How to make a contribution to the Fund

42. Governments, non-governmental organizations, and other private or public entities can contribute to the Fund. For more information about the Fund and how to contribute, donors are requested to contact:

Secretariat of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations, CH 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Email: ohchr-unvftv@un.org; telephone: +41 22 917 9315; fax: 41 22 917 9017

43. Donations can also be made online at <https://donatenow.ohchr.org/torture.aspx>. Information on the Fund can be found at www.ohchr.org/torturefund.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

44. **Torture and the unaddressed trauma resulting from torture may have lifelong consequences in terms of physical, psychological and social development, which are felt beyond the individual by families, communities and society as a whole. The need for immediate and long-term specialized health care and psychosocial rehabilitation provided by specialized medical and health-care professionals are essential to overcoming trauma and rebuilding connections. Medical and health-care professionals have a critical role to play in preventing and holding States accountable for torture and rehabilitating torture survivors.**

45. The Fund continues to play an indispensable supporting role to organizations providing such services. Since its establishment 40 years ago, the Fund has awarded more than 5,000 grants to 649 organizations in more than 140 countries, for a total amount of nearly \$200,000,000. In 2022 alone, the Fund has awarded grants to 184 civil society organizations providing direct medical, psychological, social and legal services to more than 46,600 torture survivors, including human rights defenders, political opponents, journalists, student activists, migrants and asylum-seekers, persons with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, children and women in armed conflicts, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples in 92 countries across the world.

46. In 2021, the Fund received 20 contributions, pledges and public donations, totalling \$10,562,424. On the occasion of its fortieth anniversary, the Fund needs to enlarge its donor base and receive a minimum of \$13 million annually to respond more adequately to the high demand for assistance that it receives from rehabilitation centres and other civil society actors worldwide, even though the actual needs of torture victims worldwide are much greater. The Board of Trustees of the Fund and the 16 members of the Group of Friends of the Fund appeal to Member States and other stakeholders to contribute to the Fund.
