

**Cour
Pénale
Internationale**



**International
Criminal
Court**

Second Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims

The Hague, 22 et 23 November 2005

The Second Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims was held on 22-23 November 2005 at the premises of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague. During the meeting the Members of the Board of Directors demonstrated their commitment to work to benefit the victims of crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court, and the families of such victims.

The Trust Fund for Victims was established pursuant to article 79 of the Rome Statute. The Trust Fund will play an important role in assisting victims of crimes falling under the jurisdiction of the Court. The Board is composed of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan, His Excellency Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki of Poland, Madam Minister Simone Veil of France and His Grace Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa. The election of a member of the Board of Directors from the Latin American and Caribbean States is still pending.

Over the two days of the meeting, the Board engaged in discussions on a range of matters relating to the operations of the Trust Fund. The need for the Regulations of the Trust Fund to be adopted by the Assembly of States Parties was one of the principal concerns expressed by the Board of Directors. The Members highlighted the importance of the role of the Trust Fund in restoring victims' lost dignity and showing that their suffering is not ignored, in addition to the material impact of any support that could be provided. Following the same spirit, in his welcoming speech, the Registrar of the ICC outlined the challenges relating to victims. At the request of His Grace Desmond Tutu, a minute's silence was observed for the suffering of victims.

At the first working session, presentations were made on the impact of the crimes on victims by experts from the three country situations under investigation, namely Darfur in Sudan, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

On the same day, representatives of civil society organisations addressed the Members of the Board on issues relating to the structure of the Trust Fund, its management, fundraising needs and issues related to independence, flexibility and transparency. The critical importance of fairness and equality of treatment of victims of the crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC was underlined.

On the second day, addresses were made by Judge Philippe Kirsch, President of the ICC, and by Madam Minister Simone Veil, Chair of the Board of Directors. The innovative role of victims before the ICC was mentioned, as were the challenges to the Trust Fund and the Court itself that are presented by the mandate to benefit victims.

Other sessions focused on financial issues and the proposed Budget for 2006. On the important issue of fundraising, the Board received expert advice from the Head of the Resource Mobilization Unit of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The activities and projects of the Trust Fund for 2006, the establishment of the Secretariat of the Fund and the question of vacancies and the absences of a Member of the Board were considered.

The question of the draft Regulations of the Trust Fund was also discussed. The Board was briefed on the main challenges facing their adoption and the status of the discussions that were still ongoing between States Parties in advance of the upcoming Assembly of States Parties, at which States hoped to adopt the Regulations. The Board urged that the State Parties adopt the Regulations of the Trust Fund at the Assembly of State Parties.

The Members of the Board approved the minutes of the First Meeting, and adopted several decisions regarding the general management of the Trust Fund as well as the relevance and participation of the Board at the Fourth Session of the Assembly of States Parties.

- On the 22nd of November, the first day of the Second Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors, a dinner in honour of His Grace Archbishop Desmond Tutu was kindly hosted by the South African Embassy for the Members of the Board and ICC representatives.
- The Second Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors ended with a fundraising dinner organized by the Netherlands NGO Platform for the ICC. The Netherlands NGO Platform pledged a contribution of 50.000 Euros to the Trust Fund for Victims.