

**VICTIMS RIGHTS WORKING GROUP WELCOMES THE ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE ICC TRUST FUND FOR VICTIMS**

**PRESS STATEMENT: 12 SEPTEMBER 2003**

Nongovernmental organizations and victims' experts welcome the election this morning of five eminent personalities to the Board of Directors of the International Criminal Court's Trust Fund for Victims. This revolutionary fund will help victims of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity heal and rebuild their lives.

*"This election is a pivotal step in enhancing the overall capacity of the Court to meet its commitment to victims of the world's worst crimes,"* said Dr. Yael Danieli, an international expert on victims' rights.

The Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court (ICC) today elected **Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah of Jordan; His Excellency Mr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, former President of Costa Rica and Nobel Peace Laureate; His Excellency Mr. Tadeusz Mazowiecki, former Prime Minister of Poland and former Special Rapporteur on the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on the Territory of the former Yugoslavia; Mme. Simone Veil, former Minister of Health of France and former President of the European Parliament; and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa and Nobel Peace Laureate.**

*"The decision to elect candidates of such high stature and credentials attests to the importance that States Parties place on the plight of victims of the world's most heinous crimes,"* commented Dr. Danieli, who is also a leading member of the Victims' Rights Working Group, a specialized network of NGOs and experts working under the auspices of the NGO Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC).

*"This election will galvanize the conscience of the international community to fulfill its obligations of justice and redress to victims,"* she added.

The ICC seeks to ensure justice for victims not only through criminal trials, but also by helping them through the Trust Fund to overcome the physical and psychological suffering they have endured. The Fund's success is dependent on donations from individuals, organizations, and governments.

In the U.S., individuals can contribute to the Trust Fund by visiting [www.victimstrustfund.org](http://www.victimstrustfund.org).

Individuals can send donations in Euros to the ICC, Maanweg 174, 2516 AB The Hague, The Netherlands.