

## Abstract

### **FOLLOW-UP OF THE AUDIT CONCERNING THE STATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO ASSAULT VICTIMS. (JUSTICE)**

The Court of Audit transmitted to the Chamber of representatives and to the Senate, on 20 November 2002, a report on the *Follow-up of the audit concerning the State financial support to assault victims*. The initial audit, published in October 2000, concluded that the operational means of the Commission entrusted with ruling on the aid requests are insufficient and that the procedure is too cumbersome. The effective processing duration of the requests for financial support as main claim was about 32 months, while the theoretical duration of their processing carried out under good conditions was estimated at 17 months. There was, moreover, a serious backlog of unprocessed requests. Regarding the emergency support, its granting terms were incompatible with the very concept of emergency.

Two years on, the major problems raised by the Court of Audit still have not been resolved. Approximately 1,000 files have been introduced for more than 17 months. In order to reduce this backlog, the Commission should devote its work to it exclusively for two years. The time it takes to grant emergency aid has increased to the point of being similar to the time needed for granting support as main claim. Reducing the duration of the procedure for the victims' compensation would require radical legislative and regulatory changes.

The reform projects submitted by the Minister of Justice widen the scope of the policy of support to victims. Without a proposal aiming at shortening the time for granting aid, and without guarantee regarding the means available to the Commission, this enlargement is likely to increase the processing duration and the backlog.

The Court of Audit has recommended the adoption of temporary measures in order to reduce the latter. As soon as the scope of this legislation is extended, it will be advisable to evaluate its impact and to put new operational means at the disposal of the Commission.

In his answer to the new report of the Court, the Minister of Justice announced the setting up of temporary sections for reducing the backlog and the extension of the secretariat, at least on a provisional basis. The minister wishes to qualify the concept of backlog or the time needed for granting emergency aid and emphasizes the subsidiary character of the State financial support.