



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Board of Trustees Forty-seventh session

UNITAR/BT/2009/1

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) convened in Paris from 29-30 January 2009 for its forty-seventh session.
2. The following members of the Board were present or were represented at the session:

Mr. Lakhdar BRAHIMI..... (Academia)

Mr. CHEN Jian..... (China)

Mr. Simon COMPAORÉ..... (Local authority)

Ms. Shirley FRANKLIN (Local authority)

Ms. Shirin EBADI..... (NGO)

Ms. Radha KUMAR..... (Academia)

Mr. Henri LOPES..... (Congo)

Mr. Valery LOSHCHININ..... (Russian Federation)
Represented by Mr. Alexander Matveev (Designated alternate)

Mr. Jean-Baptiste MATTÉI..... (France)

Mr. Nicolas MICHEL..... (Academia)

Mr. Tõnis NIRK (Chairman)..... (Estonia)

Mr. Henri PROGLIO (Private sector)
Represented by Mr. Dominique HÉRON (Designated alternate)

Ex Officio:

Mr. Carlos LOPES, Executive Director, UNITAR

Secretary:

Ms. Charlotte DIEZ

Observers:

Mr. Achim HALPAAP, Associate Director, Environment Unit, UNITAR

Ms. Margarete HAHNEN, Finance and Administration Section, UNITAR

3. The Chairman welcomed members to Paris and to the forty-seventh session of the Board. The Chairman thanked Ambassador Mattéi and Mr. Henri Proglío for hosting this session of the Board. The Chairman then thanked members for their continued support and paid tribute to the Board's former Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Boulgaris, who acted as Chairman a.i. at the forty-sixth session.
4. The Chairman then announced that in accordance with rule 15 of the Board's rules of procedure, as amended at the 2007 special session, the participation of Mr. Alexander Matveev and Mr. Dominique Héron as the designated alternates of their respective members was approved.
5. The Executive Director joined the Chairman in paying tribute to the hosts for having made possible to convene the Board in a prestigious venue in Paris, the *Musée du Quai Branly*. The Executive Director remarked that the session was taking place in a context of growth for the Institute, despite the situation of the global economy. He was pleased to announce that the interim budget revision showed a growth of over 50.5 per cent from the previous to the current biennium. The Executive Director still considered the budget conservative as several pledges had not yet materialized. The Executive Director then noted that this was a comfortable situation to face possible difficulties in the immediate future. He thanked his colleagues from UNITAR for the energy deployed in implementing the reforms which produced this historical landmark.
6. Under item 2, Adoption of the agenda, the Chairman requested and the Board approved that subitem 5d (Proposed subsidiary body to deal with financial matters and resource mobilization) be dealt with together with the election of the members of the subsidiary body.
7. Under item 3, Proposed organization of work, the suggestions made were adopted. Business would be conducted from 09.30 to 13:00 on the first day, after which members would be invited to a luncheon hosted by Mr. Henri Proglío. A cocktail was offered by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 19.00. For the second day business would be conducted from 09.30 to 13.00.
8. Under item 4, Introduction of new members of the Board and tribute to members whose second term expired on 31 December 2008, the Chairman announced that the Secretary-General had nominated two new members, Ambassador Chen Jian and Professor Nicolas Michel and renewed the appointment of Ambassador Loshchinin for a second term. On behalf of the Board, the Chairman expressed his deepest appreciation to the members whose term had expired on 31 December 2008 (as

listed under the item's annotation) and extended a warm welcome to the new members.

9. The Chairman then introduced item 5 of the agenda, Follow-up from the forty-sixth session of the Board, and proposed that the Board address each subitem separately.
10. Under subitem 5a, Update on the implementation of audit recommendations, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to provide a brief report. In introducing the subject, the Executive Director outlined that a number of auditor recommendations that had accumulated in the past, have since been implemented. These included the clarification of institutional arrangements for POCI and UNOSAT. In the area of IT, recommendations shall be addressed by the end of 2009. The recommendations concerning evaluation remain a pending issue that is partly addressed through the proposal to establish a new evaluation and monitoring manager post at the Institute. The Executive Director expressed his satisfaction that, on the whole, significant credibility had been gained with the Board of Auditors and OIOS, the internal auditors, over the past two years.
11. A number of Board members congratulated the Executive Director for his swift action to address pending auditors' recommendations and ensuring full transparency concerning audit matters, including making auditors reports available to the Board. Questions were raised as to why recommendations concerning financial cash flows, fraud control and geographical distribution of staff were pending and/or of medium priority.
12. In his response, the Executive Director pointed out that the recommendation concerning UNITAR financial accounts could not be addressed by the Institute, since they were handled by the UN Controller. A possible solution to this problem is to reinterpret UNITAR Statute to clarify the Institute's independence in so far as processing accounts and preparing accounting reports is concerned. This would allow for full implementation of accounting standards the Board of external Auditors has been insisting should be followed by the entire UN. Such a move would be premature at this stage. This would only be possible once the Institute has gained more credibility. Concerning measures to prevent fraud, the Institute has set up a committee to investigate post facto transactions. Given the relative small exposure of the Institute to possible fraud resulting from transactions, this was considered adequate. Concerning geographical balance of the staffing table, the Executive Director indicated that all recent managerial appointments were made from underrepresented regions or nationalities not present at the Institute. Since the establishment of a new Appointment and Promotion Board the policy for balancing representation is fully enforced. The Executive Director mentioned that in so far as gender balance was concerned UNITAR featured in the recent account presented on the matter by the Secretary-General of the United Nations as the top performer of the UN system. These efforts will continue in the future.
13. **The Board took note of the fact that the Executive Director had already taken action to implement relevant recommendations contained in the latest report of the Board of Auditors.**
14. Under subitem 5b, Update on the closure of UNITAR POCI and the creation of UNITAR's Peacekeeping Training Programme, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to elaborate. The Executive Director informed the Board that, following several recommendations made by the auditors, the establishment of an appropriate legal and operational framework was proposed and discussed with the Head of UNITAR POCI to align POCI operations with UN procedures. Unfortunately non-

compliance with several requirements led to the closure of the Programme. The Executive Director indicated that the collaboration with the entity delivering the programme ceased in the summer of 2008, after which the matter had been seized by the UN Office of Legal Affairs.

15. The Executive Director reported that POCl registered with a new name, POTI, but continued to use the UNITAR brand in various forms, including in the domain name for its website. The Executive Director indicated that the Institute had requested the opinion of the Office of Legal Affairs on the issue of the fraudulent use of the name and that the legal opinion was imminent. He noted that the operation was significant as it involved 40,000 beneficiaries a year and emphasized that POCl donors had been duly informed on the lack of accountability and consequent closure of the operation.
16. The Executive Director indicated that, in parallel to the closing of POCl operations, efforts were undertaken to set up a new and innovative Peacekeeping Training Programme. It will include three training modules: civilian protection, military and police aspects of peacekeeping. The Executive Director specified that the programme would be overseen by an Advisory Panel headed by the former Head of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and former Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno. The Executive Director was pleased to announce that the first module on civilian protection had received formal support from the Secretary-General and would be launched in the spring of 2009, with the technical cooperation of the largest distance-learning European provider, Open University UK.
17. Invited to offer suggestions on the programme, several Board members emphasized the need to complement distance-learning courses by face-to-face training to reach candidates to peacekeeping in remote locations, prioritizing training of trainers and partnering with existing centres to replicate the courses in local languages. Members also stressed the importance of keeping on board the donors of POCl and asked the Executive Director to elaborate on the funding implications.
18. The Executive Director took note of the various comments and clarified that the objective of the new programme was to sensitize candidates to peacekeeping prior to deployment and optimize outreach through various training methods. He confirmed that funding had already been secured from the Governments of Italy and Sweden for a total amount of US \$600,000 covering part of the running costs. Efforts will be pursued so as to obtain the support of other donors as well as the motivation of major troop-contributing countries.
19. **The Board took note of the closure of UNITAR POCl operations and welcomed the creation of the Peacekeeping Training Programme.**
20. Under subitem 5c, Full integration of UNOSAT into the Institute, the Chairman invited the Executive Director to provide a report. The Executive Director was pleased to announce that the conditions for the full integration of UNOSAT had been met and that UNOSAT was fully integrated into UNITAR since 1 January, 2009 without any liabilities for UNITAR. The Executive Director reminded that UNOSAT had been established by UNITAR to deal with satellite imagery interpretation for UN humanitarian operations. In the future, the services of UNOSAT will be expanded to include training on the interpretation of satellite imagery. Systematic linkages will be established with other UNITAR programmes, for example in the area of environment. The Executive Director also mentioned the important services provided pro-bono by CERN to the Programme and announced that discussions were underway with the City of Bergen and the Government of Norway to support the establishment of a

Centre linked to UNOSAT in Bergen. The Centre will provide significant technical resources and involve hiring three staff members in addition to Geneva-based UNOSAT staff.

21. Board members expressed their appreciation concerning the action taken on UNOSAT. The Executive Director was encouraged to ensure that Programme activities were fully compatible with UNITAR's mandate to avoid possible duplication of activities within the UN system and to expand beneficiary communities.
22. **The Board took note on the full integration of UNOSAT into UNITAR.**
23. Under subitem 5d, Proposed subsidiary body to deal with financial matters and resource mobilization, the Chairman reminded members that Chapter XII of the rules of procedure of the Board of Trustees provides for setting up committees, when appropriate. He recalled that the Board had agreed at the forty-sixth session to consider establishment of subsidiary bodies or other arrangements to follow matters such as finances and resource mobilization. Taking this decision into account, he had requested the Secretariat to make a proposal in this regard to the forty-seventh session of the Board. The Chairman also pointed out that, in their considerations to establish a possible subsidiary body, members may consider amending the rules of procedure of the Board of Trustees.
24. The Executive Director indicated that the idea of setting up a Committee on Finance was to relieve the Board from discussing detailed finance matters at its regular sessions, thus allowing it to focus more on substantive issues. The Chairman clarified that Committee members would be elected from the Board. The Committee would review matters such as the Institute's budget and audit reports, on behalf of the Board, and prepare relevant discussions at the regular sessions the Board. It would have at its disposal all relevant financial and administrative documentation to discharge its tasks.
25. Members welcomed the proposal of establishing a Committee on Finance. **The Board decided to establish a Committee on Finance to deal with financial matters and resource mobilization and to adopt the following terms of reference for the Committee:**

Establishment and composition: The Board establishes a Committee on Finance, thereafter referred to as the Committee. The Board shall elect three of its members to serve on the Committee. The members shall hold office for the duration of their mandate. They shall elect a chair amongst themselves.

Mandate: The Committee shall provide advice to the Board on the following subjects:

- Estimates provided by the Executive Director at such times and for such periods as the Board may determine.
- Statements provided by the Executive Director at such times and for such periods as the Board may determine.
- Rules and procedures applicable to the financial operations of the Institute.
- Resource mobilization
- Audit reports

Procedure: The Committee shall report to the Board on a yearly basis or when requested. A report from the Committee shall be presented by the Chairman at

regular Board sessions. The Board shall adopt the budget of the Institute on the basis of recommendations of the Committee.

Conduct of business: The Committee shall hold at least one regular session per year, at a venue to be agreed in consultation with the Executive Director of UNITAR. The session may be combined with a regular Board meeting.

26. The Board also decided to amend the Rules of Procedure of the Board of Trustees so then Chapter VI would now read as follows:

Rule 26bis

The Board shall set up a Committee on Finance to review the financial documents and the strategy on resource mobilization submitted by the Executive Director at such times the Board may determine. The Committee shall provide recommendations to the Board.

Rule 27

The Executive Director shall submit, through the Committee on Finance, budget estimates to the Board for its review and approval at such times and for such periods as the Board may determine.

As provided in the Statute of the Institute, the Board shall be consulted on the special rules and procedures applicable to the financial operations of the Institute.

Rule 28

At such times as the Board may determine, the Executive Director shall submit to the Board, through the Committee on Finance, a financial statement showing the receipts, expenditures and commitments of the Institute's special account.

27. The Chairman was invited to proceed with consultations, after which one member of the Board proposed Ms. Shirley Franklin, Ambassador Loshchinin and Ambassador Mattéi as members of the Committee. The proposal was adopted by acclamation

28. Under subitem 5e, Update on the request for financing the core diplomatic training of UNITAR, the Chairman invited the Executive Director to provide an update. Mr. Lopes explained that core diplomatic training is offered by UNITAR for the UN, on the UN, and carried out at the UN. In 2008, the programme had reached out to over 4,000 diplomats in various UN locations, including participation from some 187 Member States. The Executive Director also indicated that UNITAR diplomacy training is the only programme of the Institute that does not have a stable funding base. Since services are used by all Member States, it would be appropriate that the entire UN membership supports the Programme, through its regular UN budget.

29. The Executive Director recalled that, in 2008, the Secretary-General had recommended that 50 per cent of the costs of the core diplomatic training (US\$600,000 annually) be provided through the United Nations regular budget. The Economic and Social Council considered the issue favourably in July 2008 and called upon the Secretary-General to provide additional information on the financial implications of the request and to share this information with the Advisory and Budgetary (Fifth) Committee of the General Assembly. In the report of the Secretary-General before the Fifth Committee (A/63/592), the Secretary-General reiterated that the subvention should be granted from the assessed contributions to the United Nations, starting in 2010-2011. The Executive Director indicated that the final discussions and decision on this matter will take place at the resumed session of the

Fifth Committee in April 2009. Prior to a decision by the Fifth Committee, the matter will be reviewed by the United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) in early February.

30. Following a brief discussion on alternative sources of funding, **the Board expressed the hope that ACABQ would consider positively the request to finance the Institute's core diplomatic training, as recommended by the Secretary-General in his report (A/63/592). Further, the Board expressed its full support for a similar position to be taken by the Fifth Committee.**
31. Under sub item 5f, Update on resource mobilization, the Chairman invited the Executive Director to take the floor to provide an update. The Executive Director drew attention to the detailed information provided in background documentation for the meeting. He emphasized that the resource mobilization strategy adopted by the Board in Rabat, which emphasized strategic fundraising for the entire Institute, rather than for specific programmes, had proven successful, as documented by the revised 2008-2009 Budget of the Institute. A major three-year contribution by the Government of Spain will allow the Institute to strengthen its capacity to deliver training activities in the Spanish language for beneficiaries from Ibero-American countries.
32. The Board agreed with the current strategy and, while congratulating the Executive Director and the staff for their achievements, drew attention to the need to clarify that the Institute should expand its programmes into Spanish rather than use Spanish as a working language.
33. **The Board took note of the excellent progress made in implementing UNITAR's Resource Mobilization Strategy.**
34. Under subitem 5g, Update on follow-up to consolidated legal opinion on UNITAR's autonomy, the Chairman invited the Executive Director to report on the follow-up to the legal opinion issued by the UN Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) on 13 May 2008. The Executive Director reminded that the Institute had received diverse legal opinions in the past and that a full interpretation was needed on the Institute's autonomy based on the Statute. He mentioned that three outstanding issues needed additional clarification. These matters include the classification of posts, the delegation of authority for procurement, and the management of expenditures and payments. The Executive Director indicated that the classification of posts up to P-5 level was granted to the Institute by the Head of the Office for Human Resources Management (OHRM), effective 1 December 2008. Regarding procurement, the Executive Director announced that the Department of Management had entrusted him with a delegation of authority covering amounts up to US\$ 100,000 as of 1 December 2008. Concerning expenditures and payments, the Executive Director indicated that discussions would be pursued with the Controller with the goal to clarify the interpretation of the scope of the Controller's prerogatives vis-à-vis the Institute.
35. **The Board took note of the swift follow-up concerning action on the consolidated legal opinion on UNITAR's autonomy issued by the Office of Legal Affairs.**
36. Under item 6 of the agenda, the Executive Director presented the budget revision for the biennium 2008 – 2009. In presenting the budget, he reminded members that the UNITAR budget was prepared on a biennial basis and that the document submitted to the Board's approval was a mid-term revision within the current biennium reflecting recent developments.

37. The Executive Director was pleased to announce that the predictions on budget growth had been surpassed, from an expected 26 per cent increase to a 50.5 per cent increase actually achieved in comparison to the previous biennium. He recalled that the Board had cautioned the Secretariat about over-ambition, when approving the budget in December 2007. Consistent with this advice, the revised budget was a conservative estimate which does not include several contributions subject to final negotiations. The new revised budget figures take into account results from a successful resource mobilization strategy, the integration of UNOSAT, and the establishment of a new Peacekeeping Training Programme. A list of major donors of the Institute was circulated. The Executive Director confirmed that Spain will become the number one donor of UNITAR for the 2008-2009 biennium.
38. Several members congratulated the Executive Director for the progress made in such a short period of time. **The Board approved the revised budget for the biennium 2008-2009.**
39. Under subitems 7 a and 7b of the agenda, Mr. Achim Halpaap, Associate Director and Head of UNITAR's Environment Unit, presented the three Programmes grouped within UNITAR's Environment Unit, followed by a synopsis of the draft 2009-2010 UNITAR internal environment strategy. Concerning the three Environment Unit Programmes, which include Chemicals and Waste Management, Climate Change, and Environmental Governance, the presentation introduced training methodologies developed and offered through the Programmes; provided examples of the impact achieved through the training; and highlighted strategic openings and objectives for the year 2009. An example of a possible opening is the development of a One UN Climate Change Training Service Platform that would support UN agencies and Member States in designing and delivering effective climate change training through collaboration among UN agencies.
40. Mr. Halpaap proceeded by presenting the draft UNITAR 2009 internal environment strategy. He summarized the results of an internal consultative process that involved all UNITAR programmes and offices to develop a coherent UNITAR approach in the area of environmental training across the Institute. Immediate objectives of the strategy include enhancing internal information exchange on ongoing and planned environmental activities; facilitating joint planning and cooperation across programmes and offices; and ensuring coherent and effective resources mobilization.
41. A number of Board members expressed their appreciation for the work undertaken by the Institute in the area of environmental training. In the discussion, a number of issues and questions were raised. First, the internal environment strategy should spell out in more detail both methodological and operational aspects of training delivered by the Institute, including selection of target audiences and defining educational/learning objectives. Second, it would be valuable to learn more about partnerships of the Institute with other UN agencies, given that UNITAR is only one of several organizations in the UN system providing environmental training. Third, the importance of working at all levels of governance was highlighted, including training for, and in partnership with local authorities. Fourth, members provided suggestions concerning sharing of best practices through training and on substantive aspects of training in areas such as clean energy development and enforcement of environmental legislation. Finally, members highlighted the importance of developing and implementing more systematically train-the-trainers strategies.
42. Responding to the comments, the Executive Director highlighted that the development of the UNITAR internal environment strategy was an important element of implementing the broader UNITAR Strategic Reform Plan which had been

endorsed by the Board as its forty-fifth session in 2007. This relationship explains the current inward looking focus of the strategy. The name “strategy” thus could be modified to communicate more effectively the current nature of the exercise. Subsequent phases of the process will address more systematically questions directly linked to the design, delivery and evaluation of environmental training in the field. He also noted the specific role of the Institute in providing ‘executive’ training which specifically targets active professionals. Concerning partnerships with UN agencies, the Associate Director provided a number of specific examples, where UNITAR conducts training jointly with other UN agencies. He stressed that environmental training activities undertaken by the Institute were conducted almost exclusively with UN partners. Within these partnerships, UNITAR provides expertise in training design and delivery, while partners contribute substantive knowledge.

43. The Secretariat expressed its willingness to prepare a comprehensive list of partnerships. Concerning training at various levels of governance, the three Programmes of the Environment Unit have traditionally worked with national governments, given that the Programmes are linked to multilateral environmental agreements, implementation of which is coordinated at the national level. The Secretariat indicated, however, that the UNITAR internal environment strategy provided a good opportunity to foster synergies of activities undertaken through the Environment Unit with environmental training provided through UNITAR’s Local Development Programme and its associated CIFAL Centres.
44. The Chairman summarized the discussions and expressed his appreciation for the presentation made by the Secretariat. **The Board took note of and commended UNITAR environmental training programmes and suggested the further development by UNITAR of training objectives, design, delivery and evaluation in this field.**
45. Under subitem 7c, Mr. Halpaap introduced the 2008 UNITAR Climate Neutral Policy and Strategy, which included three components: the development of an annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions of the Institute; setting of emission reduction targets; and offsetting of remaining emission by investing in projects under the UN-endorsed Clean Development Mechanism. The initiative is a swift measure of the Institute to implement a decision of the UN Chief Executives Board to move the UN towards carbon neutral operations. He emphasized that a major objective of UNITAR’s climate neutral policy was to reduce carbon emissions per person trained and units of training delivered through the increased use of technology-aided learning.
46. Board Members welcomed the initiative, but emphasized that face-to-face training was an effective tool in a number of training contexts. The Executive Director clarified that face-to-face training would indeed remain an important pillar of training services provided by the Institute. He also reiterated the commitment of the Institute to be one of the leading organizations in the UN system to achieve climate neutral operations.
47. **The Board expressed support for UNITAR’s Climate Neutral Policy and Strategy and recommended that implementation of the policy takes effect immediately.**
48. Under Item 8, Any other business, the Chairman proceeded with the election of the Vice-Chairman since Ambassador Boulgaris’ term had expired on 31 December 2008 and opened the floor for possible nominations. One member took the floor to put forward the nomination of Ms. Radha Kumar, which was seconded by other members. **Ms. Radha Kumar was elected by the Board as the next Vice-Chairman by acclamation.**

49. The Chairman then opened the floor for suggestions of other items to be discussed. One member took the floor to propose developing States' capacity to enforce international criminal justice through training in support of current efforts to end the culture of impunity. An important discussion ensued with the engagement of all members of the Board. Several considerations were made about the feasibility of the Institute's involvement in new areas relating to human rights, culture of impunity, national judicial systems and peace and reconciliation mechanisms.
50. The Executive Director responded to the comments and mentioned that the Institute's International Law Programme, which had been active since 1965 in collaboration with the International Court of Justice, did cover partly the issues raised, and that the new Civilian Protection Course being established included a human rights and cultural awareness as well as ethics of peacekeeping components. On the issue of collaboration with OHCHR, the Institute is developing training for diplomats in Geneva on the Human Rights Council machinery. The Executive Director proposed that at the next Board session the Secretariat should present a fully-fledged report on human rights activities and list all the activities undertaken by the Institute that already addressed the issues raised.
51. Members welcomed the proposal and the Chairman noted that its feasibility would need further review by the Secretariat. **The Board considered it necessary to evaluate at the appropriate juncture the possibility to include the judiciary issues into the Institute's training programmes. The Board proposed to discuss this issue on the basis of a fully-fledged report to be prepared by the Secretariat for the next Board session.**
52. Another member raised concerns about the need for more training dealing with the financial crisis. The concern was seconded by several members. The Executive Director mentioned activities covering the issues raised and announced more courses dealing with economic alternatives and financial regulation.
53. The Executive Director informed the Board about the new website of the Institute. He also asked support from Board members for resource mobilization and gave examples on how this could be done.
54. **The Board expressed its solidarity with one of its members, Ms. Shirin Ebadi, who had experienced major obstacles to conduct her work in the field of human rights.**
55. The Board decided that its next session would take place on 12 and 13 November 2009 in Geneva to respect the budgetary calendar.