

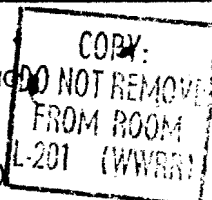
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SECOND COMMITTEE
12th meeting
held on
Friday, 15 October 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 12th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. FAFOWORA (Nigeria)



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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 73: TRAINING AND RESEARCH (continued) (A/37/14, A/37/3 (part II), A/37/31 and A/37/111)

- (a) UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
- (b) UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY: REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

1. Mrs. ZHANG (China) said that, in recent years, UNITAR had continued to expand its programme, engaging in substantial research and training activities and organizing seminars on major economic and social issues including the establishment of the new international economic order. It had also made tremendous efforts to overcome its financial difficulties and, by nationalizing its work and adopting ways to broaden its sources of income and reduce its expenditure, it had balanced its budget for the first time in three years.

2. Her delegation was saddened to learn of the impending retirement of the Executive Director, who by his dedication and talent, had contributed to the establishment of relations of co-operation between China and the Institute.

3. Since its establishment, the United Nations University (UNU), had conducted many useful studies, in particular, on global economics, hunger and poverty, human and social development as well as the application of science and technology. It had also made an effort to help the developing countries improve the utilization of their resources and environment.

4. Through the concerted efforts of the whole population, China, a developing socialist country, had established an independent and relatively integrated economic system. Although it had indisputably made remarkable progress in the field of science, culture and education the level of development of its national economy was still relatively low for, like most third world countries, it was facing formidable tasks in its efforts to establish an independent national economy. Accordingly, her delegation hoped that UNITAR and UNU would concentrate on studying and resolving several outstanding problems encountered by the developing countries in their efforts to achieve national economic development and thus make a realistic contribution towards the development of the third world.

5. Finally, her delegation reaffirmed its support for the work of UNITAR and UNU in the field of development and expressed the hope that China's links of co-operation with those two bodies would be further strengthened.

6. Mr. ABDULLAH (Indonesia) noted that the financial resources upon which UNITAR and the United Nations University depended for their survival had been cut back at the very time when those institutions needed them most in order to study the grave economic and political problems facing the world. However, despite its financial difficulties and the retrenchment of its programmes, UNITAR had achieved

(Mr. Abdullah, Indonesia)

substantial results. In that connection he cited the programme for regional and interregional co-operation in the 1980s, the recent seminar on multilateral diplomacy and the new international economic order and the studies on the progressive development of the principles of international law relating to the new international economic order, all of which should contribute to the continuing debate on the reform of the world economic system in the United Nations. His delegation also supported the work carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, not only because of the flagrant waste of resources on armaments but also because disarmament was imperative for the survival of mankind.

7. Part of the Project on the Future related to the implementation of the new international economic order and research in the field of energy and natural resources. Those areas were particularly important as the prospects for accelerated development of the developing countries were dependent upon them.

8. Research was an important function of any organization that wished to remain viable and relevant to its time. UNITAR's Division of Research was very dynamic. In that connection, his delegation reaffirmed its full confidence in the general thrust and direction of UNITAR's research, both that related to the functions and objectives of the United Nations and that related to regional co-operation for development.

9. It was gratifying to know that UNITAR had at last succeeded in balancing its budget through its own efforts and the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. However, if UNITAR was to perform its task effectively and meet the needs of the United Nations, it would require far greater resources than were currently available to it. His delegation therefore supported the recommendation made by the Joint Inspection Unit and backed by the Executive Director that UNITAR should have a core budget. At the same time it appealed to all countries to increase their voluntary contributions so as to enhance the effectiveness of UNITAR's role in the United Nations system.

10. His delegation also wished to pay tribute to the Executive Director - who was shortly to retire - for his dedicated service to UNITAR over more than 10 years.

11. The United Nations University was still a young institution; however, its international impact was steadily increasing. For example, the implementation of the Medium-Term Perspective of its new programme focusing on five themes was well underway and its role within the international organizations and international academic community was becoming well defined.

12. As a free and autonomous international institution, the University should address questions which were central to the human condition. The promise of the University to mobilize the international academic community so as to contribute to the building of a better world was beginning to be fulfilled.

13. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that, despite their financial difficulties, UNITAR and the United Nations University would fully implement their respective mandates in the efforts to achieve the objectives of the United Nations.

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14. Mr. TETTAMANI (Argentina) said that the training and research activities should be broadly supported for they were extremely useful in promoting a better understanding of the complex problems facing the international community.

15. The studies carried out by UNITAR in such fields as disarmament, the law of the sea and the new international economic order, and its organization of seminars on various themes not only contributed to the training of diplomats and other officials but also helped to publicize, through multilateral contacts, what had been accomplished and what might be accomplished in those fields. It was gratifying to see that the Executive Director had made a great effort to submit a balanced budget in 1982.

16. His delegation also supported the activities of the United Nations University and, in particular, its ambitious new programme of work. Such issues as peace, poverty, development and information needs related, directly or indirectly, to most present-day problems.

17. As the Joint Inspection Unit had stated in its report (A/37/111), the ultimate test of the United Nations University would be its capacity to produce ideas and solutions. However, since universal solutions to problems of socio-economic development might at times be an illusion, efforts must be made to build, within individual developing countries, the institutional and infrastructural capacity for development research and for the application of such research. The efforts to co-ordinate the work of UNITAR, UNU, the various institutions of the United Nations and the scientific and academic communities were extremely positive.

18. The crisis in resources affecting the various institutions was particularly serious for those, like UNITAR and UNU, which were dependent on voluntary contributions for their funding and whose activities produced results only in the long-term. Accordingly, his delegation expressed its support for the activities of those two institutions and urged them to redouble their efforts in the performance of their tasks.

19. Mr. DHARAT (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that he was gratified to see that the United Nations Institute for Training and Research was continuing its work despite its financial difficulties.

20. With regard to training, seminars for new representatives and diplomats were important, since many diplomats, including his country's nationals, had thus had an opportunity to familiarize themselves further with questions relating to international law, the law of the sea, economic development and the new international economic order.

21. Many developing countries did not have institutes for advanced technical studies where they could train their nationals under programmes such as those conducted by the Institute. UNITAR therefore played a major role regarding assistance to developing countries.

22. His country maintained close co-operation with UNITAR in the field of training, and it had concluded an agreement with UNITAR to develop the Institute

(Mr. Dharat, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

for International Relations at Tripoli. Moreover, it maintained constant contact with UNITAR with a view to establishing a translation and interpretation institute. The report of UNITAR (A/37/14) reflected his country's interest in the Institute's activities, with regard to both participation in training programmes and financial contributions to the Institute.

23. His country's great interest in training did not mean that it had no interest in the Institute's research activities. The studies and other works published by UNITAR met with keen interest in the Jamahiriya.

24. Furthermore, his delegation welcomed the establishment by UNITAR of close co-operation with the United Nations specialized agencies and bodies outside the United Nations, such as OPEC. It also appreciated the efforts made by the Institute to reduce its expenditure, to increase its resources and to balance its 1982 budget. He agreed with the Executive Director that UNITAR must be guaranteed stable financial resources so that it could continue to play its role effectively.

25. It could be seen from the report of the United Nations University (A/37/31) that there had been an improvement in the University's activities. The University had modified its structures in order to broaden the scope of its programmes and to strengthen its intellectual and administrative capacity.

26. The Medium-Term Perspective, 1982-1987, as adopted by the Council of the University at its eighteenth session, represented a decisive stage in the University's activities. He was pleased that the themes selected for that perspective were the economy, hunger, poverty, security and technology.

27. His delegation was in favour of the strengthening of the University's role and training programmes through the granting of a greater number of fellowships to developing countries, particularly those that had not already benefited from its programmes.

28. Decentralization of the University, the strengthening of the relations it maintained with scientific bodies in the developing countries and the dissemination of its research works in a growing number of developing countries, if possible in the official languages of the United Nations, would enable more third-world countries to keep informed about its work and activities.

29. His delegation also welcomed the proposal that an African institute for natural resources should be established. That initiative would help to develop African activities in the field of prospecting for natural resources and to strengthen the capacity of African bodies in that area.

30. Mr. HATEM (Egypt) said that it would seem legitimate for the General Assembly to ensure the viability of all its subsidiary organs financed through voluntary contributions. Unfortunately, those organs were in an alarming financial position, primarily as a result of the reduction in the level of contributions from donor countries. The General Assembly should therefore take immediate action with a view to persuading the donor countries to raise their contributions, or at least to maintain their present level of contributions.

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(Mr. Hatem, Egypt)

31. In that connection, his delegation supported the recommendation made by the Joint Inspection Unit that a core budget should be established for UNITAR in order to guarantee its financial stability, on the understanding that such a budget would be used only for covering administrative expenses and that operational activities would be financed from voluntary contributions.

32. His delegation noted with appreciation that, for the first time in three years, UNITAR had succeeded in balancing its budget. His Government would announce its contribution to UNITAR at the forthcoming pledging conference, which was to take place in November 1982.

33. UNITAR was in an exceptionally advantageous position for undertaking scientific research on United Nations short- and long-term problems, and such research could also be of great benefit to the developing countries.

34. In that regard, continuation of the studies in United Nations policy and efficacy should be encouraged, since those studies made it possible to propose solutions with a view to strengthening the Organization's efficacy. The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization could be an excellent subject for study for that purpose.

35. Furthermore, the study on disaster relief operations was a useful contribution to the endeavour to tackle human and natural disasters in a more standardized manner. Similarly, the studies on the outcome of the negotiations on the law of the sea and on the eleventh special session of the General Assembly provided lessons that could be of benefit in future multilateral negotiations.

36. However, his delegation expected that UNITAR would focus its research on new areas, particularly on the developing countries' needs. It should be noted that by 1982 over 7,000 diplomats and other officials had benefited from the training programmes of UNITAR. The workshop on international negotiations held by UNITAR with a view to promoting the negotiating skills of diplomats was a valuable contribution, since it had made it possible to show that negotiations were an effective means of achieving the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

37. His country had co-operated with UNITAR by hosting the highly successful training and refresher course in international law for African countries.

38. His delegation hoped that UNITAR would establish in-depth training programmes in the areas of disarmament and the drafting of legal instruments, and believed that it was important to hold "on-the-job" seminars for representatives to organizations of the United Nations system in order to keep them up to date with developments in issues before the Organization.

39. With regard to the reports of the Council of the United Nations University (A/37/31) and the Joint Inspection Unit (A/37/111), his delegation had been particularly interested in the JIU recommendations concerning the following points: the importance of greater co-ordination among the existing programmes of the United Nations University and, if possible, the expansion of those programmes;

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(Mr. Hatem, Egypt)

the need to develop the UNU network in such a way as to enable the University to evolve from a single-centred institution to a decentralized global system; the need for each project or activity to have a cost limit and a definite time frame; the need for UNU to maintain its present character and not move towards a degree-granting university of the traditional type, to devote itself to building up, in the developing countries, the institutional and infrastructural capacity for development research and to tackle political and economic issues that might not yet be "mature" for consideration in United Nations forums.

40. His delegation believed that there should be closer co-ordination between the research programmes of UNITAR, the United Nations University, other United Nations institutions, and national and international research institutions.

41. He wished to pay a tribute to the Executive Director of UNITAR for the dedication he had shown and the tireless efforts he had made over the past 10 years.

42. Mr. POGREBENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that present circumstances made it necessary to concentrate on problems of international security and disarmament, since it was difficult to tackle development problems without first having achieved the objectives of disarmament and detente. Thus far UNITAR, in its research work and study projects, had not attached enough importance to those questions, despite a few recent steps in that direction, including the preparation by the USSR, at the request of the Institute, of a paper entitled "Prevention of nuclear war: the position of Soviet scholars". Needless to say, UNITAR studies on international security and political development should be undertaken in co-ordination with the competent United Nations services, particularly the Department of Political Affairs. Such co-ordination was by no means adequate.

43. The USSR was pleased to note that the project entitled "Role of the public sector in the economic and social development of African countries", which was financed by its contribution and in which Soviet scholars were participating, was continuing successfully. In September 1982, a seminar attended by specialists from many African countries had been held in the Soviet Union under that project. The USSR had also organized in September-October 1982, with UNITAR participation, two other seminars on the economic and social development of developing countries. Among the other valuable activities of the Institute had been the Second International Conference on Heavy Crude and Tar Sands, the implementation of whose decisions should result in better solutions to the energy problems of States Members of the United Nations.

44. However, some of the work undertaken by UNITAR during the past two years, such as the studies in United Nations policy and efficacy, had been of questionable value. The Institute should focus instead on the settlement of such problems as the strengthening of peace and security and of international co-operation, the impediments to the process of restructuring international economic relations, the negative aspects of the activities of transnational corporations and the draining of the resources of developing countries.

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(Mr. Pogrebenko, USSR)

45. Despite its financial difficulties, the Institute was also continuing some questionable studies under the project "Regional and interregional co-operation in the 1980s". It would be better to concentrate on co-ordinating its work with that of other organizations of the United Nations system and with the principal units of the United Nations Secretariat. Such co-ordination would prevent duplication and waste of human and financial resources. In addition, UNITAR should plan its expenditure in the light of its financial resources, and the effectiveness of the work of its major units should not suffer from a diminution of those resources.

46. Lastly, the Soviet Union was pleased to note that UNITAR had achieved a balanced budget in 1982 and that its administration had profited from the views expressed over the last few years by delegations which had been in favour of continuing the present method of financing the Institute.

47. Mr. BARREIRO (Uruguay) said that, ever since its establishment, UNITAR had been doing valuable work in the field of training. It was unfortunate that financial difficulties had forced it to restrict its training activities. The Institute's research work was of very great interest, particularly the Project on the Future. With regard to the latter, consideration should be given to the general context of development or, in other words, to the factors hindering economic growth and the elements which played a positive role. Only a model that was based on all those variables could be universally applicable. The use of normative criteria should also be avoided, since they were always difficult to quantify with complete objectivity. Lastly, studies should be limited to the international context, without encroaching on the prerogatives of countries, which were the sole masters of their national development policies.

48. It had been wise to devote much of the Institute's research to the international energy market, since any planning in that area must necessarily be based on a comprehensive study. The Institute had been right to concentrate on petroleum prices, which were a basic factor in the search for new sources of energy. However, that must be a subject of ongoing study, since energy price movements vitally affected the international economy, and particularly the economies of oil-importing developing countries. It would be useful to see how the model devised by UNITAR for determining the "optimum" price of oil could be applied to other commodities and to hear what the outcome of the talks with UNCTAD and OPEC on the subject had been. Lastly, he would like to know whether any appreciable progress had been made in the last few years on the question of substitute products to make up for the inadequacy of natural resources, since the developing countries could not accept theories that regarded growth as a limited process and did not take into account the tremendous capacity of mankind for scientific and technological progress.

49. His delegation was pleased to note that UNITAR had been able to improve its finances while retaining its status as a basically autonomous institution.

(Mr. Barreiro, Uruguay)

50. The report of the United Nations University (A/37/31) was too sketchy and did not give enough details about the work of the University, despite the fact that it was at the centre of a whole network of training and research work. It would be interesting, for example, to have more information on subprogramme (b) (Energy systems and policy), the studies on the food-energy nexus (subprogramme (g)) and the studies relating to energy planning and evaluation of new technology, which were very important for energy-importing developing countries. It would also be interesting to know whether any attention had been given to the use of fossil fuels and its impact on the environment, especially the serious problem of the cooling of the atmosphere which they might cause.

51. He agreed with the Joint Inspection Unit (A/37/111, para. 30) that the University should establish a planning and evaluation unit, which would report directly to the Rector and whose report would be annexed to that of the Council of the University. Uruguay approved of what the University was doing, but it should follow more closely the instructions given in resolution 34/112, paragraph 3, and ensure broader geographical coverage in its activities, which should be concerned mainly with the problems of developing countries. It was also extremely important that the University should focus on major environmental problems. Generally speaking, United Nations bodies should systematically co-ordinate their research and training activities, in order to avoid overlapping and to work more effectively.

52. Mr. TANIGUCHI (Japan) said that he found the Joint Inspection Unit's report on the United Nations University (A/37/111) very encouraging. The University was entering a new phase, in which it could be expected to make major progress towards attaining its basic goals. In that respect, the Medium-Term Perspective might well usher in a new era. However, there was a need first to define priorities at the programming stage and then, in the implementation phase, to focus on a small number of priority programmes, the objectives of which must be clearly defined.

53. As the Rector of the University had said, the University should be thought of as a kind of early warning system, helping to define problem areas and formulating policy options. It was also good to hear that the University was endeavouring to become a more decentralized and multicentral global institution. But in order to achieve that, it was essential for the University to have more interaction with the United Nations system and with the world's academic and scientific communities. It had already taken active steps to achieve those ends (for instance, at the Nairobi Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy), but more was needed, including a strengthening of the potential of the Tokyo Centre. His Government intended to do everything possible to strengthen the infrastructural base of the University, which it hoped would become an intellectual world centre. It had already provided a plot of land and was at present studying the question of the University's permanent headquarters. However, contributions from Governments were still far short of what was required to achieve the necessary twofold increase in core income over a period of five years. An increase in the number of contributing Governments would not only strengthen the financial base but also demonstrate world-wide support for the University.

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(Mr. Taniguchi, Japan)

54. With regard to UNITAR, he expressed particular appreciation to the retiring Executive Director, Mr. Nicol. UNITAR had made invaluable contributions in the field of training and research; in particular, it organized with the World Bank very important annual seminars and it had published many valuable studies. His Government, which had continuously supported the Institute's activities, made contributions to its regular budget as well as appropriations from funds in trust. He was happy to note that in 1982 a balanced budget had been achieved. In view of the financial difficulties from which the Institute would no doubt continue to suffer, it was absolutely essential that it should rationalize its operations. Training, being specifically assigned to UNITAR, should be maintained and if possible strengthened; on the other hand, since research work was being carried out by many other organizations within the United Nations system, co-ordination between their activities and those of UNITAR should be improved.

55. Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) said that his country attached special importance to United Nations training and research activities. In that field UNITAR was an indispensable institution because of its dedication to the causes which the Charter set out to defend - peace, security and development - and because it transcended ideologies and national or regional self-interest. The training courses and seminars and the research programmes were very valuable and deserved support.

56. Among UNITAR's research programmes, which dealt with such high-priority subjects as economic development, operational co-ordination and rationalization, and system-wide planning, his delegation attached special importance to the Project on the Future, an ideal one for UNITAR since it was in a good position to undertake the essential scientific research. The search for alternative strategies for the establishment of a new economic order was increasingly imperative and the policy choices for the Project on the Future seemed to be prudent. It was to be hoped, however, that the study on technology, domestic distribution and North-South relations would not be confined to describing phenomena but would also propose alternative approaches, particularly with regard to the development of countries involved in that process. Under "regional approaches to the problématique of the future", two of the analyses were of particular interest to Tunisia: first, that on the strategies for the future of Africa, which raised the issues of whether the establishment of a new international economic order would lose its relevance for the continent if it were to confine itself to exercising only formal control over its natural resources and abandon the goal of industrialization, and of what alternatives were available to Africans in planning their future in accordance with the Lagos Plan of Action; and, secondly, the analysis of "strategies of co-operation in the Mediterranean area", which described a model social structure capable of encouraging such co-operation. Tunisia also attached great importance to UNITAR's research on energy and natural resources.

57. The Institute should have all the material and human resources it needed. It could not rely exclusively on voluntary contributions, which were often limited, and it was hard to understand why it should not be financed by the regular budget of the United Nations. His delegation urged all those who were opposed to that arrangement to reconsider their position, and it hoped that all States that could do so would substantially increase their voluntary contributions.

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(Mr. Slim, Tunisia)

58. With regard to the United Nations University, a tribute was due to the work accomplished by that international community of scholars, which reflected diverse cultures, languages, schools of thought and social systems. His delegation was gratified by the adoption of the medium-term perspective for 1982-1987 and endorsed the five major themes chosen. However, UNU and UNITAR should co-ordinate their research work in order to avoid overlapping and wasteful expenditure.

59. Mr. GIBSON (New Zealand) said that while New Zealand's direct involvement in the activities of the United Nations University had been limited so far, it had been contributing for a number of years to the general resources of UNITAR and had a high regard for its research activities and for its practical and relevant training programmes. In that connection, his delegation was gratified by the measures taken to strengthen the co-ordination of training activities within the United Nations system (A/37/14, para. 96) and by the continued co-operation between UNITAR and the United Nations University; their activities should complement each other as effectively as possible.

60. He welcomed the news that for 1982 UNITAR had achieved a balanced budget. He paid a tribute to the Executive Director of UNITAR for the efforts he had made to that end; continuing vigilance would, however, be necessary because smaller organizations like UNITAR were often the first to suffer in times of financial stringency. Moreover while the institution of a core budget might provide some financial stability to UNITAR, there might also be a decline in resources because States that were providing voluntary contributions might be less inclined to do so if UNITAR's operating costs were a charge on the United Nations regular budget. His delegation accordingly favoured maintaining the financing of UNITAR by voluntary contributions. In conclusion, he paid a tribute to the Executive Director, Mr. Nicol, for his tireless dedication to UNITAR.

61. Mr. DANIELSEN (Norway) thanked the Executive Director of UNITAR for his report and for his devoted efforts over the previous ten years on behalf of UNITAR. It was her hope that the Institute's studies on the International Law Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the Conference on the Law of the Sea would give impetus to the discussion of how to enhance the importance of the United Nations system. Her delegation believed that UNITAR, given its limited resources, should give priority in its work programme to research activities on the United Nations system itself; it should serve as a catalyst and co-ordinator of research conducted under other programmes or in various national institutes that was applicable to the United Nations system. It also believed, that in view of the practical value of UNITAR's training programmes for government representatives working with multilateral questions, the scope of those programmes should not be reduced despite existing financial constraints.

62. She noted with satisfaction that for the first time in three years UNITAR had been able to balance its budget by a reduction in staff and a vigorous fund-raising effort. Since UNITAR needed a more predictable financial base, consideration should be given to the possibility of including some of the Institute's administrative expenditure in the regular budget of the United Nations. The

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(Mr. Danielson, Norway)

increase in special-purpose grants meant that a major part of UNITAR's work fell outside the effective priority-setting of the Board of Trustees. In conclusion, her delegation appealed to all Governments to increase their contributions to the general resources of UNITAR.

63. Mr. LEIDO (Philippines) said that what was common to the research work of UNITAR and United Nations University was its practical application to chronic problems of peace and development. His delegation attached special importance to the work of the Global Learning Division of the University and its three objectives: promoting more equitable distribution of capacity to have access to knowledge, encouragement of the understanding of local and national problems in their global dimensions and study of the problems and opportunities created by the rapid growth of new communications and information technology. In that connection it was his hope that the staff of the Division would soon be up to strength so that it could achieve its objectives.

64. Studies had shown that large differences in productivity between societies or segments of a single national society were largely due to unequal access to technical knowledge and price information. His delegation was accordingly gratified to note that the United Nations University had undertaken studies, under Theme V, in eight Asian countries, including the Philippines, on the sharing of traditional technology, a project which should reveal how modern research and development might be integrated with the experience and knowledge of traditional societies. The results would be used in the Philippines' programmes for rural areas. UNITAR research, on the other hand, should focus in the medium term on the problems and opportunities created by the transition of some developed countries from an industrial to an "information" society with a view to facilitating needed structural adjustments.

65. He pointed out that UNITAR's parallel studies under the Project on the Future were also focused on policy choices on technology, domestic distribution and North-South relations. He hoped that closer research co-ordination would develop between UNITAR and UNU on those topics in order to maximize results from limited funds and avoid duplication. His delegation thanked the Institute for its efforts during the second phase of the project on the progressive development of the principles and norms of international law relating to the new international economic order.

66. Noting with satisfaction that the financial situation of both the University and UNITAR had considerably improved over the past year, he appealed to countries in a position to do so to increase their contributions to those bodies. In conclusion, he commended the Japanese Government and the City of Tokyo for donating a site for the permanent headquarters of the University and expressed his gratitude to the outgoing Executive Director of UNITAR for his dedicated service to the United Nations.

67. Miss COURSON (France) reminded the Committee that at its thirty-sixth session the General Assembly had decided to grant UNITAR a second grant-in-aid from the regular budget of the United Nations in order to enable it to cover its deficit for 1981 and had requested the Executive Director to take the necessary steps to strengthen the effectiveness of the Institute, reduce its costs and increase its resources. In that connection, her delegation congratulated the Executive Director on submitting a balanced budget, thanks to substantial reductions in staff costs and overhead costs as well as a decrease in the number of programmes, and hoped that that improvement would continue in 1983. She pointed out that it was by being selective in the choice of the studies undertaken and emphasizing their quality that the Institute would confirm its reputation and attract contributions from donor countries. It was particularly important to give preference to studies of special interest, such as the Project on the Future or research on problems directly concerning the United Nations system. In that connection, the Institute must co-operate closely with the United Nations University in order to avoid duplication. UNITAR's activities should consist mainly in the organization of training seminars for international officials, diplomats and administrators from the developing countries, and fruitful co-operation had been established in that respect between UNITAR and the International Institute of Public Administration (Institut international d'administration publique) in Paris. Her delegation, while recognizing that UNITAR was, like all bodies financed by voluntary contributions, affected by the general dearth of resources, advocated its continued financing by extrabudgetary funds and remained opposed to any proposal charge the staff costs of UNITAR to the regular budget of the United Nations. She wished the Executive Director, who was shortly to leave UNITAR, every success in his future activities.

68. She recalled France's interest in the work of the United Nations University and said that it had contributed 230,000 francs to the University's budget for 1982. She thought, however, that the University should not undertake programmes that were too ambitious and should co-ordinate its activities with those of other United Nations bodies and with the world university community. In conclusion, she requested the governing bodies of the University to pay all due attention to the recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/37/111), which seemed very pertinent.

69. Mr. Mc BARNETTE (Trinidad and Tobago) emphasized the importance to the developing countries of the research conducted by UNITAR. In view of the relations between training and research on the one hand and social and economic development on the other, it was from that perspective that his delegation viewed the Institute's activities.

70. For the United Nations system, the international economic crisis meant a severe lack of resources and particularly affected bodies such as UNITAR which were financed by voluntary contributions. In that connection, he welcomed the steps taken by UNITAR to enhance its effectiveness, reduce its costs and increase its resources, in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit. In particular, he noted with satisfaction that the Institute had been able to balance its budget in 1982 and that it had made an effort to rationalize its full-time core staff and co-ordinate its activities in order to avoid duplication. In that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the working group on training

(Mr. Mc Barnette, Trinidad and Tobago)

mentioned by the Executive Director in his introductory statement to the Second Committee on 5 October 1982. During the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago had decided to make an extraordinary grant of \$100,000 to UNITAR with a view to reducing the deficit of the General Fund. He drew attention to the need to examine the way in which the Institute was financed and especially the proposal to provide it with an assured core budget. No effort should be spared to ensure that UNITAR functioned in an efficient and rational manner so that it could provide a service to the international community characterized by its quality and relevance. He warmly thanked the Executive Director, Mr. Nicol, who had directed UNITAR with remarkable competence for the past 10 years.

71. Mr. ESAN (Nigeria) emphasized the role being played by UNITAR, through its training and research activities, in the realization of the noble objectives of the United Nations and particularly the promotion of economic and social development. He commended the quality of UNITAR's training programmes, from which Nigerian officials, among others, had benefited by participating in courses and seminars such as the joint EDI/UNITAR seminar on economic development and its international setting. Referring to the relevance of the Project on the Future in relation to the implementation of the Declaration on the New International Economic Order, he noted with satisfaction the progress made in the various elements of the project, and in particular the regional approaches to the problématique of the future, and emphasized the need for more progress in that area. His delegation was conscious of the financial constraints on UNITAR, whose position was all the more shaky in that it was funded through voluntary contributions, and thought that there seemed to be logic in the suggestion for a core budget, which should receive serious attention at the current session. He praised the qualities of UNITAR's Executive Director, Mr. Nicol, who was held in great esteem in Nigeria, and reaffirmed his country's support for UNITAR, to which it was ready to contribute to the extent its resources would permit.

72. Noting with satisfaction the efforts being made by the United Nations University to promote the solution of global problems, his delegation warmly commended the adoption of the Medium-Term Perspective. It hoped that the international community would increase its support for the United Nations University and endorsed the proposal to intensify co-operation between the University and UNITAR in order to avoid duplication.

73. Mrs. BALI (India) said that her country, the third largest reservoir of skilled manpower in the world, attached great importance to the development of human resources and consequently was deeply interested in the subject of training and research. The Indian Government considered that the role of UNITAR, the United Nations University and other allied programmes should be viewed in the context of overall efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations and promote economic and social development.

(Mrs. Bali, India)

74. As a member of the Board of Trustees of UNITAR, India was involved in the management of the Institute and was also associated with several of its programmes through some of its non-governmental organizations. Some recent programmes, especially that on regional and interregional co-operation in the 1980s had aroused particular interest.

75. Her delegation hoped that UNITAR would continue to gear its programmes to the needs of the developing countries in particular and would manage to strike a judicious balance between training and research. The Indian Government considered, however, that in the long run the Institute could not continue to function or preserve its independence if it was dependent solely on voluntary funding. It should therefore be provided with a core budget.

76. India fully supported the programmes of the United Nations University and specifically the new Medium-Term Perspective for 1982-1987 based on five themes. The existing programmes and the new ones under the umbrella of those five themes would enable the University to focus attention on such vital areas as world hunger and strengthen the efforts of other organizations to increase food production and improve people's nutrition.

77. His country took an active part in the implementation of several United Nations programmes. The Indian Government also supported the natural resources programme of the University and the establishment at the Centre for Energy Studies of the Indian Institute of Technology at New Delhi of a programme for the training of University fellows in the field of new and renewable resources.

78. She continued to believe that the University could play a useful role within the existing framework of the training and research activities of the United Nations system, and she expressed the hope that that institution would receive increasing support from the international community as a whole.

79. Mr. SALLU (Sierra Leone) said that at a time when each country was endeavouring to modernize its society in order to improve the standard of life for its citizens, mankind must seek its long-term salvation in research and training. It was against that background that the work of UNITAR and the United Nations University must be viewed.

80. The activities of UNITAR were timely with regard both to training and to research because the problems that were addressed were ones which required at least some clarification, if not solutions, within a short time. With regard to the United Nations University, his country continued to believe that the five themes identified within the framework of the medium-term prospective were topical areas of research that were bound to produce results beneficial to all mankind.

81. The relevance of the activities of UNITAR and of the University was an additional reason why the international community should support the efforts of those two institutions. In today's world, nothing could be more relevant than research efforts aimed at the establishment of peace in the world, the eradication of hunger or the dissemination of new methods of learning at the world level.

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(Mr. Sallu, Sierra Leone)

82. His delegation would like to make special reference to the work being done by the University in the field of human and social development and coexistence of people, cultures and social systems. At a time when countries were intensifying their efforts to achieve co-operation and were becoming more interdependent, there was need for peoples and communities to know each other better and to interact with better understanding and appreciation of each other's cultural values and social systems. That was the only way of bringing about lasting peace and co-operation among all nations.

83. His delegation would also like to commend, in particular, the UNITAR Project on the Future because in grappling with the problems of immediate concern, it was necessary to keep in mind the issues that might have a bearing on the future. Studies under that project were destined to yield fruits that would be enjoyed by future generations in all regions of the world.

84. In that regard, his delegation had noted with interest the support given to both UNITAR and the University by various countries and organizations. It had also noted with satisfaction the steps being taken by the two institutions in pursuance of the goals mapped out for their respective fields of research.

85. His delegation would nevertheless like to call for greater co-operation and harmonization of activities between UNITAR and the University in order to avoid duplication and ensure the optimal use of the scarce resources available to them. His Government could not, moreover, ignore some of the difficulties highlighted in their reports. Those institutions could not, for example, continue with their useful work unless they were assured by the international community of maximum support, especially in terms of financial resources. They must therefore receive increased voluntary contributions.

86. In the specific case of UNITAR, he stressed that its future could not be solely dependent on voluntary contributions and that it must therefore be able to receive funding from a core budget. That was the only way of safeguarding the heritage that had been so painstakingly built up over the years, for succeeding generations.

87. Mr. NICOL (Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) said that he wished, on behalf of the UNITAR staff as well as personally, to thank the members of the Second Committee for their constructive criticism and their words of praise. Their remarks would be taken into account in the draft work programme of UNITAR, which would pursue its work despite the difficulties facing it, for it was a viable agency and had a very important role to play.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

88. Mr. ASTAFIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), replying to a statement by the United Kingdom representative, said that that representative had gone to some length to cast doubt on official data concerning assistance by the USSR to developing countries. He had quoted figures from Western sources, in particular

(Mr. Astafiev, USSR)

OECD publications. However, according to an article in The New York Times of 29 September 1981, which had drawn on data compiled by United States Government agencies, approximately \$2 billion had been provided by the USSR just for the training of students in developing countries. The allegations by the United Kingdom representative could not therefore be taken seriously, any more than could his version of how Soviet assistance was distributed among the recipient countries.

89. The United Kingdom representative had also questioned the methods used by the USSR for determining the amount of assistance to developing countries. His own delegation referred the United Kingdom delegation to a recent UNCTAD report on economic links between socialist countries and developing countries that contained full information on the matter.

90. The United Kingdom representative had, in addition, criticized the USSR for not participating in the international monetary system. It was true that the Soviet Government viewed that system in a critical light, and, what was more, its criticisms were similar to those of a number of developing countries. The persistent opposition of some of the Western countries, and more specifically the United Kingdom, to proposals for making the World Bank and IMF more democratic constituted a stumbling block to the negotiations being conducted to that end.

91. He would like, in his turn, to address some questions to the United Kingdom delegation, namely: What was the sum of the losses suffered for decades by the former British colonies? What was the purpose of United Kingdom official assistance: to create national enterprises in the developing countries that would become the exclusive property of those countries, or to facilitate the expansion of private capital? The United Kingdom took pride in having ranked second in the amount of private investment in developing countries, but what percentage of that investment returned to the United Kingdom in the form of profits or of interest on commercial loans? What was the percentage of British capital involved in the neo-colonialist exploitation of the developing countries? He was happy to note that the United Kingdom representative recognized that his country's contribution to third world development was not pernicious.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.