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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in pursuance of Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/11. The report coincides with the conclusion of the 2010-2012 strategic plan. Over the course of the plan, outreach to beneficiaries by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has increased significantly, with over 78,000 individuals from virtually the entire United Nations membership having benefited from UNITAR training and training-related services. The number of events has also increased, with close to 400 events now organized annually and a growing emphasis placed on more effective and efficient provision of training through increased e-learning opportunities and programming designed to enhance capabilities of learning centres in developing countries, as called for by the Council in its resolution 2011/11.

Never before in the Institute's 50-year history has programming been so diversified, with new courses and other training and training-related events responding to the needs of beneficiaries related to peace, security and diplomacy; the environment; and human mobility, local development and public finance and trade. Beneficiary reaction to UNITAR learning-related events is very positive, with 95 per cent of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that events were useful overall. Parallel to the focus on learning, institutional capacity development activities in support of the achievement of broader socioeconomic objectives continue to take on much prominence.

* E/2013/100.



The Institute has taken concrete steps to further enhance the quality of its services and has established an internal quality assurance framework for learning-related events, in addition to its efforts to align e-learning courses with internationally recognized certification schemes. The Institute has now fully implemented a results-based management framework, with the final component being the completion of a new monitoring and evaluation policy framework.

The financial performance of the Institute is stable: income in 2011 and 2012 stood at just over \$21 million each year, with some 9.5 per cent of that coming from self-generated sources. Despite this stability in a challenging and uncertain financial and economic climate, non-earmarked voluntary contributions remain at alarmingly low levels, which continues to compromise the ability of the Institute to meet core operational needs and to continue to advance towards strategic objectives.

The Secretary-General recommends that Member States provide full support to UNITAR, including the necessary non-earmarked funds that will allow the Institute to meet its core requirements.

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/11 of 22 July 2011, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of that resolution at its substantive session in 2013. This is the third report prepared and submitted to the Council in compliance with General Assembly resolution 62/210 of 19 December 2007, in which a streamlined reporting arrangement for the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established.

2. The Institute's mission is to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations by delivering innovative training and conducting research on knowledge systems with a view to strengthening individual, organizational and institutional capacities. Outreach by UNITAR is extensive and targets multiple segments of society. Two particular sets of beneficiaries are given primary attention: the delegates and other actors who are engaged in intergovernmental processes to establish norms, policies and procedures in the fields of peace and security and economic and social development; and key stakeholders at the national and local levels who work to translate multilateral agreements into concrete action.

3. The Institute reached out to more than 50,000 beneficiaries during the 2010-2011 biennium. These positive results have continued into the present biennium, with the overall number of beneficiaries surpassing 27,000 for 2012, an approximately 15 per cent increase over 2010 figures of 23,688. The Institute organized 389 events in 2012, more than two thirds of which had a specific set of learning objectives and half of which were delivered with partners. Over the course of the year, individuals from 185 Member States benefited from UNITAR services; 70 per cent of the beneficiaries of training and training-related events came from African, Asian and Latin American and Caribbean countries. The Institute also made noteworthy progress in balancing the gender ratio of its beneficiaries: the overall female-to-male ratio now stands at 51:49.

4. These outputs were produced by a dynamic corps of engaged and motivated professionals representing one of the most gender-balanced and diverse organizations in the United Nations system. With a present 51:49 female-to-male ratio and a 54:46 ratio of developed countries to developing countries, UNITAR closely monitors its staff composition and is committed to ensuring broad geographical representation, with a view to promoting staff diversity. Moreover, the Institute continues to engage a broad spectrum of interns, trainees and other collaborators in its programming and operations, with a view to supporting their career development and meeting organizational needs.

5. The present report coincides with three significant milestones: the conclusion of the Institute's 2010-2012 strategic plan; the upcoming fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of UNITAR by the General Assembly in December 1963, which UNITAR will mark later this year; and my proposal to consolidate the United Nations research and training institutes as part of the change implementation process, with a view to leveraging the institutes' existing strengths for more effective and efficient service delivery.

6. As stated in my 2009 report (E/2009/57), UNITAR embarked on a set of new strategic objectives in 2010 to advance towards its longer-term goal of becoming a world-renowned centre of excellence for the provision of high-quality training and

research related to knowledge systems. Section II of the present report synthesizes the main achievements made over the course of the planning cycle, with emphasis placed on the period 2011-2012.

7. Section III presents updated information on a number of programmatic initiatives which lay the groundwork for more efficient training for Member States, with a focus on enhancing the capabilities of learning centres in developing countries, as called for by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2011/11. The section also includes updated information on the Institute's role in promoting system-wide coordination with regard to important United Nations initiatives, such as the One United Nations training service platform for climate change (CC:Learn) and in strengthening synergy with the United Nations System Staff College in connection with the inaugural edition of the United Nations Summer Academy.

8. Section IV addresses the financial situation of the Institute, which is marked by a sustained level of income despite important funding commitments not having materialized, the closure of the Institute's Brasilia office and prolonged weakness in, and unpredictable voluntary contributions to, the General Fund.

9. Section V summarizes recent discussions on the proposed consolidation of several small United Nations entities dedicated to research, training and knowledge services, and the need to strengthen such entities for enhanced service delivery to Member States. Section VI contains a recommendation that Member States provide full support to UNITAR.

II. Achievements of the 2010-2012 strategic plan

A. Identifying and responding more effectively to beneficiary needs

1. Responses to thematic priorities

10. Never before in the 50-year history of UNITAR has programming been as diversified as it is today. New training and training-related activities related to emerging and strategic thematic priorities are being developed regularly and through an increasingly wide spectrum of partners. As previously reported, UNITAR continues to deliver a series of courses on United Nations reform, covering topics related to institutional adaptation, management reform, system-wide coherence and integrated approaches to conflict and post-conflict situations. Since the series was introduced in 2010, awareness of United Nations reform initiatives has increased greatly in diplomatic circles: some 400 New York-based diplomats have participated in nine workshops to date.

11. To assist in promoting effective intergovernmental negotiations, the Institute has intensified its training of delegates on skills and techniques for effective participation in multilateral conferences, as well as on key issues for reaching consensus (e.g. arms trade, chemicals and waste management, human rights, sustainable development). In partnership with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNITAR also continues to provide specialized support to presiding officers prior to the annual session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

12. The Institute has also intensified its efforts related to deepening understanding of key outcomes of international conferences, with particular emphasis on arms trade, the environment and sustainable development. In 2012, UNITAR launched two new online courses related to the environment. Adapting training materials developed jointly by the Institute, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Orange House Partnership, UNITAR delivered an e-learning course on classifying and labelling chemicals according to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals. A second e-learning course, on the green economy, was delivered twice, in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), reaching 136 stakeholders in over 50 countries.

13. The Institute has become the leading United Nations agency with regard to promoting awareness and discussing issues related to the new and rapidly expanding field of nanotechnology and manufactured nanomaterials. In connection with the Institute's work on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management and following a series of regional workshops in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe and Latin American and Caribbean, UNITAR is assisting a group of pilot countries to assess and develop strategies related to management of nanotechnology. It is also launching an e-learning course to respond to worldwide interest in this new, rapidly expanding field of innovation.

14. Parallel to its work in strengthening capacity at the national level, the Institute continues to place emphasis on training and capacity development in the field of local governance, including the challenges that increasing urbanization trends pose for environmental sustainability and economic development. The Institute has gauged an increasing demand for training on enhanced management of basic services by local authorities, e.g. in the areas of water and sanitation, waste management and transport, through its network of 11 Centres internationaux de formation des acteurs locaux (International Training Centres for Local Actors) (CIFAL) worldwide. The network further expanded in 2012, with the creation of centres in Merida, Mexico, and in Algiers to address the increased need for capacity-building for local development in the form of municipal-level training for the delivery of basic social services. During the period 2010-2011, the network trained in excess of 14,000 beneficiaries from the vast majority of Member States.

15. As part of its strategy to extend its capacity development activities at the local level, UNITAR is focusing on post-conflict countries. It has signed a three-year partnership agreement with the Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan to provide postgraduate education to 20 high-level officials who directly oversee the country's decentralization process. Implemented in close cooperation with the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, the initiative will award successful participants with a master's degree in development policies and practices, following a 12-month course programme which blends face-to-face instruction in Abu Dhabi, Istanbul, Geneva and Kabul with e-learning courses in the field of public financial management. Each course has a field-study component, after which participants will be required to write a thesis on a topic aimed at improving the institutional capacity of the Government of Afghanistan at the subnational level. This approach, which builds urgently needed leadership capacity without taking key officials away from their work for long periods, is being viewed with much interest by other post-conflict countries.

16. As a crosscutting theme, gender mainstreaming and, more broadly, gender-related programming continue to figure prominently in the Institute's curriculum, particularly in the fields of peace, security and diplomacy. Building on an existing array of training activities, including e-learning peacekeeping topics (e.g. protection from sexual harassment, violence and abuse), UNITAR has scaled up its work to include specialized training in New York to build capacity for women to negotiate peace agreements and the development of an online discussion platform on women in diplomacy, in cooperation with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and other partners. In 2013, the Institute is also undertaking an initiative through its office in Hiroshima, Japan, in collaboration with the University of Calgary (Canada) in order to improve gender mainstreaming in the fellowship programme for Afghanistan.

2. Growth in knowledge-sharing outreach

17. Knowledge-sharing outreach represents an important dimension of the Institute's outward-looking strategic vision. In 2012, approximately one quarter of UNITAR beneficiaries attended events organized by other organizations to which the Institute made knowledge-sharing contributions.

18. The Institute has continued its high-level engagement with the most senior officials of the United Nations responsible for the prevention and sustainable resolution of conflict, through planning and facilitating the seminar for special and personal representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. Established in 2001 and organized since 2008 in association with the United Nations System Staff College, the seminar brings together the most senior staff at Headquarters with heads of peace missions and envoys to exchange knowledge and experience with the purpose of enhancing United Nations practice. Heads of United Nations agencies, United Nations High Commissioners and senior African Union staff, among others, participate. Since 2007, UNITAR has been facilitating the convening of the heads of mission conferences of the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support, in conjunction with the seminar for special and personal representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. A CD-ROM of the UNITAR publication *On Being a Special Representative of the Secretary-General*, based on interviews with such representatives, has also been made available to participating officials.

19. In order to contribute to the sharing of knowledge and experience among senior peacemakers in Africa, and as part of the Institute's collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Africa in support of the implementation of the Peace and Security Agenda of the African Union, UNITAR organized a series of high-level exchanges involving the main actors of the African peace and security architecture, as well as staff of the African Union, regional economic communities and member States of the African Union Peace and Security Council. Two high-level seminars were held on operationalizing the preventive approaches of the African peace and security architecture, and a third seminar was conducted involving a majority of the members of the Committee of Elders of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa to facilitate the further sharing of knowledge and experience in this field. These high-level seminars were conducted in addition to the annual UNITAR regional training programme to enhance conflict prevention and peacemaking in Africa for mid-level and senior officials, organized in Addis Ababa in collaboration with UNDP.

20. The Institute's outreach efforts continued to target public audiences, with outreach to 713 individuals who attended the high-level Geneva lecture series organized jointly with the United Nations Office at Geneva, as well as other special events, including a high-level panel on South-South cooperation held at the conclusion of the fifty-first session of the UNITAR Board of Trustees, held in Brazzaville in partnership with the Ministry of Scientific Research of Congo, and the Bergen symposium examining the linkages between climate change and disaster risk reduction, development and human rights.

21. The Institute also displayed various aspects of its programming at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, at which UNITAR organized directly or partnered with other entities to organize 13 different activities and added substantive contributions to 11 other activities. Combined outreach by UNITAR at the Conference involved over 11,000 individuals, including approximately 10,000 delegates who visited the "My green dreams" exhibition. The diverse events resulted in a range of partnerships, including the organization of an international forum on training and skills development for green and climate-resilient jobs through collaboration with ILO, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNEP and others in 2013.

3. Increased use of technology-enhanced learning

22. Technology-enhanced learning continues to play a prominent role in the Institute's activities. The proportion of UNITAR programmes offering e-learning as a mode of training delivery doubled from 33 per cent to 66 per cent over the course of the 2010-2012 strategic plan. Courses are now offered in fields as diverse as chemicals and waste, climate change, the green economy, international law, local development, multilateral diplomacy, peacekeeping, public finance and trade, sustainable urban transportation and social media. As a result of this diversification, the proportion of e-learning courses increased from 25 per cent of all events in 2010 to over 35 per cent in 2012 (and now accounts for 50 per cent of events associated with learning outcomes). The increase in e-learning beneficiaries is equally impressive. During the past biennium, the number of e-learning course participants more than doubled, from 2,080 in 2010 to 4,315 in 2011. While the Institute registered a slight decline in the number of e-course deliveries in 2012, technology-enhanced learning is now reaching close to 5,000 beneficiaries, with registrations received from participants in 175 countries.

23. Although the potential of e-learning to increase access to beneficiaries is very important, some studies indicate that a combination of online and face-to-face delivery is the most effective in terms of lasting impact. Therefore, in addition to pursuing growth in online course offerings, the Institute is working to increase the number of blended-learning opportunities that combine face-to-face instruction with technology-enhanced learning, such as the master's degree programme in development policies and practices for Afghan officials cited earlier (see para. 15 above) and the Learning Platform on Human Mobility.

24. As the world becomes more reliant on new technologies for imparting knowledge, it is important that the United Nations offer more increased opportunities for online and/or blended learning. Much more work needs to be done through the United Nations to update instructional methodologies and to integrate the conceptualization and delivery of capacity development at all levels of governance.

25. Partnerships with more than 30 entities, including a broad spectrum of organizations of the United Nations system (e.g. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ILO, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNDP, UNEP, Economic Commission for Africa and Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)), non-governmental organizations (e.g. International Institute for Trade and Development, INTOSAI Development Initiative, Orange House Partnership, South Centre), academia (e.g. École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (Switzerland), Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Open University (United Kingdom), University of Geneva (Switzerland), University of Gothenburg (Sweden) and World Trade Institute) and the private sector (e.g. Veolia Environnement) have contributed to this impressive growth in e-learning and, more broadly, in technology-enhanced learning.

B. Enhancing the quality and diversity of products and services

1. Quality assurance

26. The Institute has taken bold steps to further strengthen the quality of its services. Following the creation of a quality assurance committee in 2010, the Institute established a quality assurance framework for learning-related events, with a view to validating the quality of training products and services, strengthening quality and providing a platform for sharing experience sharing and lessons learned on quality review. The framework is composed of three interacting elements: a set of 16 quality standards; a self-assessment process by learning development managers and other staff; and an independent peer review process led by the quality assurance committee. To support the application of the framework, a set of guidelines has been developed which describe the standards and provide guiding questions to facilitate the understanding of the standards using practical examples, reference documents and online resources such as those on the UNITAR “Click4it” learning and training wiki.

27. In addition to providing a benchmark for quality assurance, the framework also serves as a tool to facilitate certification with external quality improvement schemes, such as the certification process for e-learning programmes and institutions in international capacity-building (ECBCheck) of the European Foundation for Quality in e-Learning. In 2012, UNITAR was awarded certification for two online peacekeeping training courses, adding to the two courses already certified in 2010 and 2011. Additional courses are expected to obtain certification by the end of 2013.

2. Training of trainers

28. In addition to efforts to diversify modes of training delivery, another noteworthy trend is the increased emphasis that the Institute is placing on multiplier effects, e.g. through the training of trainers and training of coaches, as has been pursued over the past several years in the areas of conflict resolution (Nigeria), post-conflict reconstruction (Afghanistan) and diplomacy (South Africa). Based on tangible results, UNITAR has expanded multiplier approaches in existing areas, including the training of diplomatic trainers in Algeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sao Tome and Principe, and extended multiplier approaches to the fields of chemicals management, climate change, peacekeeping and satellite

imagery training (see discussion under paras. 55 and 56 below). In 2013, the Institute plans to further expand this multiplier effect to the field of human mobility.

29. With very much the same objectives as the training of trainers, the Institute often identifies select participants to serve as resource persons in subsequent UNITAR training activities. For example, in connection with the Institute's work in the field of peacemaking and conflict prevention, launched in 1993, two alumni have since become special representatives of the Secretary-General, while additional alumni have become deputy special representatives of the Secretary-General. Four graduates (two female and two male) of the UNITAR training programme to enhance the conflict prevention and peacemaking capacities of indigenous peoples' representatives have been elected or named as expert members of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues from the Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and Pacific regions. Two other indigenous alumni (an alumnus from Africa and an alumna from Asia) have been appointed to the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. During the current reporting period, a UNITAR fellow from Africa who has since become a special representative of the Secretary-General taught in the training programme for the African region on peacemaking and conflict prevention, and three indigenous alumni (two female and one male) served as resource persons for the training session on conflict prevention for indigenous representatives, sharing their knowledge and experience related to promotion and protection of human rights, negotiation and women's empowerment for peace and development processes.

3. Broader capacity development objectives

30. While many of its outputs result from learning-related programming and, to a lesser extent, public outreach, conferences, lectures and side events, UNITAR is also engaged in a number of longer-term and larger-scale capacity development projects with broader development objectives. For instance, it is partnering with the Environmental Protection Agency of Ghana to build its capacity to execute a \$6 million project that will significantly reduce polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) as part of its obligations under the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Chemicals. The Agency and the Institute are executing the project with the support of UNDP and financing through the Global Environment Facility. The project has thus far completed an inventory of PCBs, a national awareness campaign, draft legislation for the control of PCBs and a draft PCB management plan. Upon completion of the project in 2014, Ghana will have disposed of tons of PCBs and increased capacity to improve the safe management of the remaining amounts.

31. Similarly, UNITAR has acted as the international executing agency for over 80 national projects in the context of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management. This has typically involved multi-year, multicomponent projects to assist countries to strengthen key institutional aspects for sound chemicals management, such as by undertaking national assessments and identifying priorities, developing sustainable governmental coordination mechanisms and stakeholder involvement policies, and developing and implementing action plans on top of identified priorities such as the labelling of chemicals or the monitoring of pollutant emissions.

C. Strengthening efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in delivering results

32. The Institute continues to work to strengthen its accountability framework and improve resource efficiencies and programme relevance and effectiveness, both through the implementation of results-based planning, budgeting and monitoring and through effective use of information technology systems for the planning and management of training events.

1. Centralized event management database

33. As indicated in my previous report in 2011, UNITAR has designed an event management system to provide real-time information on key dimensions of its activities. The system is conceived as a client-management interface which is designed to enable potential beneficiaries to view and search for event information, as well as apply and/or register and, where applicable, pay online. The system also enables UNITAR staff to manage and report on event and beneficiary information. It streamlines transactions and workflows and further enhances the effectiveness, efficiency and accuracy of the Institute's reporting.

2. Strengthened results-based management capacities

34. The Institute has now fully implemented a results-based management framework, linking the strategic plan and the biennial results-based programme budget to annual programme and individual workplans, as well as annual staff performance evaluation and staff development plans. Since the introduction of harmonized annual workplans in 2010, the planning and budgeting format has been improved to streamline the monitoring of expected accomplishments and outputs, the reporting of achievements and the planning of activities. Evaluation of staff performance has also been enhanced, with an assessment to be undertaken annually on the achievement of results and a set of competencies. Programme performance reporting also takes place annually against a pre-established set of results-based budget indicators and measures.

3. Enhanced monitoring and evaluation

35. In 2012, UNITAR further enhanced its practices related to managing for results, with a new monitoring and evaluation policy framework. The framework is an important step in the Institute's efforts to strengthen accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in its programming and operations. It includes a number of internationally recognized guiding principles, norms and standards and specifies new evaluation criteria and requirements. Replacing the Institute's policy that had been in place since 2008, the framework shifts emphasis from the level of activity to that of results. With few exceptions, projects and undertakings associated with learning outcomes, for example, are required to systematically measure and evaluate knowledge, skills and/or awareness gained, and some undertakings are required to conduct evaluations in order to assess the application of knowledge and skills for improved organizational performance. While most evaluations continue to be undertaken on a self-assessment basis, given the nature and characteristics of the Institute's programming, the new policy includes modalities for independent evaluation to be managed by the Institute's Monitoring and Evaluation Section.

36. The Institute also regularly reports on a set of key performance indicators which provide an overview of how well the organization is performing. Among the current indicators are beneficiary outreach, including by geography and gender; the number and profile of events, including delivery methods and partnership modalities; client reaction to training services, including ratings of relevance, newness of information, intent to use and overall usefulness; and financial performance.

37. The Institute continues to work to systematically measure beneficiary reaction to its learning-related events and now reports and tracks feedback using the event management system. Based on a sample of 225 events (87 per cent of 2012 learning events), an average of 81 per cent of beneficiary respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the content of the training event concerned was new to them, that it was relevant to their jobs and that they would likely use the information acquired. Respondents also rated the overall usefulness of events, with 95 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that the event or events in which they participated in 2012 were useful overall.

38. Staff knowledge and awareness of evaluation tools, methods and approaches have strengthened, with both formal and informal in-house learning opportunities available. Nevertheless, applying skills and knowledge in the form of undertaking more robust self-assessments of learning and other intended results remains challenging given funding and time constraints, as well as other resource-related considerations.

D. Increasing autonomy

39. To increase the financial security of UNITAR, management has worked to improve its use of information technology systems, including through the development of a payment and registration system integrated into the event management system whereby beneficiaries can view announcements of upcoming events, as well as register, submit applications and complete payments for events online using credit cards or bank transfers. Developing the information technology infrastructure for the facility was a major undertaking and required close coordination across the Institute's divisions and sections. Its success is undeniably a major accomplishment and represents the first such mechanism, to the Institute's knowledge, in the United Nations system. Primarily as a result of developing the online payment facility, UNITAR has been able to diversify funding and mobilize self-generated income, which represented an important component of the Institute's 2010-2012 strategic direction. During this period, the Institute mobilized some \$5.4 million in the form of self-generated income, based for the most part on fee-based training courses, the majority of which were delivered online.

40. The success in developing an efficient online payment facility and mobilizing self-generated income has brought challenges in terms of processing an increasing number of small-value financial transactions, which incur service charges that reduce the income reverting to the Institute. The United Nations Office at Geneva and UNITAR are working closely together to reduce the level of service charges incurred and to delegate increasing financial authority to UNITAR.

41. The Fellowship Fund, which was established as an instrument to allow UNITAR to cover its costs while reducing or waiving the course fees of eligible participants from least developed and other developing countries, has not proven

successful. In 2011, contributions from Member States amounted to only \$80,000, against a target of \$1 million. The Institute's Board of Trustees expressed concern over those developments at its fifty-first session and is working with management to develop more robust fundraising strategies as a priority for 2013, including, for example, ways in which Member States, international and regional organizations and other partners may contribute to the funding of specific fee-based courses with a view to increasing the number of fellowship awards in the future.

III. Towards the provision of more efficient training and research in the United Nations system

42. In its resolution 2011/11, the Economic and Social Council, acknowledging efficiency gains realized by the Institute through increased e-learning course offerings and the emphasis placed on multiplier effects, called upon the Institute to pursue its efforts to enhance the capabilities of learning centres in developing countries with innovative methodologies and to contribute to better coordination of the United Nations research and training institutes.

A. Efficiency gains through increased e-learning and training of trainers

43. With more than half of the beneficiaries of the Institute's training events now learning online, UNITAR has demonstrated a commitment to realizing important gains in resource efficiency, with increased flexibility and widened outreach, a reduced carbon footprint and the possibility of reusing course design and content for multiple audiences. Efficiency gains are also being achieved using the multiplier effects of capacity development, such as through the training of trainers.

1. Public finance and trade

44. Of the Institute's 4,897 e-course participants in 2012, 50 per cent benefited from courses related to public finance, trade and intellectual property, which were largely delivered in partnership with international and regional organizations, as well as academic institutions. Targeting mostly delegates and Government officials from least developed countries and other developing countries, the Institute's online programming in public finance employs technology-enhanced methodologies and communities of practice. As a result, UNITAR has reduced participation costs while increasing flexibility in scheduling, networking and accessing international experts and other global practitioners, thus providing a valuable alternative to face-to-face training.

2. Environment

45. In the broad area of its environment-related training and capacity-building, UNITAR took advantage of the multiplier effect with regard to the number of persons trained on the United Nations system for the classification and labelling of chemicals in South-East Asia. Following an initial training of trainers provided by UNITAR in 2011, an additional 2,800 persons were trained in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand in 2012, thus widening the outreach from the impact of the initial training. The Institute also partnered with UNDP, UNEP, the

United Nations System Staff College and other entities in organizing a series of United Nations Development Group regional workshops on environmental sustainability, climate change and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Taking place in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, the workshops contained a built-in multiplier effect, with participants sharing knowledge and skills with their relevant United Nations country teams.

46. In 2013, the Institute is developing with UNEP a training-of-trainers course with a view to strengthening the capacities of Member States to produce national mercury inventories in connection with the Minamata Convention on Mercury, which will be opened for signature later this year.

3. Diplomacy

47. In partnership with the diplomatic academies of various ministries of foreign affairs, UNITAR has delivered activities related to the training of trainers, the objective of which has been to strengthen the capacities of senior civil servants to deliver training and knowledge-sharing at the national level. Activities build trainees' appreciation of learning styles and communication techniques, as well as their substantive knowledge in various subject areas, such as diplomacy, negotiation and climate change. Activities have been delivered in partnership with the Institute of Diplomacy and International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Algeria and the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa. Workshops providing for the training of trainers have also been delivered in partnership with UNDP to strengthen and build the pool of United Nations resource persons who are able to effectively and efficiently deliver training upon demand.

4. Peacekeeping

48. In the field of peacekeeping training, the Institute's long-term strategy involves strengthening endogenous training capacities through peacekeeping training institutions at the regional, subregional and national levels, with a view to increasing beneficiary outreach and enhancing ownership of training design, delivery and follow-up. The approach combines a number of pilot training courses, delivered back-to-back with training of trainers, and provides an opportunity for newly trained local trainers to apply training skills and techniques under close supervision and with the support of international experts. Since 2011, UNITAR has focused on peacekeeping learning centres in Liberia (Angie Brooks International Centre), Nigeria (Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Centre), Rwanda (Rwanda Peace Academy) and Zimbabwe (South African Development Community Regional Peacekeeping Training Centre). As a result of this engagement, the Institute more than doubled the number of participants in a span of less than 18 months during the 2011-2012 period. In 2013, the Institute will publish a training-of-trainers manual with the aim of providing a benchmark for capacity development in this field.

5. Post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan

49. The Institute has contributed to the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan by developing the leadership, managerial and professional skills of the Afghan civil service and other stakeholders and by creating the conditions to sustain a growing community of mentors, coaches and fellows to address organizational needs. Since the programme was launched in 2003, UNITAR has completed nine fellowship cycles,

with over 400 Afghan civil servants, academics and practitioners engaged in meeting personal learning and development goals and 75 fellows and 20 coaches going on to become coaches and Afghan resource persons, respectively. As a result of this initiative, close to 100 national-level projects have been undertaken, three quarters of which are being implemented in the respective organizations of the fellows.

B. “Delivering as one”: achievements through inter-agency collaboration

1. Climate change

50. Since its launch in 2009, the One United Nations training service platform for climate change (CC:Learn) has grown steadily in scope and range of activities, most recently with the support of the Government of Switzerland. The CC:Learn initiative contributes to the implementation of article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, on education, training and public awareness. The initiative currently has 33 partners drawn from multilateral organizations, operating both at the global level to foster information- and knowledge-sharing on climate change learning and at the national level through the development of climate change learning strategies. At the global level, the CC:Learn Initiative contributes to key events such as sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, operates a knowledge-sharing platform (www.unccllearn.org) with a searchable library of learning resources on climate change and is developing introductory and advanced learning resources, which will be made accessible through a web-based platform. Work at the national level engages Governments through United Nations country teams, thereby ensuring a “One United Nations” approach to learning. Building on existing climate change policies and institutions, national authorities and individuals acquire the skills they need to face a future of increasing climate uncertainty, while also taking advantage of emerging opportunities in low emissions and the green economy. The CC:Learn initiative is active in Benin, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Malawi and Uganda, but there is demand from more than 20 additional countries. The initiative is part of the Inter-Agency Committee for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and the United Nations Joint Framework Initiative on Children, Youth and Climate Change. A steering group comprised of partner organizations provides guidance for CC:Learn activities. The Institute serves the initiative’s secretariat.

2. Chemicals and waste management

51. In the field of chemicals and waste management, UNITAR participates in the Inter-Organization Programme for the Sound Management of Chemicals, which was established in 1995 to strengthen cooperation and increase coordination in the field of chemical safety. The Programme brings together nine intergovernmental organizations which are actively involved in chemical safety (FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNEP, UNITAR, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), World Health Organization, World Bank and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) and which implement a large number of activities at the country level to improve chemicals management. In virtually all its activities related to chemicals and waste management, the Institute actively collaborates with at least one other organization participating in the Programme, for example with ILO on the issue of global chemical labelling, UNEP for projects related to mercury and UNDP and

UNIDO for projects related to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

3. Migration

52. As in other thematic areas, UNITAR has focused on where it may add value by folding more effective learning into its overall strategy for capacity development. In the field of human mobility (migration), this approach is reflected in a number of ways. First, as with the seminar series on migration and development, UNITAR has continued to champion support to the delegates of developing countries, in particular with regard to their access to information and knowledge in this field. Currently, UNITAR is working to ensure that, in the context of the intergovernmental Global Forum on Migration and Development, better support is provided to the network of Forum focal points from developing regions with respect to the actualization of Forum recommendations. It is also working on the establishment of a network of learning on migration and development in the post-2015 context for national and regional training centres in developing regions, with a view to institutionalizing learning programmes and buttressing the Forum's focal point system.

53. Second, in maintaining its focus on a more integrated approach, UNITAR now co-leads the Global Migration Group Task Force on Capacity Development, which was established in 2013. Building on the assessment work first described in its previous report, the task force will: (a) centralize all activities related to capacity development, collecting and disseminating information on current Global Migration Group activities related to capacity development within the Group and to the wider public; (b) promote good practices in the area of effective learning and knowledge management, including needs assessments and evaluations, and their application to capacity development activities undertaken within the context of the Group's multi-annual workplan and, where relevant, relating to the actualization of recommendations of the Global Forum on Migration and Development; (c) deliver joint Global Migration Group capacity development products, in conjunction with the work of the broader Group and building on priorities identified within the Global Forum on Migration and Development process; and (d) build and support a network of institutional partners, including national and regional training centres in the field of migration and development in the post-2015 context.

54. Third, capitalizing on its experience in the field of local development, UNITAR has initiated migration-related training through its established network of international training centres for local actors. In 2012, it also launched the Learning Platform on Human Mobility, the first global platform dedicated to local and regional government in this field. Through a prestigious, hybrid curriculum of face-to-face and online learning developed with pre-eminent experts in the field, in 2013 the Learning Platform is addressing the topics of public perceptions of migrants and the role of the media, exploitation of migrant labour and entrepreneurship within migrant communities. Through 2015, the Learning Platform will deliver capacity development to hundreds of local and regional government officials, develop an online community of practice and support, build a body of knowledge accessible to a larger public in both in-class and online forms and share valued insights with different levels of governance, including but not limited to intergovernmental forums such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development. Further, it will draw on relevant regional and international networks, including Cities of Migration, Eurocities, the Joint Migration and Development Initiative of the European

Commission and the United Nations, and the International Metropolis Project. The Learning Platform is based in Antwerp, Belgium.

4. Satellite imagery and analysis

55. The Institute has continued to expand its Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT), in terms of both its functions and its output, thereby confirming its technology-intensive approach to applied research to develop practical solutions adapted to the needs of the United Nations system and the international community in general. The output of UNOSAT is divided into services and capacity development. Under services, a full range of mapping and satellite analysis is offered to all United Nations entities and Member States in the areas of emergency response and humanitarian assistance, human security and monitoring and territorial planning and environmental change detection. In the area of capacity development, UNITAR delivers a range of specialized training programmes in Geneva and in-country in the areas of strategic territorial planning and disaster management, rapid mapping and advanced satellite analysis. New subregional multi-year programmes have been launched by UNITAR in East Africa in collaboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and in South-East Asia in partnership with ESCAP and with the collaboration of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre.

56. The Institute supported the response to a total of 63 humanitarian crises through the Humanitarian Rapid Mapping service, which has been active since 2003 with support from a variety of donor countries, including Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. In 2012, the demand for UNOSAT geospatial assistance by United Nations agencies in the field increased by 25 per cent, which indicates the significance of satellite analysis in the crisis response cycle and the central role of UNOSAT as the United Nations centre of excellence for satellite analysis, in collaboration with other providers of important information such as the Department of Field Support and the United Nations Operation and Control Centre. The majority of the requests in the area of humanitarian assistance have come from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is regularly assisted by UNOSAT in the area of independent commissions of inquiry. The Institute's UNOSAT experts assisted four OHCHR independent commissions of inquiry for Libya and Syria.

5. United Nations Summer Academy

57. Together with the United Nations System Staff College and the International Training Centre of ILO, the Institute co-organized the inaugural edition of the United Nations Summer Academy in August 2012. The Academy was a unique executive educational programme in which some 40 United Nations staff and other development practitioners and academics engaged in learning, knowledge-sharing and debate on a number of important themes included in the Five-Year Action Agenda of the Secretary-General and the outcome of the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. The Academy's programme included intense and thoughtful discussion and interaction on themes such as sustainable development, climate change, global governance, poverty, social and gender issues, migration, partnerships for development and the role of the private sector, inequality within and across nations, innovation and new technologies for development.

IV. Financial situation of the Institute

58. For the year ended 31 December 2012, total income was \$21.3 million, compared with \$20.9 million in 2010. While a 2 per cent growth rate is encouraging in a very difficult economic environment, this conceals some very distinct trends. Earmarked project funds have grown significantly in some programme areas, but other programmes have experienced considerable difficulty in attracting funding. In addition, the non-earmarked General Fund has not succeeded in attracting funding and has only averaged \$350,000 in contributions annually since 2010. This funding pattern presents major financial and managerial challenges to the Institute, and means that there is no scope for exploring ad hoc opportunities for capacity-building to support Member States.

59. At its fifty-third session, the Institute's Board of Trustees approved the proposed revision of the budget for the 2012-2013 biennium of \$42.6 million, compared with the original budget of \$44.8 million, for a slight reduction of \$2.2 million, or 4.9 per cent, to reflect actual income. The slowdown in the impressive growth of the Institute's income from the 2008-2010 period is attributed to the continued downturn in economic activity resulting from the global financial crisis.

60. For the third consecutive biennium (2010-2011), the Institute received an unqualified audit opinion of its financial statements from the United Nations Board of Auditors. All previous recommendations have been implemented.

V. Looking forward: opportunities for enhanced service delivery to Member States

61. During 2012 initial discussions were held between the Secretary-General and the Institute's Board of Trustees to explore the implications of the proposed consolidation of several small United Nations entities dedicated to research, training and knowledge services, including UNITAR, transforming them into a key knowledge arm of the United Nations over time. By bringing the work of these entities into alignment under strengthened and more strategically linked leadership and sharing support services, the United Nations should be able to do even better in supporting Member States in generating new ideas, sharing knowledge and building capacities to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

62. During these discussions, all parties made it clear that the important mandates of UNITAR (and the other entities) should be not only be preserved but also enhanced. The Institute's Board of Trustees expressed interest in the idea as presented at the Board's fifty-second session and said that it looked forward to learning more about the proposal as soon as possible. Consultations with the governing bodies of the entities are continuing, and a proposal will be presented to Member States for discussion.

VI. Recommendation

63. It is recommended that Member States provide full support to UNITAR, including the necessary non-earmarked funding to the General Fund that will allow UNITAR to meet its core requirements.