



UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/35/181 + app. 1  
25 April 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-fifth session  
Items 63 (a) and 96 of the preliminary list\*

TRAINING AND RESEARCH: UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE  
FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Report on the United Nations Institute  
for Training and Research

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (JIU/REP/79/18).

\* A/35/50.

REPORT  
ON THE UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE  
FOR TRAINING AND RESEARCH (UNITAR)

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## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE REPORT

1. This Report is one of a series of assessment studies the JIU is undertaking in connexion with research and training activities which have been established, or are assisted, by the United Nations system. The system is actively engaged in the improvement of many training and research institutions in an attempt to make them more effective. The General Assembly and other United Nations governing bodies, as well as the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), have directed the attention of the international community to the importance of these activities and the need for adequate programming, sound administration of resources and co-ordination.
2. UNITAR serves as a case study of particular interest with regard to the role of the UN system in research and training. It is in a special position because, unlike many other professional training and research institutes assisted by the UN system, UNITAR is an institute organized to serve not a government or a region in particular but the world community as a whole.
3. A review of UNITAR should start with an examination of its inherent assets and limitations. Once these are identified, realistic suggestions can be made for improving the usefulness of UNITAR to Member States and the UN system.
4. The present study of UNITAR involves not only a review of its past history and achievements, but attempts to ascertain its potential as a focal point for the origin, discussion, interchange and dissemination of ideas on world problems within the UN system. Suggestions are made on how UNITAR might work more effectively, particularly as a focal point in a UN network of training and research services. To this end, the investigation covered the organization of the Institute itself, its work programme and its relationship with other training and research centres. The study also reviews the current staffing of UNITAR and other relevant aspects of its organization and current activities.
5. UNITAR is funded primarily by voluntary contributions from Member States and certain organizations and institutions. This study reviews the question of financing and suggests certain alternatives which might enhance the Institute's stability and the continuity of its programmes.
6. The Inspectors first visited UNITAR Headquarters in New York in April 1979 and discussed its work programme with the Executive Director and other senior officials of the Institute. The Inspectors also talked with knowledgeable members of the UN Secretariat as well as others who were familiar with UNITAR's activities. They also attended a few meetings and seminars organized by UNITAR, examined many of its publications and had a useful exchange of ideas with some government officials, the Chairman and certain members of the Board of Trustees of UNITAR and some officials of the specialized agencies. To all these, the Inspectors would like to express their appreciation for their co-operation and contribution to this Report.

CHAPTER I. BACKGROUND

7. In 1962, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to study the desirability and feasibility of establishing a United Nations institute or a training programme under the auspices of the United Nations, to be financed by voluntary contributions, both public and private 1/. The resolution also suggested a frame of reference which might include such fields as training of personnel, particularly from the developing Member States, for administrative and operational assignments with the United Nations and the specialized agencies and for national service, advanced training for persons now serving in such posts, and research and seminars on operations of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.

8. In his report 2/ the Secretary-General strongly supported the proposals for the establishment of a United Nations Institute and proposed a general plan of action for its creation. In 1963, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to establish the Institute with a view to its establishment during the first half of 1964, if feasible 3/. It was also specified that the proposed Institute could make its most effective contribution by supplementing and co-operating with existing institutions, and thus avoiding duplication.

9. The organizational arrangements - in particular for the funding of the Institute - took longer than had been envisaged. With the first session of the Board of Trustees, which took place on 24-25 March 1965, UNITAR came into existence as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations. During this session, the Board of Trustees reached a consensus on the broad lines of the Institute's initial work programme; training should not be subordinated to research; research should be related to practical and specific objectives; initial operations should be on a small scale, with a small body of very high calibre personnel; because of its guiding role, UNITAR should take a long-range view of its work.

10. The Executive Director, appointed by the Secretary-General, set up the first Panel of UNITAR Consultants to advise him on the formulation of an initial work programme. With regard to the fund raising, the results were considered as gratifying at that time. Included in the contributions was a donation of \$450,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation which made it possible for the Institute to acquire a home of its own, a five-storey building opposite UN Headquarters.

11. In his report 4/ to the General Assembly at its twentieth session, the Secretary-General indicated, inter alia, that following consultations with the first Panel of UNITAR Consultants and other contacts with various UN organs, the Executive Director had submitted proposals regarding the Institute's initial work programme to the second session of the Board of Trustees, in September 1965. The programme adopted was as follows:

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1/ Resolution 1827(XVII) 18 December 1962.

2/ Doc. E/3780, 28 May 1963.

3/ Resolution 1934(XVIII).

4/ Doc. A/6027, 5 October 1965.

- Specific training programmes, for early implementation, to be transferred, after negotiation, from the UN to UNITAR:
  - (1) Foreign Service Officers from Newly Developing Countries;
  - (2) Development Financing;
  - (3) Techniques and Procedures of Technical Assistance.
- Establishment of a new programme for the training of development agents.
- With regard to research, exploration of the possibility of undertaking operational evaluation of the World Food Programme projects, with a view to studying later the methodology of evaluation of UN and agency operations.
- Survey of existing studies on the instrumentalities of UN peace-keeping with a view to identifying possible areas of useful research by UNITAR.
- Feasibility study on technological and scientific resources released by disarmament for purposes of economic and social development.
- Study of UN methods and techniques for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- A number of projects for both training and research to be taken into account for future proposals.

12. UNITAR began operational activities during 1966 5/. Two UN agencies were invited to be present at Board meetings in line with a scheme of rotation, with the proviso that one of the seats would always be occupied by either ILO or UNESCO.

13. In a detailed report 6/, submitted to the General Assembly in 1966, it was pointed out that in accordance with UNITAR's basic purposes, the activities of the Institute focused on objectives and programmes of the UN and that both training and research were regarded as mutually reinforcing activities.

14. An important element was added to the work programme of UNITAR in 1971. The Board of Trustees, at its tenth session in September 1971 "decided that the Institute should undertake, as soon as funds permitted, a programme for the continuous examination of major trends and developments having implications for the future of mankind that may require responses from the UN system" 7/. This programme, entitled "Project on the Future", has gathered considerable momentum since 1975, when a general outline was first approved by the Board of Trustees.

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5/ According to its Statute, UNITAR's purpose is to enhance "the effectiveness of the UN in achieving the major objectives of the Organization, in particular the maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of economic and social developments" by the performance of the two functions of training and research.

6/ Doc. A/6500, 8 November 1966.

7/ Doc. A/8714, 1974.

15. Up to 1973, the General Assembly continued to take note 8/ of the annual report of UNITAR, while expressing both its satisfaction for the increasing effectiveness of the Institute and the hope that it would have greater and wider financial support. At its twenty-ninth session in 1974, the Assembly invited the Institute in organizing its work to take full account of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. At its thirtieth session in 1975, the Assembly further strengthened this recommendation. It invited UNITAR to concentrate its work in the sphere of economic and social training and research.

16. The Executive Director reported to the General Assembly in 1978 9/ that an ad hoc advisory meeting of Board members convened in March 1978 noted with great concern that the reserves in the General Fund of the Institute had been depleted. It requested the Executive Director to present a balanced budget for 1979, which meant postponement of several projects and various austerity measures, including staff reduction in some areas. On the other hand, the Executive Director had embarked on a fund-raising campaign. In his introductory statement the Executive Director stressed the serious financial difficulties which the Institute had to face and indicated that unless the 1979 contributions increased considerably, the functioning of UNITAR would be seriously impaired. In the meantime, the original budget for 1979 had had to be reduced by more than 20 per cent.

17. The Assembly in 1978 acknowledged the value of the research and "future studies" undertaken by UNITAR; welcomed the emphasis and urged the continuation of the concentration of the work of UNITAR in the sphere of economic and social training and research and the inclusion of specific projects on the problems in the areas identified by the Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions and in the relevant decisions of the Assembly at its twenty-ninth session; and called upon Member States and organizations to provide greater and wider financial support to UNITAR.

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8/ Resolutions 2509(XXIV); 2640(XXV); 2767(XXVI); 2950(XXVII); 3064(XXVIII).

9/ Doc. A/33/14, 1978.

## CHAPTER II. ORGANIZATION AND STAFF

### A. Organization

18. UNITAR has a simple organization keyed to two basic functions, training and research. At present, in addition to the Office of the Executive Director, there are four departments: Department of Research; Department of Project on the Future; Department of Training; Department of Finance and Administration. The functions of these Departments are described in Chapter III. There is also a small office in Geneva. UNITAR's policy is formulated by an international Board of Trustees, composed of 24 distinguished officials and scholars appointed in their individual capacities. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, the President of the General Assembly, the President of ECOSOC and the Executive Director of the Institute are ex-officio members of the Board.
19. Consistent with the two functions of UNITAR, Training and Research, the Inspectors believe that there should be only two basic programmes. Each of these should be headed by a Director and each of the programmes could have several components. The present Department of Finance and Administration, a staff function, should be a component of the Executive Director's office. Thus, UNITAR would consist of two departments: one for Training and the other for Research.
20. The Inspectors believe that the separation of Research and the Project of the Future into two distinct departments has created problems of co-ordination and overlap. These problems would be curtailed by having a single Director, with a distinguished background in research and in United Nations activities, covering all programmes fulfilling the "research" function of UNITAR. Thus, the entire research programme would be under this Director including the projects of the future and any new research activities which might be added. The Director of this programme could also serve as Acting Executive Director in the absence of the head of UNITAR.
21. It also seemed to the Inspectors that there was a problem of general co-ordination among the Departments and, particularly, between the Departments of Training and Research. There should be greater exchanges between these two Departments.
22. Although the Executive Director has responsibility for co-ordinating all UNITAR activities, the Inspectors believe that he would be well-served by meeting with his senior staff regularly, at least once a month, to consider issues of policy and co-ordination, as well as to plan future activities. This would avoid co-ordination problems which sometimes now exist and would encourage an exchange on what each Department is doing and what each anticipates for the future.
23. The Geneva Office of UNITAR represents UNITAR at various UN meetings and organizes special training programmes. The Inspectors question whether the current cost of this office in relation to its functions merits its continuance. The possibilities of performing the essential functions of the office by New York based personnel or by contract personnel should be explored to determine whether this would be more economical than maintaining the office.



B. Staff

24. UNITAR has three categories of staff:

(a) Regular - UNITAR makes fixed-term appointments on the basis of United Nations staff rules and procedures. Some regular staff are provided by secondment from the United Nations.

(b) Fellows and consultants - UNITAR issues "letters of award" which specify the conditions, period of service and emoluments. Some of them, as well as some fellows of UNITAR, are not paid but are considered to be honorary fellows. There is no contribution to pension nor the staff benefits which regular personnel receive. It is relatively easy to obtain personnel from universities for short periods under this procedure at costs lower than those of regular staff.

(c) Special Service Agreements - Under this arrangement UNITAR commissions a person for a study at a specific cost. Special service agreements make it possible to engage staff for short periods, but most of the special service agreements are for consultants.

25. In addition to the Executive Director at the Under-Secretary level, UNITAR has, at the time of this Report, only 13 regular Professional staff in New York, classified from D-2 to P-1 (one more is in Geneva). There are 19 General Service staff in New York and 3 in Geneva. In addition to these regular staff members, UNITAR has 15 non-resident and part-time Professional staff (categories (b) and (c) above) in New York and 2 in Geneva. The total salary and common staff costs for New York and Geneva amount to \$1,400,000 per year.

UNITAR Staff

Professional

New York	14
Geneva	1
	—
	15

General Service

New York	19
Geneva	3
	—
	22

Non-Resident - Part-time Professional

New York	15
Geneva	2
	—
	17

26. Thus, UNITAR's regular staff is modest in number and because of the uncertainty of contributions to the budget always somewhat insecure. This is a particular hardship for General Service staff and certain key Professional staff members whom UNITAR needs on a full-time basis and for indefinite periods.

All Professional personnel are on short, fixed-term contracts which does not lend itself to career development or security of staff, and can be a discouraging element in attracting good staff. The Inspectors believe that UNITAR's regular staff should be small and should be supplemented, as at present, by staff recruited for special short-term periods, dependent upon the studies at hand. It is difficult to indicate with authority what size the permanent staff should be as this would depend upon two unknowns - future contributions and future work programme. But the Inspectors have concluded that a minimum nucleus of established staff no smaller than at present is required.

### CHAPTER III. SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS

27. When submitting his views regarding the terms of reference of UNITAR, the Secretary-General stressed that the Institute's scope covered only the study of practical problems of the UN and made concrete research and training facilities available to the UN and the specialized agencies. UNITAR's role, he said, is one which is not, "and could never be, filled by other institutions for research and training". 10/

28. Since UNITAR's inception, the need for concentration of activities has received attention from the Institute's authorities, the Member States and the ACC. Although its work programme started with training and research activities, some of which were transferred to UNITAR from other UN bodies, the Institute has made an effort to appraise its activities in relation to its objectives. It has also attempted to ensure better co-ordination and co-operation with other training and research services operating within the UN development system.

29. However, these efforts have not been entirely successful partly because of an organizational issue. Training and research are organized as separate activities with independent programmes, except for the central guidance from the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director. According to the Statute, both activities have a common aim which involves the study and understanding of the UN's objectives and operations, but they do not always appear to follow the same path or work closely together.

30. In 1969 the authorities of UNITAR decided that compartmentalization should be abolished and that all the substantive work concerning training and research be carried out in a single Department of Studies. The 1973 Report of the Executive Director to the General Assembly pointed out the practical advantages of such integration which would permit instructors and lecturers to make use of their own research results, and for the research staff to be stimulated by the contact and experience that participation in training provides. This was not followed for long and training and research have once again been organized in separate units and integration made even more difficult with the more recent establishment of the Department of the Project on the Future.

31. Another general problem has been the tendency in UNITAR to spread its work widely, expanding its scope and increasing the number of studies and training activities, rather than concentrating its resources on the analysis of a few major and basic problems of the UN system. There is a certain amount of pressure for extending its activities, since seeking acceptance, recognition and support is a necessary corollary for an Institute dependent upon voluntary contributions. Nevertheless, such a tendency towards fragmentation can in the long run so dilute its programme and resources as to make its work ineffective.

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10/ Note by the Secretary-General (Doc. E/3780, p.3).

A. Training

32. UNITAR's training programmes are designed to prepare nationals primarily from developing countries for assignments with the UN, the specialized agencies and their national services concerned with the work of the UN. Also, "these programmes may include training for staff members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies as well as training for special United Nations field assignments" (Article II of the Statute).

33. During the last eleven years the Institute provided training for 4,649 participants, in 152 courses: 98 courses were held at the New York Headquarters; 24 in Geneva and 30 in the field.

34. The following tables<sup>11/</sup> were prepared to offer a broad picture of UNITAR's training activities during this period (1969-1979):

Year	Total Courses	Courses Outside New York/HQ	Participants*	Nationalities	Lecturers and Guest Panelists
1969	8	4	268	96	98
1969/70	25	2	162	79	60
1970/71	14	4	207	90	32
1971/72	9	4	200	78	not available
1972/73	9	2	381	106	" "
1973/74	10	2	414	113	" "
1974/75	15	7	605	120	" "
1975/76	13	5	479	113	" "
1976/77	15	6	699	134	" "
1977/78	16	8	565	130	" "
1978/79	18	10	669	134	" "
	152	54	4,649		

\* Participants from UN and other international organizations not included.

<sup>11/</sup> The reports of the Executive Director to the General Assembly were used as the main source of the above data. Unfortunately, the information and presentation of the statistics concerning these activities vary from year to year and in some cases do not reveal all the necessary details; also changes in criteria make it difficult to formulate a comprehensive analysis of trends and scope. The tables provide, however, an insight into the operation as a whole.

Courses

Year	Total	New York/HQ	Geneva	Elsewhere
1969	8	4	-	4
1969/70	25	23	1	1
1970/71	14	10	1	3
1971/72	9	5	1*	3
1972/73	9	7	-	2
1973/74	10	8**	1	1
1974/75	15	8	5	2
1975/76	13	8	3	2
1976/77	15	9	3	3
1977/78	16	8**	4	4
1978/79	18	8***	5	5****
	152	98	24	30

\* This seminar was also held in Beirut.

\*\* One of these seminars was also held in Geneva.

\*\*\* One of these seminars was also held in Geneva and other locations.

\*\*\*\* One of these seminars was held in several locations.

35. In 1979, according to its work programme, the Institute was expected to complete some 40 training activities (courses and seminars). Among these, (a) 13 were for the training of delegates and members of permanent missions to the UN, and diplomatic training for other than those in permanent missions; (b) 12 were joint professional training programmes other than for diplomats; (c) 12 on training services requested by Member States and (d) 3 were inter-agency training activities under discussion with the UN, ILO and the JIU. Examples of such training activities are as follows: Under (a) some seminars were related to the work and organization of the United Nations such as the seminar for new delegates to the General Assembly (New York), the seminar on negotiating procedures in the United Nations (Geneva); others dealt with special aspects of the United Nations system, such as seminars on international economics for diplomats (New York), the seminar on the law of the sea (Geneva). Under (b) were included the junior professional programme (New York, Geneva and other locations), the International law training programmes, the Advanced training course on international documentation (Geneva). Under (c), a course for a group of political scientists from the Federal Republic of Germany (Geneva), another for a group of university students from Venezuela (New York), and advisory assistance to Saudi Arabia in establishing a diplomatic institute in Jeddah etc.

36. Since 1974, the policy has been to strengthen the training function covering the needs of the diplomatic missions, the international staff of UN organizations, and regional and other professional training, focusing the attention of

the Institute on issues of current concern to the international community. This emphasis was given in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly and elsewhere. Notwithstanding the financial limitations, UNITAR has tried, over the years, to cover most of the important issues and problems concerning the effectiveness of the United Nations, but as noted in paragraph 49, more concentration would be beneficial.

37. The courses were sometimes not particularly well suited to the requirements of participants. However, most were successful. During the last five years, the annual average number of participants was 600 from more than 120 countries, and the number of courses organized in the field is increasing.

38. UNITAR began in 1979 to regionalize some of its training activities for foreign service officers in order to make possible the training of a larger number of persons with the same budget. In general, bringing the trainers to the participants rather than the contrary has served a good purpose and has also helped to reduce the per capita cost of the training. In order to serve an even larger number of participants, particularly at the junior professional level or in courses dealing with technical co-operation and development, UNITAR could strengthen its existing co-operation with regional and national training centres throughout the world. In regard to the location of the courses organized directly by UNITAR, the Inspectors think that the current average distribution of about 80 per cent at Headquarters (New York and Geneva) and 20 per cent in the field is about right. Greater decentralization is not suggested.

39. The holding of training courses away from Headquarters is decided after receipt of a request from a government; they require special organizational arrangements. UNITAR should act whenever possible as a focal point, providing leadership, co-ordination and backstopping to encourage other institutes (national or regional) who are willing and able to participate and support the various UNITAR training efforts away from Headquarters. Courses lasting more than one month should be organized preferably in association with other centres at field location. Such co-operation would enable UNITAR to spread its resources further and would encourage other institutions to deal with issues of priority concern to the United Nations.

40. Some have suggested expanding UNITAR's training statutory function in order to take over most other UN training activities; the organization of a UN staff college has also been proposed. These proposals raise basic issues concerning the purpose of the Institute. There are several factors which should be reviewed in relation to the possibility of expanding UNITAR's training activities, an idea which seems to be based mainly on financial, but also on bureaucratic considerations. In the first place, UNITAR's objective is not in-service training for UN staff. Although its training activity must be organized to enhance the effectiveness of the UN and may include training for staff members, its clientele should, as at present, consist mainly of nationals and diplomats of the Member States. Secondly, the UN system Secretariats are better equipped and much more experienced in handling its in-service training requirements, which are complex and require an intimate knowledge of internal policies and procedures.

41. In 1969, the participants in a UNITAR colloquium for senior officials of the UN system suggested organizing training programmes of the "staff college" type, an initiative which was adopted by the Institute's Board of Trustees and, in due course, supported by ACC at its fifty-third session in April 1971. <sup>12/</sup> The proposal was examined by the Fifth Committee and approved "in principle", subject to further clarification of the organization and financing of this programme.

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<sup>12/</sup> UNITAR's Report by the Executive Director to the General Assembly's twenty-eighth session (Doc. A/8414).

As a consequence, the Assembly decided to postpone its consideration and requested the Secretary-General to submit a new report about the project and its financial implications. The Executive Director of UNITAR finally concluded that in the light of the discussions of the General Assembly and the UNDP Governing Council 13/, "it would be inappropriate to proceed with the proposal to establish a staff college as an autonomous institution" 14/, or even as a programme of the type envisaged unless the Institute's resources could be augmented to finance the provision of special courses for the training of international officials in administration and modern management techniques. Thus, the idea of a "staff college" was dropped. The Inspectors believe that this is the right decision, at least for the next few years.

## B. Research

42. Although UNITAR's activity in research is carried out at present by two separate departments, one having the title of "Research" and the other "Project on the Future", it appears that they are both engaged in similar functions and should be examined together.

43. The nature, scope and emphasis of the Institute's research activities were outlined by the Board of Trustees during the fourth session in 1966: UNITAR's research should be focused on problems and requirements of the UN, generally oriented towards future developments and with emphasis on studies concerned with the effectiveness of the Organization and the needs of developing countries. The Board also decided that the Institute should concentrate on meeting gaps in existing programmes of study and should avoid unnecessary duplication of work. This policy was reviewed and confirmed by the Board in September 1969 on the basis of a report submitted by the Executive Director 15/.

44. The "Project on the Future" is a recent addition to UNITAR's research activities 16/ but it appears that it did not bring any new basic concept to research, except perhaps the intention of serving "to alert" the UN system to major evolving problems and to stimulate timely international action on the basis of its critical examination.

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13/ UNDP, Fifteenth session (Doc. E/5256, p.53).

14/ Report to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly (Doc. A/9014).

15/ Doc. A/7615, Annex VI, pp. 44-58.

16/ See Chapter I, paragraph 13. In 1975, the following areas of study were identified as being of possible interest for the Project on the Future Department: (a) Africa and the future; (b) Economic and Social Strategies designed to achieve the national targets of the 1974 World Food Conference; and (c) specific studies on non-renewable resources. In 1976, emphasis was given to problems and issues relating to the establishment of the NIEO in the context of the inter-relationships between food, population, energy resources and environment. Three important conferences were organized by UNITAR in 1976/77 within this project on: (a) natural petroleum and gas; (b) microbial energy conversion; and (c) alternative strategies for desert development and management. The Department also contributed to UNITAR's research programme with a "study on global models and their relevance to the New International Economic Order", an activity which was continued in 1978 with the addition of analysis about North-South relations.

45. At present the emphasis of both departments is mainly on topics related to the New International Economic Order, law and socio-economic development. The Research Department, also stressing the need to explore implications for the future, including the role and situation of women, is now giving emphasis to studies concerning: (a) the UN and the New International Economic Order; (b) multinational co-operation for development; (c) population, resources and environment implications for development; and (d) international laws, security and diplomacy. The Project on the Future Department is concerned with: (a) studies on policy choices such as technology, domestic distribution and North-South relations; regional approaches to the problems of the future (Africa and South-East Asia); progress in the establishment of a New International Economic Order; and (b) studies on supply constraints in energy and natural resources.

46. UNITAR enjoys a privileged position by having direct access to all the organizations of the international community, which enables it to take a multi-disciplinary inter-agency approach. Being an autonomous organization, having the possibility of enlisting outside talent and with the potential to be a focal point in an international research and training network, UNITAR stands in a unique position and can play a leading intellectual role in drawing the attention of the UN system and governments to the problems faced by the organizations and possible alternative solutions and courses of action, as well as to possible improvements in the functioning of the system itself.

47. There is nothing basically wrong with the Institute's general policies and guidelines approved by the Board and the Executive Director concerning the planning, methodology and execution of its research activities. To contribute substantively to the objectives of the international community and to suggest solutions to world problems, UNITAR should review its capacity to serve as a "think tank".

48. UNITAR should renew efforts to encourage the participation in its work of the best talent available. It must be able to continue to associate itself with the most distinguished intellectuals and leaders of the international community and the academic world. One important reason for doing this is to enhance the identity and future prospects of the Institute itself. An Institute of recognized quality and with a coherent programme can attract the collaborators it requires.

49. The current selection of research projects seems reasonable in most respects. There are grounds, however, to question the breadth of the programmes and the duration and timeliness of the studies. The urge to produce as many documents as possible on diverse problems engenders a risk of duplication and cannot be justified in view of the limited resources. Such diversification and proliferation can be detrimental to quality. The Inspectors believe that there should be a better focus of efforts and a concentration of resources so that UNITAR's capacity to serve as a UN centre of excellence could be strengthened.

### C. Advisory and Co-operation Services

50. The Secretary-General, giving his views about the frame of reference for the work programme of the Institute 17/, pointed out that UNITAR should concentrate on the study of "problems with which the United Nations may be concerned, particularly from an operational point of view". He pointed out that in building up a group of knowledgeable specialists for these tasks, UNITAR could be of great value in making personnel "available, on occasion, to the Secretary-General for important special missions". 18/

17/ Note by the Secretary-General (Doc. E/3780, p.3). This document, although not intended as a final blue-print of UNITAR, still provides a valid conceptual framework for discussion about its scope and functions.

18/ Ibidem, p.4.



51. There is no doubt that UNITAR could provide consultation and guidance in matters concerning the increasingly complex situations in which the system has to operate "including those devolving from the Secretary-General himself". It seems to be natural and advisable, for practical reasons, to take advantage of the experience, accumulated wisdom and capabilities of the Institute in regard to the study of present and future world problems.

52. It is also true that high-level training and research are spheres of work which need a touch of reality and this is perhaps another good reason for UNITAR's interest in providing advisory services in the technical co-operation field. The Inspectors feel, however, that UNITAR's scope for providing advice should be limited to responding to specific requests from Member States, the Secretary-General, the regional commissions and the specialized agencies, only on substantive aspects of problems for which UNITAR has been or is carrying out training or research projects.

53. Because of its responsibilities and its position in the UN system, UNITAR could contribute advice and guidance to Member States and to UN organizations responsible for regional training and research projects in areas in which UNITAR has competence. UNITAR should provide such advice on request and in the light of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for TCDC.

#### D. Publications and Dissemination of Information

54. UNITAR's publications are necessary for the dissemination of its research. Their justification and usefulness depend, however, on their being directly related to the principal objectives of UNITAR and of priority interest to its recognized clientele, i.e. mainly the international community.

55. Publication of UNITAR studies could be a legitimate source of income and the Inspectors think that UNITAR should explore further the possibilities of selling or leasing reproduction rights to outside publishers as well as organizing an efficient distribution of its books and periodicals.

56. The number of studies and papers prepared and published by UNITAR is impressive and most of them serve a useful purpose. To date, over a hundred books, papers and periodicals, on different subjects, have been distributed to the international community, the academic world and the general public. In 1978, the list of available and forthcoming publications included 22 research reports, 12 studies, 10 papers in the "Peaceful Settlement" series, 4 regional studies, 12 "future" studies, 3 conference reports, 5 papers in the lecture series, 10 periodicals, 3 training manuals and 3 seminar reports.

#### CHAPTER IV. FUNDING

57. UNITAR depends entirely on voluntary contributions for its financing. When it was founded an endowment fund was envisaged which might have freed it from the uncertainty of annual contributions or pledging. This did not work out and, as a result, UNITAR must plan its activities each year without really knowing what its income will be.

58. In 1978, 38 governments made pledges to UNITAR. The major contributors to the General Fund for the past two years have been the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Canada, Norway, Switzerland and Japan. There is a large rouble account in the USSR which is being used increasingly for conferences, research and publications. Negotiations are now underway for the use of this account for travel to and from the USSR on Aeroflot. Once this travel arrangement is worked out, more seminars can be held in the USSR.

59. During 1978 the income of the General Fund amounted to \$1,976,685 (government contributions \$1,839,770) while expenditures came to \$2,252,672, resulting in an excess of expenditure over income of \$275,987 (a somewhat smaller deficit occurred in 1976 and 1977).

60. Contributions to the Special Purpose Grants Fund have been increasing. In 1978, these amounted to \$851,502, while in 1977 it was \$324,180. In 1978, income exceeded expenditures by \$461,223 under this Fund. At the end of 1978, \$1,165,277 was held in non-convertible currencies. In 1978, the major contributors to the Special Purpose Fund were the Beulah Edge Trust, Sweden, Federal Republic of Germany, UNDP for a water conference and UNESCO for a summer training institute. There has been some concern that UNITAR might become too dependent upon special purpose funds and thus its orientation and activities would be directed by the purposes established by contributors (see also Chapter VI, paragraph 91).

61. It is difficult to even estimate the contributions in-kind to UNITAR, but they are considerable. For example, contributions in the form of conference facilities, travel of some participants, interpreters and others are made, probably amounting each year to more than the General Fund budget itself.

62. Funding is obviously one of the principal problems of UNITAR. At present it is difficult to plan programmes and activities because of the uncertainty of the voluntary contributions. Undoubtedly, UNITAR could be a more effective and efficient institution if this problem could be solved. There are a number of possible alternative funding arrangements including the following:

(a) Regular budget: This would have the obvious advantage of a relatively stable budget. However, such an approach would probably be rejected as a matter of principle and also because it would set a precedent.

(b) Core budget: This would involve regular budget support for a basic core staff and support funds with programme money being provided by voluntary contributions and trust funds. This would have the advantage of giving some stability to the organization, but this approach also might be rejected for the reasons given in (a) above.

(c) Endowment: UNITAR had hoped at its inception to have an endowment fund which would provide some stable annual income. This did not materialize and it is unlikely that it will happen at this late date.

(d) United Nations University Endowment: The suggestion here is to have part of UNU's income from its endowment given to UNITAR. This would give some stability to UNITAR, but would make it dependent upon and a satellite of UNU.

(e) Voluntary contributions: As at present, this would have an unsettling effect.

63. The Inspectors have concluded that the most suitable, although recognizably difficult, solution to the funding problem would be to have a core budget (about 1 million dollars per year) provided through the regular UN budget. This would be used for the minimum number of staff, basic facilities, etc., required to maintain the infrastructure of the Institute. The extensive substantive programmes would have to be supported by voluntary contributions, trust funds, etc.

64. Other steps could be taken to improve the budget situation. For example, UN organizations should reimburse UNITAR for services rendered to them. There would be mutual advantage in UNDP entrusting UNITAR with the role of "executing agency" for projects for which UNITAR has unique competence. UNITAR could also be used as a consultant to "executing agencies" for development projects.

CHAPTER V. RELATIONSHIPS AND CO-OPERATION

65. Since the initial discussions on the proposal for establishing UNITAR, the General Assembly and ACC have been aware of the activities of other organizations in related fields. As a consequence, they were (and still are) very much concerned about the need for co-ordination in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and to enhance co-operation and interchange.

66. The operation of UNITAR still gives rise to questions concerning the relationship of its programme to the activities of other training and research centres within the UN system or assisted by UN organizations. The Inspectors believe that UNITAR should act as a focal point of a network of training and research institutes associated with the UN system, in which its primary role would be to provide intellectual guidance, facilitate interchange and promote harmonization. This role has been initiated but has not been carried out sufficiently, partly because of inadequate financing and difficulties inherent in co-ordination within the UN system.

67. The problems of duplication of training and research efforts were always considered in connexion with the need to strengthen the support of the UN system to national and regional centres. It was also recognized that the United Nations system, because of its diversity, complexity and action in new and uncharted fields, required the services of a distinct high-level training and research programme. The problems of overlap were also considered in the Secretary-General's note which stated that "any duplication with the work of other institutions would be most unlikely" <sup>19/</sup> and that UNITAR's functions could be best performed in close relationship and combination with the programmes of other centres within the UN.

68. UNITAR's Statute expressly indicates that one of the responsibilities of its Executive Director is to "Co-ordinate the work of the Institute with that of other international, regional and bilateral programmes in similar fields" (Article IV, paragraph 3 (g)). When necessary he should also set up advisory bodies with representatives of the specialized agencies and other interested institutions. UNITAR should encourage co-operation of training and research centres on relevant specific projects.

69. UNITAR organizes and chairs annual meetings of Directors of UN-assisted training and research centres and related international institutes. The first meeting took place in Geneva in July 1966 and from then on they were held regularly on an informal basis to examine methods of furthering collaboration and to stress co-ordination of programmes. Regional institutes from Africa, Asia and Latin America, several organizations of the United Nations and other global and international centres of the system such as the United Nations University (UNU) and the Economic Development Institute of the IBRD attend. These meetings are useful, in the Inspectors' opinion, but in the future UNITAR should play a more prominent role in planning and guiding the meetings, and in follow-up.

70. Representatives of the specialized agencies did not attend the Board of Trustees, with the exception of UNESCO and IBRD which attended the 1966 and 1967 sessions. This observation does not imply the absence of consultations which were nevertheless accomplished through the ACC meetings or, occasionally,

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<sup>19/</sup> Ibidem, p.6

by direct contact and arrangements with the agencies. However, the Inspectors feel that it would be useful for some of the UN agencies to attend the meetings of the Board of Trustees.

71. The Inspectors were pleased to note that since UNITAR's inception there have been some joint programmes organized by the Institute. UNITAR's 1979 work programme also includes several research and training projects to be executed in collaboration with other institutions, the UN University among them.

A. UNITAR and the United Nations University

72. With the sponsorship of the UN and UNESCO, and on the basis of the feasibility study submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, the establishment of the United Nations University (UNU) was decided by Resolution 2951(XXVII) on 11 December 1972. Its purpose is to advance the concept of an international community of scholars and a world-wide network of academic institutions. 20/

73. When UNITAR was consulted about the proposed establishment of UNU and participated in the preparation of the feasibility study, it had already had several years' experience in a related field. The Institute favoured the proposal and regarded the University mainly as an instrument to co-ordinate and supplement the work done in already existing institutions, including those outside the UN system. 21/

74. The dangers of duplication were obvious. The General Assembly Resolution in creating the UNU in December 1972 expressly stated that "close co-ordination should be maintained between the activities of UNESCO, UNITAR and other organizations of the UN system and those of the University".

75. In 1973, UNITAR was represented at the meetings of the UNU Founding Committee in which the Charter was drawn up. The Executive Director of the Institute was included as an ex-officio member of the University's Council in order to facilitate the co-ordination which was deemed necessary and called for by General Assembly Resolution 3081(XXVIII).

76. From then on the relationship between both institutions was always considered satisfactory by their respective authorities. Since September 1975, consultations were regularly carried out by UNITAR's Executive Director and the Rector of the UNU to ensure co-operative working relationships among them. During the eleventh annual meeting of Directors of UN Institutes organized by UNITAR (Geneva, July 1976), the Under Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination, also an ex-officio member of the UNU Council, briefed the meeting on the work underway in the University and, as a result, all participants agreed to the need for co-ordination and mutual support in this field of common interest. This interchange of information was repeated in the Directors' meetings of 1977 and 1978; the Rector of the University participated in the 1978 meeting for the first time.

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20/ According to this resolution, UNU structure should consist of a programming and co-ordinating central organ and a decentralized system of affiliated institutions.

21/ See Annex III of the Report of the Executive Director to the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly (Doc. A/8414).

77. The results of a consultative meeting held in June 1978 between the UNU and UNITAR are quite promising, at least in terms of recognition of respective interests and activities. Efforts were made to differentiate between their particular programmes, such as by having the University widen its dissemination of knowledge in the training programmes, and the provision by UNITAR of additional expertise and information on scheduled courses and seminars. Other recommendations for collaboration and co-ordination concerned some research projects and conferences.

78. In the Report to the 105th session of the Executive Board of UNESCO's "Programme and External Relations Commission" 22/ and in the discussions about the UNU Annual Report, many similarities were noted concerning the roles of the University and UNITAR. The need for more precise arrangements to avoid duplication and overlapping were evident from this discussion.

79. The present expanded spectrum of the UNU's and UNITAR's functions in such wide fields as peace, security and world welfare, makes it difficult for them to programme their activities with clear lines of separation. However, the Inspectors think that the definition of the functions of both institutions, as approved by the General Assembly, provides a satisfactory basis for drawing up clear lines between the two organizations. A merger of UNITAR with the UNU system would be an extreme solution to avoid duplication and overlap. Therefore, the Inspectors suggest that there be a formal meeting of UNU and UNITAR, under the auspices of the UN and UNESCO, to discuss the issue of co-ordination and overlap. This meeting might be the occasion to identify opportunities for common execution, or collaboration on programmes. The relationship between UNU and UNITAR would be strengthened if the Rector of the UNU were a member of UNITAR's Board of Trustees.

#### B. Other Global and Regional Centres

80. The question of the relationship and co-operation of UNITAR with the UNU, although the most complex, is not the only one that should be considered in examining the scope of the Institute. There are other problems of co-ordination, almost as important, in regard to the programming of many global and regional training and research centres operating within the UN system.

81. The annual meetings of Directors of training and research centres from different regions of the world, the organization of inter-regional seminars and collaboration with UN organizations, commissions and specialized agencies such as ECA, ECWA, IAEA, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO, although in most cases for occasional joint ventures, prove the willingness and potential of UNITAR to co-operate and pool resources.

82. Some contact with global centres such as the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the International Institute for Labour Studies (ILO), the International Institute for Educational Planning (UNESCO) and the Economic Development Institute (IBRD), can also be mentioned, but the Inspectors feel that these working relationships of UNITAR could still be improved and enlarged.

83. The same could be said for the regional training and research centres assisted by the UN system, particularly those devoted to planning and development administration where the support and advice of UNITAR as a leading intellectual institution should be useful in providing information, stimuli, innovative ideas and guidance for the study of UN problems.

84. The relationship and interchange with universities and study centres outside the UN system is desirable in regard to UNITAR's work and should be encouraged. These relationships, either for training or research, might be organized, inter alia, through the UNU network of academic institutions.

85. Training for diplomats and nationals of Member States should, in particular, be organized in co-operation with the specialized agencies, regional commissions and regional centres to facilitate decentralization and reduce costs.

### C. The Network Strategy

86. A network strategy would be helpful in providing a basis for co-ordination among UNU, UNITAR and the other institutions working within the United Nations system in research and training in such broad fields as peace, security and development.

87. Regional research and training centres could better avoid duplication and improve the quality of their work through co-operation agreements which delimit responsibilities and by joint undertakings with the corresponding regional economic commissions. Global centres assisted or managed by United Nations organizations are also confronted with problems of co-ordination particularly with regional centres active in their fields but also with other global centres. The network strategy would enable them to co-operate within an integrated system.

88. The benefits of the network strategy would accrue from co-ordination and better use of resources through harmonized medium and long-term planning. Such planning could be of practical value as a method of co-ordination applied to inter-related activities of organizations working towards the same goal, or set of goals, within the UN system, but each institution should maintain its own identity, character and programme.

89. Thus the network strategy, under which UNITAR would serve as a focal and co-ordinating point for UN and UN-assisted regional or global institutes functioning in related fields, could gradually add coherence, quality and purpose to the many major efforts of the UN system for research and training. The annual meeting of the Directors of UN-assisted training and research centres described in paragraph 69 could be the instrument for considering and gradually introducing a network strategy.

CHAPTER VI. EFFECTIVENESS AND ACCEPTANCE

90. In reviewing the value of the services provided by UNITAR, the Inspectors have based their opinion on several indicators reflecting effectiveness and acceptance, as well as on numerous interviews with those familiar with UNITAR and its activities. The simplest indicator is the extent of financial support received from governments and other contributors. Only 30 per cent of the countries directly using UNITAR's facilities are really contributing to its cost and some of them quite irregularly. One cannot assume that a failure to make voluntary contributions is equivalent to lack of confidence in UNITAR. On the contrary, many countries which do not contribute or contribute small amounts do make use of the services of UNITAR and this is of primary significance. But as noted in Chapter IV, the uncertainty and inadequacy of contributions adversely affects the programming capacity of UNITAR and hence its work.

91. Another characteristic of interest (as described in Chapter IV) is that UNITAR's funding is divided into: income of the General Fund and contributions to the Special Purpose Grants Fund. The first is a component of the amounts received for institutional support and as such is suffering a continuous decline in actual value, which is not being compensated for by an adequate increase in the contributions of the countries. The second is steadily increasing lately, but this is creating, as a result, a new kind of limitation on the authorities of the Institute in determining the orientation of its programming and could hamper its independence. The General Assembly has repeatedly expressed the hope that the Institute will receive greater and wider financial contributions, but to date this support continues to be limited and uncertain.

92. Another indicator to be considered in this appraisal is the use of the services of the Institute by its clientele. UNITAR's concept of its clientele <sup>23/</sup> seems rather broad; it should concentrate its services on the governments (including diplomatic missions to the UN) and the international officials who are in a position to take action on the subjects the Institute deals with. At present, the only concrete significant data which could be cited concerns statistics of participation in UNITAR's courses (Chapter III). During the last 11 years there were a great number of individual participants and an average of 108 countries using the Institute's facilities. This figure speaks for itself but it should be analyzed in relation to the percentage of contributing members mentioned in paragraph 90 above.

93. In the same connexion, it is noted that the income derived from the sale of publications is still rather low: less than 30 per cent of the printing cost to the Institute. In the view of the Inspectors this reflects more the inadequate sales techniques and the appeal of some publications to only a narrow group of specialists than any criticism of the intrinsic value of the publications.

94. In applying decentralization and regionalization as ways for UNITAR to be as near as possible to its clientele and enlarge the number of participants in its courses, the Institute was fairly successful. One hundred and twenty-two courses were organized at Headquarters (New York and Geneva) out of a total of 152 in 11 years.

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<sup>23/</sup> Reports of the Executive Director to the General Assembly thirty-second and thirty-third sessions (A/32/14 and A/33/14).



95. The nature of relations with other institutions also can provide insights for judging the effectiveness of UNITAR. The Inspectors made an examination of these relations in Chapter V. Their observations show that UNITAR was very active in this respect and succeeded in obtaining many positive responses. The Inspectors are pleased to note that UNITAR's efforts to improve relations, either through mutual support and the execution of joint ventures, or participation in an organizational network, gives a positive image of its effectiveness and acceptance.

96. However, there is a danger that the urge to seek support through inter-institute co-operation could lead to fragmentation of the programme with more activities and relatively less resources for each. This should be avoided since UNITAR must concentrate on activities directly related to its own mandate.

97. All in all, UNITAR's image may be diffuse, not as sharp as it should be, and the Institute may also be falling short of some of its targets, but the potential is there, as well as the determination and readiness of its authorities to adapt the Institute to better confront its responsibilities. The Inspectors feel that in this respect effectiveness would be improved by better coordination and by integrating some of its activities. Concerning acceptance, some uncertainties would be eliminated if the recognition of UNITAR's worth, consistently accorded by the General Assembly,<sup>24/</sup> were translated into adequate financial support and active participation of a greater number of Member States and organizations of the international community.

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<sup>24/</sup> For the last five years, see Resolutions 3217(XXIX), 3403(XXX), 31/107(1976), 32/57(1977) and 33/20(1978).

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

98. Although UNITAR has experienced difficulties in the past, it now seems to be at crossroads in its development. The Inspectors believe that it should continue, but its role should be better defined and strengthened. Specific conclusions and recommendations are made to that effect.

### Organization and Staff

99. UNITAR should consist of two departments, one for Training and one for Research, related to its two basic programmes. The separation of Research and the Project on the Future into two distinct departments has created some problems of co-ordination and overlap. Therefore, consideration should be given to forming a single department of Research. The Director of this department could also serve as Acting Executive Director in the absence of the head of UNITAR (Chapter II, paragraphs 19-20).

100. The present Department of Finance and Administration should be a component of the Executive Director's Office (Chapter II, paragraph 19).

101. In order to improve general co-ordination among UNITAR, there should be: (a) greater exchange between the Training and Research Departments; (b) at least a monthly meeting of the Executive Director with his senior staff to consider issues of policy and co-ordination (Chapter II, paragraphs 21-22).

102. The possibilities of performing the essential functions of the Geneva office by New York based personnel or by contract personnel should be explored to determine whether this would be more economical than maintaining a separate office (Chapter II, paragraph 23).

103. UNITAR's regular staff should be small and should be supplemented, as at present, by staff recruited for special short-term periods, depending on needs. In any case, a minimum nucleus of established staff no smaller than at present is required (Chapter II, paragraphs 24-26).

### Scope and functions

104. There should be a better focus of efforts and a concentration of resources so that UNITAR's capacity to serve as a UN centre of excellence could be strengthened (Chapter III, paragraphs 27-31, 36, 49).

### Training

105. A. The decentralization of some training activities has made possible the training of a larger number of persons with the same budget. In order to serve an even larger number of participants, UNITAR might strengthen its existing co-operation with regional and national training centres (Chapter III, paragraph 38).

B. Courses lasting more than one month should be organized in association with other centres in the field (Chapter III, paragraph 39).

C. UNITAR's training statutory function should not be expanded to include UN staff training activities (Chapter III, paragraph 40).

D. The decision not to establish a "staff college" was the right one, at least for the next few years (Chapter III, paragraph 41).

### Research

106. A. UNITAR should review its capacity to serve as a "think tank" in order to contribute substantively to the objectives of the international community and to suggest solutions to world problems (Chapter III, paragraphs 47, 48).

B. The current selection of research projects seems reasonable in most respects. However, the breadth of the programmes, the duration and timeliness of the studies, the variety of problems covered, and the number of documents produced can be questioned as being possibly detrimental to quality (Chapter III, paragraph 49).

### Advisory and Co-operation Services

107. UNITAR, because of its responsibilities and its position in the UN system, should provide advisory services to Member States and to UN organizations for regional training and research projects in areas in which the Institute has competence (Chapter III, paragraph 53).

### Publications and Dissemination of Information

108. A. The number of studies and papers prepared and published by UNITAR is impressive and most of them serve a useful purpose.

B. UNITAR should explore the possibilities of selling, or leasing, reproduction rights to outside publishers as well as organizing an efficient distribution of its books and periodicals (Chapter III, paragraphs 54-56).

### Funding

109. UNITAR could be a more effective and efficient institution if the funding problem were solved. From among a number of possible alternative funding arrangements, the most suitable, although recognizably difficult, solution would be to have a core budget financed by the UN regular budget, supplemented by voluntary contributions (Chapter IV, paragraphs 57-63).

110. Other steps could be taken to improve the budget situation: reimbursement for services rendered by UNITAR; UNDP entrusting UNITAR with the role of "executing agency"; UNITAR used as a consultant to "executing agencies" (Chapter IV, paragraph 64).

### Relationships and Co-operation

111. UNITAR's serving as a focal point of a network of training and research institute within the UN system should be strengthened. In order to further coordination and in conformity with Article IV, paragraph 3(g) of its Statute, consideration should be given to encouraging co-operation with training and research centres on specific projects. Similarly, it would be useful for some of the specialized agencies to attend the meetings of the Board (Chapter V, paragraphs 65-68, 70).

112. The annual meeting of Directors of UN-assisted training and research centres and related international institutes is considered as useful, but in the future UNITAR should play a more prominent role in planning and guiding the meetings, and in follow-up. The organization of joint programmes is also a positive element (Chapter V, paragraphs 69, 71).

113. The dangers of duplication between UNITAR and UNU are obvious and close co-operation is necessary. Many efforts were made over the years to avoid these dangers but the results are not sufficiently satisfactory. Consideration should be given to holding a formal meeting of UNU and UNITAR, under the auspices of the UN and UNESCO, to discuss the issue of co-ordination and overlap. The relationship between UNU and UNITAR would be strengthened if the Rector of UNU were a member of UNITAR's Board of Trustees (Chapter V, paragraphs 72-79).

114. A. Various initiatives taken by UNITAR to arrange working relationships with UN and UN-assisted institutes, to organize meetings and seminars, to collaborate with UN organizations, prove its willingness and potential to co-operate and pool resources. But this could still be improved and enlarged; in particular, relations with global centres, regional training and research centres need strengthening.

B. The relationships with universities and study centres outside the UN system should be encouraged and might be organized in collaboration with the UNU.

C. Training for diplomats and nationals of Member States should, in particular, be organized in co-operation with the specialized agencies, regional commissions and regional centres (Chapter V, paragraphs 80-85).

115. A network strategy under which UNITAR would serve as a focal and co-ordinating point for the UN and UN-assisted regional or global institutes working in the fields of peace and development should be introduced gradually (Chapter V, paragraphs 86-89).