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## United Nations research and training institutes

# Report of the Council of the United Nations University on the work of the University

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## I. Introduction

1. Rarely has the demand for independent, objective policy research been greater than today. The United Nations University (UNU) is committed to providing evidence-based research that supports policy development and decision-making on pressing and emerging global policy issues.

2. The Charter of the United Nations University, adopted by the General Assembly in 1973 (resolution 3081 (XXVIII); see also [A/9149/Add.2](#)), mandates that the University shall devote its work to research into the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations and its agencies and shall enjoy autonomy within the framework of the United Nations. It further grants UNU the academic freedom required for the achievement of its objectives, with particular reference to the choice of subjects and methods of research and training.

3. Its unique identity as both a research institution and a trusted knowledge partner within the United Nations system enables UNU:

(a) To promote knowledge creation and exchange through education and capacity-building programmes;

(b) To connect diverse international stakeholders for generating and sharing objective, high-quality research with a broad spectrum of publics;

(c) To translate research findings that can drive positive change into evidence-based, pragmatic policy recommendations, and deliver those recommendations to the United Nations and global decision makers.

4. UNU further serves as a bridge between academic and international policymaking communities, providing researchers in academic institutions and think tanks, including those in the developing world, with a unique opportunity to help to shape policymaking in the United Nations.

5. In recent years, UNU collaborations have addressed a wide range of policy challenges, such as the impact of climate change on natural ecosystems and human livelihoods and well-being; biodiversity and natural ecosystem protection; effective responses to new migration flows; the control of illegal drugs; education for sustainable development; gender equality; and the promise and consequences of new technologies, including their role in exacerbating or bridging inequalities within and between nations. Indeed, the work programme of UNU encompasses the full range of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

6. UNU helps to build and strengthen capacities at the national and local levels through training initiatives, including interdisciplinary postgraduate degree programmes as well as specialized non-degree courses and workshops, that are focused on pressing and complex challenges to peace, development and sustainability and on the needs of the global South.

7. UNU communicates its research findings through publications – many freely available in digital format – and events, as well as websites and social media.

8. The present report serves to summarize the activities, achievements and priorities of UNU in 2020, with a particular focus on the University's contributions to policymaking processes. The report does not include an exhaustive inventory of UNU operations and accomplishments for the year, but rather provides a broad overview of the thematic and geographical scope of its work. Additional information about the work of UNU is available from its website (<http://unu.edu>).

## II. Overview of the global United Nations University system in 2020

9. UNU operates as a network of 14 research and training institutes<sup>1</sup> in 12 countries. The global system is coordinated by the UNU Centre in Tokyo and governed by the Council of the United Nations University, whose members are appointed jointly by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

### A. Governance and leadership

10. The operations and academic activities of UNU are overseen by five governance and leadership structures, of which three function system-wide (the UNU Council, UNU Rectorate and UNU Administration) and two are institute-specific (UNU institute directors and UNU institute advisory boards and committees).<sup>2</sup>

11. The UNU Council oversees the affairs of the global UNU system. The Council's responsibilities include approving the UNU work programme and budget and adopting University-wide statutes and policies. The Council reports on the work of the University to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Board of UNESCO.

12. The Council comprises 12 appointed members, who serve six-year terms in an individual capacity and not as representatives of their countries (see annex); the UNU Rector; and three ex officio members, namely the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Director General of UNESCO and the Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). The Council met twice in 2020, in June for its seventy-third session and in December for its seventy-fourth session. Owing to the ongoing global pandemic, both sessions were held online.

13. The UNU Rectorate provides management direction for the University and coordinates policy development activities within the UNU system. The Rector, who holds the rank of Under-Secretary-General, is the chief academic and administrative officer of the University. He is assisted by two Vice-Rectors, in Tokyo and Bonn, Germany), respectively, and the Tokyo-based Office of the Rector.

14. The UNU Administration is responsible for development of unified standards, financial and treasury system management, and budget reporting to the Council, as well as for providing human resource, financial and procurement services to the global UNU system. The unit is based in Tokyo and has an administrative services office in Putrajaya, Malaysia.

15. Each of the 14 UNU institutes is headed by a Director, who reports to the Rector. Directors have direct oversight over the formulation of their institute's budget, human resources, and research and programme development. They meet annually for a gathering known as the Conference of Directors and periodically on a virtual call for all directors to discuss policy and coordination matters.

16. Each institute benefits from the guidance of an advisory board or committee, typically comprising at least three appointed members in addition to the Rector and the institute Director. The bodies actively advise on the thematic programming and

<sup>1</sup> The term "institutes" as used herein encompasses the 14 academic units of the global UNU system (as set out in sect. II.B of the present report).

<sup>2</sup> Key external bodies that play a governance role are the Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

management of their respective UNU institutes, including on quality assurance and fundraising.

## **B. Global United Nations University system**

17. The UNU Centre provides executive management, administration, coordination and support services to the global UNU system. In addition to the Tokyo-based headquarters unit, the UNU Centre encompasses a satellite office in Bonn for the UNU Vice-Rectorate in Europe and one for administrative services in Putrajaya.

18. The research and academic work of the University is carried out by a network of institutes, each of which has a specific focus as mandated in its statute and host country agreement.

19. The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER), located in Helsinki and established in 1985, focuses on the interlinked development challenges of transforming economies, states and societies, with a primary emphasis on research-into-use processes.

20. The UNU Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNU-BIOLAC), located in Caracas and established in 1988, promotes the use of biotechnology for sustainable development.

21. The UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT), located in Maastricht, the Netherlands, and established in 1988, explores the social, political and economic factors that drive technological innovation, covering all aspects of governance and policy development.

22. The UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA), located in Accra and established in 1988, undertakes policy-relevant research and provides cutting-edge knowledge about sustainable responses to natural resources management challenges throughout Africa.

23. The UNU Institute in Macao, China (UNU-Macao), and established in 1992, focuses on the challenges faced by developing societies from high-impact innovations in human-centred information, computing and communications technologies.

24. The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), located in Tokyo and established in 1996, advances efforts to achieve a more sustainable future through policy-oriented research and capacity development in three areas: transformations towards sustainable societies; natural capital and biodiversity; and global change and resilience.

25. The Institute for Water, Environment and Health, located in Hamilton, Canada, and established in 1998, contributes to resolving pressing water challenges by analysing and synthesizing existing knowledge, conducting research to identify emerging policy issues and applying scalable, science-based solutions.

26. The Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies, located in Bruges, Belgium, and established in 2001, focuses on new forms of governance and cooperation, including the provision of global and regional public goods, and the processes and consequences of intra- and inter-regional integration.

27. The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS), located in Bonn and established in 2003, contributes to efforts in solving the challenges of global environmental change, with a focus on environmentally driven vulnerability and risks and on the interplay between ecological and societal factors.

28. The International Institute for Global Health (UNU-IIGH), located in Kuala Lumpur and established in 2007, advances evidence-based policy on key health

issues, with a particular focus on mainstreaming gender in health systems and helping decision makers in the global South engage with global health challenges.

29. The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-FLORES), located in Dresden, Germany, and established in 2012, develops strategies to resolve problems in the sustainable use and integrated management of environmental resources, in particular water, soil, waste and other geo-resources.

30. The UNU Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), located in New York and established in 2014, generates innovative solutions to global public policy challenges, contributes to the major policy debates at the United Nations and represents the UNU Rector and UNU institutes at Headquarters.

31. The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance (UNU-EGOV), located in Guimarães, Portugal, and established in 2015, works at the intersection of governance, technology and development, translating its research findings into relevant policy instruments.

32. The Sustainable Cycles Programme, hosted since 2016 by the UNU Vice Rectorate in Europe in Bonn, focuses on the sustainable production, consumption and disposal lifecycles of electrical and electronic equipment (e-waste). The programme is currently transitioning to UNITAR, which will host it fully as of January 2022.

## C. Human and financial resources

### Personnel

33. UNU is an inclusive employer, committed to ensuring that its workplace culture is tolerant of differences in culture, race, sexual orientation and other characteristics, is gender-balanced, supports the meaningful participation of persons with disabilities and is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and abuse.

34. The University's personnel includes a mix of staff in the Professional and higher categories and General Service and related categories, who are appointed in accordance with the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations; visiting scholars, research associates, postdoctoral fellows and administrative and academic services personnel, who are employed on personnel service agreements; and consultants. As of the end of 2020, the global UNU system had a personnel complement of 740, of whom 55 per cent were women, including 50 per cent of institute directors, and 42 per cent were nationals of developing countries.

### Finances

35. UNU receives no funds from the regular budget of the United Nations. It is funded entirely through voluntary contributions in the form of institutional funding (recurring contributions of the host country supplemented by investment income derived from the UNU endowment fund) and special project contributions (obtained from Member States, foundations, agencies, international organizations and other sources) that are designated for specific research projects.

36. The approved UNU budget for the biennium 2020–2021 is \$112.5 million: \$51.1 million for academic programme costs, \$42.7 million for staffing and personnel costs and \$18.7 million for general expenses.

### **III. The year in review**

37. UNU conducts objective, evidence-based research that sheds new light on important questions to help policymakers and practitioners worldwide view complex issues from fresh, critical perspectives. The present section provides an overview of the University's work and operations in 2020.

#### **A. Pandemic response**

38. Organizations and individuals worldwide faced the unprecedented challenge of coping with a global pandemic in 2020, and UNU was no exception. The effect of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was twofold, forcing the University to adapt both its daily operations and its ongoing research agenda.

##### **Operations**

39. From the first report of COVID-19, UNU convened a COVID response team and developed a COVID-19 contingency plan. To protect the health of UNU staff and collaborators and comply with local requirements, the UNU Centre and the globally dispersed institutes of the UNU system activated voluntary and, for limited periods, mandatory work-from-home arrangements that enabled UNU operations to continue largely uninterrupted.

40. The rapid and successful transition was enabled by videoconferencing, asynchronous communication and collaboration applications, online project management tools and adjusted workloads. When in-office administrative or on-site research work was required, steps were taken to ensure that proper sanitary measures were observed.

41. The UNU Centre and individual UNU institutes implemented their COVID-19 responses on the basis of evolving local conditions as well as United Nations system and UNU headquarters protocols. Personnel were regularly updated on current conditions and future expectations.

42. The most visible effect of the pandemic was its impact on public events. Many conferences and seminars, some international, were postponed or cancelled, while others were amended to be held online.

##### **Research**

43. Many institutes undertook new research contributing to a better understanding of and response to the pandemic or adjusted ongoing projects to incorporate COVID-19 considerations. The pandemic also made it necessary to change work methodologies, adjust project timelines, coordinate with external partners and donors and adapt the manner of UNU interaction with global policymakers.

44. The need to modify research agendas varied by institute, as some thematic directions were more affected by the pandemic than others. Research that relies heavily on first-hand information was particularly affected, requiring reconsideration of the data required and their method of collection. For projects involving ongoing fieldwork, contingency plans were quickly developed that included moving scheduled onsite activities online and reaching out to local stakeholders who could carry out safe data collection in the field.

45. The following are examples of how COVID-19 considerations were incorporated into the UNU research agenda:

(a) The UNU Centre for Policy Research adjusted its modern slavery and human trafficking projects to analyse how the pandemic might increase the risks of such abuses. As part of its project on managing exits from armed conflicts, the Centre collected data on the effects of the COVID-19 messaging campaign by Boko Haram on public perceptions of the pandemic. The Centre also launched a new initiative that analysed the impact of COVID-19 on humanitarian access;

(b) The Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance initiated new research on e-government responses and quick adaptation to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath;

(c) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security reviewed its ongoing activities to consider outputs that would inform COVID-19 response and recovery efforts;

(d) The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability initiated research to reconceptualize landscape approaches for biodiversity in the context of COVID-19, as well as to explore the ramifications of the pandemic for the education sector;

(e) The International Institute for Global Health collaborated in a high-level policy dialogue that will inform the redesign of international development assistance in the aftermath of the pandemic and conducted a study of the impact of COVID-19 on gender inequality;

(f) The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research reoriented its work programme to consider COVID-19 implications and possible mitigation and adaptation measures. Actions included adjusting ongoing projects to consider the economic and social impacts of COVID-19, investigating the adverse effects of the pandemic and government lockdowns on informal workers, estimating the impact of COVID-19 on poverty and gauging the correlation of social and institutional trust to the spread of the virus and measures to contain it.

46. UNU research outputs included numerous reports and articles – covering such topics as the development-related aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of access to care for non-Covid-19 conditions and the impact of fake news – many of which are accessible through the COVID-19 response page on the UNU website (<https://unu.edu/covid-19>).

47. Notably, the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, with the support of Premesh Kumar, developed the UNU Evidence, Policy and Interventions for COVID-19 Tracker (UNU EPIC Tracker, <https://epictracker.org>), an online inventory of public health, economic, social and community measures taken to address the pandemic across all countries. An accompanying blog site, Global Health Reflections (<https://iigh.unu.edu/?keyword=global-health-reflections>), published analytical pieces that drew on sources provided through the UNU EPIC Tracker.

## **B. Institutional developments**

48. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, UNU managed to operate smoothly in most of its work areas throughout 2020. The effect on funding varied across the UNU system: although some institutes had to reduce their expenses to mitigate funding decreases, others were able to maintain or even increase their funding. COVID-19 also led many institutes to rethink or reorganize their research portfolios, which will

see longer-term outcomes and potentially open up new research areas and funding opportunities.

49. The main developments at UNU institutes in 2020 are briefly described below.

50. The main activity of the UNU Programme for Biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean, co-organizing biotechnology courses and fellowships, was severely disrupted by the global pandemic. Many planned activities were postponed or organized virtually.

51. The UNU Centre for Policy Research built increasingly strong relationships across the United Nations system and with other global stakeholders, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Stimson Center. Together with the proactive efforts of the Centre for Policy Research, such partnerships led to notable fundraising successes that surpassed expectations. The Centre for Policy Research was invited to Davos, Switzerland, to present its research at the World Economic Forum and expanded its research footprint into additional countries in Africa and Asia.

52. The Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies refocused its work into three broad programmes – on the Regional Integration Knowledge System, regional public goods, and the Regions and Cities Governance Lab – under a new cluster system that brings clarity to issues that have recently evolved or attained heightened urgency. A major achievement was the launch of version 2.0 of the web-based Regional Integration Knowledge System platform that provides information on regional organizations and indicators to track the ongoing level of integration.

53. The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance established or reinforced collaborations within the United Nations system, including with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNESCO, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe. The Unit held discussions with diverse e-governance stakeholders in multiple countries and strengthened or established relations with several universities and government institutions in its host country. The Unit also increased and diversified its range of projects and their policy relevance.

54. In addition to welcoming a new Director, the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security started work on six new projects and held a launch workshop for a joint project with the United Nations Capital Development Fund and UNDP that will improve financial preparedness for climate change and natural hazards in the Pacific region. The institute also expanded its portfolio of partners by signing agreements with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development and Local Governments for Sustainability, hosted or participated in numerous events, including the online 2020 Summer Academy on World Risk and Adaptation Futures, and produced many new publications.

55. The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources focused on building, strengthening and expanding collaborations and networks within different geographical locations and thematic areas to enlarge and diversify its resource base. As well as consolidating donor relations in Germany, the institute deepened cooperation with United Nations entities, namely the United Nations Environment Management Group, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and UN-Water; with the private sector; and with the Technical University of Dresden, on a joint PhD programme. Highlights included the



biennial Dresden Nexus Conference, held online for the first time, and two new collaborative lecture series.

56. The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability continued to advance policy dialogue on key global agendas. The institute organized side events at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, helped to develop the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and formulate the next global framework on education for sustainable development, and joined the International Advisory Board of the flagship UNESCO “Futures of education” programme. The Institute also formed, in a collaborative initiative with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Mayors Academy for Sustainable Urban Development in Asia Pacific; contributed to COVID-19 response and recovery recommendations submitted to the Prime Minister of Japan in July; and launched the Sustainable Development Goals Universities Platform to engage Japanese universities in the discussion and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

57. The UNU International Institute for Global Health responded rapidly to the global pandemic by developing and launching an EPIC tracker website, a regularly updated inventory of pandemic-related government policies and public sector interventions. The Institute also obtained a \$2.2 million grant to establish, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), UNDP and other stakeholders, a gender and health policy hub to consolidate and generate policy-relevant evidence on effective interventions and best practices for integrating gender into health programming. The Institute established a consortium designed to anchor Malaysia as a regional resource in global health research and practice.

58. The UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa took steps to redefine its mission with the aim of amplifying African voices around natural resources management. The Institute advanced its work on the impacts of stranded assets on hydrocarbon-rich African countries and launched a project commissioned by the Government of Germany to examine the implications of the European Green Deal for Africa–Europe relations. The Institute also convened a seminar on stranded assets at the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, hosted several webinars and organized a side event at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

59. On the basis of the announcement by the Government of Canada that it would extend financial support for the Institute for Water, Environment and Health until 2025, the Institute began implementing a new strategic plan focused on four interconnected areas: (a) helping countries to implement water-related Sustainable Development Goals; (b) bringing unconventional water resources and a technology revolution to the Global South; (c) unpacking the gender–water nexus; and (d) managing water- and climate-related risks and operationalizing water security. The Institute also worked on setting an agenda for the water/migration nexus and supported 34 countries in their use of the Institute’s SDG6 Policy Support System.

60. UNU-Macao developed its strategic plan for the period 2021–2025 and introduced a new research team to address the impacts of artificial intelligence governance. The new research portfolio encompasses prominent issues on the Secretary-General’s agenda for digital cooperation. A key highlight was the signing of an agreement with Caritas Macau for a five-year strategic cooperative partnership in the fields of sustainable community development, social innovation and civil society cyberresilience. The Institute organized the eleventh International Development Informatics Association conference and an expert consultation meeting on artificial intelligence for Africa, both as online events.

61. The UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology conducted a project launched early in 2020 that was aimed at extending existing approaches to consider the role of innovation in driving economic performance using big data. The Horizon 2020 project, which brings together researchers from several European countries, is focused on understanding the origins of the productivity slowdown in Western economies. An Institute researcher was also awarded a €1.5 million “starting grant” from the European Research Council for a project focusing on reintegration governance for migrants, combining the fields of migration governance and return migration studies.

62. Under its Sustainable Cycles Programme, the UNU Vice Rectorate in Europe co-published the *Global E-waste Monitor 2020* with UNITAR, ITU and the International Solid Waste Association. During the year, in line with the two-year transition process agreed between UNU and UNITAR, the programme was further integrated into the Division for Planet at UNITAR.

63. The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research quickly shifted its focus towards the pressing concerns of the unprecedented global pandemic, including by reorienting its research to analyse the potential socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic in the global South. As it became clear that the pandemic posed a significant risk to progress made in areas such as gender equality, workforce participation, education and global poverty, the Institute swiftly incorporated the consideration of those areas into its research. The Institute also assisted the Governments of Mozambique and South Africa in modelling the impact of the pandemic on their respective economies.

### C. Policy-relevant research

64. UNU is a trusted, independent voice that undertakes evidence-based research addressing the most important policy debates of our time. There are three vectors by which UNU influences the United Nations policy processes:

(a) Indirect analytical influence, by providing evidence-driven input into policy discourse and debates and serving as a bridge between the United Nations system and global academic communities to help fill the chronic research/policy gap;

(b) Direct engagement with policy actors, including undertaking politically sensitive policy-related research and convening roles;

(c) Collaborative knowledge generation, working in partnership with other United Nations system entities to develop specific policy-relevant knowledge and outputs.

65. UNU partners with many United Nations system entities (the Secretariat, agencies, programmes, commissions, funds and convention secretariats) and maintains hundreds of active formal agreements and informal collaborations with universities, research institutes and think tanks, non-governmental organizations, professional organizations, foundations and private entities worldwide. Such cooperative relationships enable UNU to focus effectively on its strengths, involve larger numbers of specialists and researchers in its work and access additional means of disseminating its research outputs.

66. As a United Nations system entity, UNU has privileged access to the evolving policy needs of the Organization and its Member States. UNU can connect the policy priorities with academic communities worldwide that would otherwise have limited awareness of the needs of the United Nations and works with them to develop policy solutions. Integrating cross-disciplinary approaches in its research programmes both enriches UNU policy support activities and underscores its comparative advantage.

67. Nowhere is the thought leadership of UNU more evident than in the context of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Goals. UNU interdisciplinary research helps policymakers to better understand the interconnections among the Goals and the potential for positive secondary effects from the different implementation options.

68. The paragraphs below provide descriptions of some activities and achievements from the almost 200 projects<sup>3</sup> undertaken by UNU in 2020 and the way in which that work contributed to the United Nations policy processes in the context of selected Sustainable Development Goals.

69. Contributions to Goal 1 include the following:

(a) The UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology is working on a collaborative project to analyse and redefine the strategic plan of the Greater Mekong Subregion programme. The aim is to enable programme members to attain higher per capita income and living standards in the context of cross-country income convergence;

(b) The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research published one working paper showing that COVID-19 poses a real challenge to achieving Goal 1 and another estimating the impact of the pandemic on the distribution of global poverty and on the incidence and severity of poverty in developing countries;

(c) UNICEF Kyrgyzstan released two reports written by the UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology researchers, one proposing a multidimensional poverty indicator tailored to the specific case of the Kyrgyz Republic and another examining child poverty rates and social assistance needs in the context of COVID-19.

70. Contributions to Goal 3 include the following:

(a) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security submitted to WHO an analysis of sexual and reproductive health and rights services provided in Malaysia, and possible entry points for embedding those services into an integrated package for universal health coverage. The case study will be the highlighted feature of a new WHO handbook on the topic;

(b) The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability advanced localization of the Goals in Japan at the national and local levels. As part of its work, the Institute contributed to a set of recommendations, submitted to the Prime Minister of Japan in July, for incorporating the Goals as a guiding principle in the COVID-19 response and recovery approach of Japan.

71. Contributions to Goal 4 include the following:

(a) In close cooperation with UNESCO, the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability contributed substantially to the formulation of the next global framework on education for sustainable development entitled “Education for sustainable development: towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (ESD for 2030)”;

(b) The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability is playing a leading role in the Higher Education for Sustainability Initiative, helping to build partnerships between the United Nations system and academia.

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<sup>3</sup> Many of the projects described in sections C and D were undertaken in collaboration with, or funded by, multiple stakeholders that are not specifically named herein.

72. Contributions to Goal 5 include the following:

(a) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security collaborated with WHO and the British Medical Journal to commission and edit a collection of papers exploring progress in women's health since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 25 years ago. The series was launched at the World Health Summit in Berlin in October 2020;

(b) The project of the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security entitled "What works in gender and health" is designed to analyse gender mainstreaming, gender equality and women's empowerment across the United Nations health-implementing agencies. The project has provided feedback to various agencies and will inform the WHO gender programme strategy.

73. Contributions to Goal 6 include the following:

(a) The project of the Institute for Water, Environment and Health examining unconventional water resources created a community of practice to support global and regional actions highlighting the role of unconventional water resources in alleviating global water scarcity and offering policy-relevant and science-based technical solutions;

(b) The Institute's flagship tool, the SDG6 Policy Support System, is now used by water professionals and policymakers from 34 countries. The tool has contributed to improving processes and collaboration to achieve the targets of Goal 6 at the national level.

74. Contributions to Goal 7 include the UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa working with the African Group of Negotiators to better inform stakeholders and eliminate their knowledge gaps about the unique set of circumstances in Africa regarding stranded assets and the challenges of achieving a low-carbon development pathway.

75. Contributions to Goal 10 include efforts by the UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance, through a UNDP-funded project, to support the Government of Georgia in upgrading the country's national policy documents and legislation on disability, with a special emphasis on access to information, for compliance with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

76. Contributions to Goal 11 include the following:

(a) The Mayors Academy for Sustainable Urban Development in Asia Pacific fostered exchange, peer learning and cooperation between city leaders in Asia and the Pacific region on such topics as development financing frameworks and technology and innovation for urban transformation;

(b) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security provided significant input into the work of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction relating to the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, including serving on the steering committee of the Global Risk Assessment Framework and feeding its research results into the Technical Forum of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Bonn.

77. Contributions to Goal 13 include the following:

(a) The UNU Centre for Policy Research published a report in which the relationship between climate change and insecurity was examined, directly supporting the work of the United Nations climate security mechanism, and contributed to the Secretariat's climate-security policy review process;

(b) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security published a policy note that serves to outline how the integration of risk financing considerations into updates of nationally determined contribution plans to address climate change offers benefits beyond financial protection. The document was used to inform subsequent recommendations adopted by the governing body of the InsuResilience Global Partnership;

(c) Researchers of the UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources contributed significantly to the publication entitled *World Water Development Report 2020: Water and Climate Change*.

78. Contributions to Goal 15 include the following:

(a) The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability contributed actively to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework through measures such as co-organizing an open meeting to engage parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the discussion of landscape approaches for the post-2020 framework, publishing a policy brief on applying landscape approaches to achieve the 2050 vision for biodiversity and supporting development of a United Nations system-wide approach to biodiversity;

(b) The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources contributed to the efforts of the High-level Committee on Programmes, tasked by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination with developing a common approach to integrating biodiversity and nature-based solutions for sustainable development into United Nations policy and programme planning and delivery.

79. Contributions to Goal 16 include the following:

(a) The work of the UNU Centre for Policy Research continued to feed into Security Council priority-setting. Examples include an ongoing project on the role of the Council in transitional justice, which served to inform the priorities for a Council member during its presidency of the Council; providing strategic advice to a special representative of the Secretary-General on sanctions and mediation; and advising the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration;

(b) The UNU Centre for Policy Research published a report in which details were provided on how the resident coordinator system is helping to reduce the risks of violent conflict in the Sahel region, work that directly supported the reform of the United Nations development system;

(c) The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance acted as adviser to the permanent committee for digital governance of the Community of the Portuguese-Speaking Countries, providing insights and recommendations that will help to shape the digital governance agenda for the Community and its members;

(d) The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance also helped the Government of Sao Tome and Principe and the Government of Cabo Verde to develop their national strategies for digital governance and assisted the former in developing an action plan for its strategy;

(e) The Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies helped the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia to develop a regional integration indicator system, as well as guidelines for government officials and other users in the Arab world;

(f) UNU-Macao published a report that reviews national cybersecurity strategies in the Asia-Pacific region and makes recommendations on the operationalization of overall societal cyberresilience;

(g) The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research published a seminal working paper examining the impact of COVID-19 on the South African economy that served to inform debate among policymakers.

## **D. Practical impact**

80. Many UNU projects are aimed at either providing immediate practical benefit for vulnerable or marginalized populations or building up the academic and research capacities of individuals, institutions and government agencies in the global South. The following examples demonstrate the work of UNU to achieve benefit in the field or enhance capacity development efforts in 2020 in the context of selected Goals.

81. Contributions to Goal 3 include the work of the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, which supported the Malaysian Ministry of Health in a successful competitive bid for a WHO tender to fund the establishment of a regional training centre for implementation research in the Western Pacific region that will highlight the country's increasing global health expertise.

82. Contributions to Goal 4 include the following:

(a) The Global Leadership Training Programme of the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability enables postgraduate students from Japan to conduct fieldwork at partner institutions in Africa with the aim of helping to solve the continent's sustainable development challenges;

(b) The "Early-Career Professionals" online workshop series of the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security enables health researchers from the global South to engage with high-level health policy analysts and specialists;

(c) The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources is conducting a project on sustainability and innovation management in Bangladesh for training academics, developing new curricula and enhancing the lecturer skills of the trained academics;

(d) The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research actively supports economic development traineeship schemes aimed at building the capacities of the next generation of economists in Mozambique and South Africa.

83. Contributions to Goal 6 include the following:

(a) Use of the SDG6 Policy Support System, focused on helping those who lack adequate drinking water supplies or access to improved sanitation facilities, continued to expand and now encompasses some 50 institutions in 34 countries, primarily in the global South;

(b) Through its research to identify the factors for groundwater pollution in the Korba aquifer in Tunisia, the UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources highlighted water-shortage and water-pollution risks to the aquifer and offered policy recommendations.

84. Contributions to Goal 8 include the following:

(a) The research conducted by the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research is helping to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and analysis in Myanmar as the country moves through a challenging structural and developmental transformation;

(b) The UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research helped the Government of Mozambique in developing an emergency subsidy model to support vulnerable urban households during the COVID-19 crisis, identify the most vulnerable districts, and monitor and assess the scheme's impact;

(c) With the Delta 8.7 knowledge platform, led by the UNU Centre for Policy Research, local policymakers worldwide were assisted in building their capacity around evidence and statistics on target 8.7 of the Goals. As part of the initiative, an online workshop was organized for Brazilian policymakers to help them to develop evidence-based policies in the context of a response to the pandemic.

85. Contributions to Goal 11 include the following:

(a) UNU-Macao launched a five-year strategic partnership with Caritas Macau to strengthen cooperation on projects that promote policy development, research and capacity-building for sustainable community development, social innovation and civil society cyberresilience. A key initiative is the Smart City-zen Cyber Resilience project;

(b) The Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies is developing a comprehensive methodology to monitor progress on implementing the Goals at the municipal level. Its work in 2020 included a pilot study for Flemish municipalities.

86. Contributions to Goal 13 include the following:

(a) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security trains young professionals from developing countries through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change–UNU Early Career Climate Fellowship Programme, with the aim of bridging the existent training and capacity-building gap;

(b) The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security contributed to the doctoral research programme on climate change and disaster risk management of the West African Science Service Centre on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use.

87. Contributions to Goal 16 include the following:

(a) The Apprise mobile application developed by UNU-Macao helped to improve initial human-trafficking screening efforts in Thailand and was used in such industries as fishing, manufacturing, and sex work;

(b) The project of the UNU Centre for Policy Research entitled “No research about us without us” was aimed at engaging local beneficiaries in the Central African Republic. Its outputs included “High Stakes”, a board game developed with local young people that illustrates the challenges faced by young people in exiting armed groups;

(c) The UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance operates a rolling three-month fellowship programme for civil servants, mainly in developing countries, with a focus on key areas of electronic governance and sustainable development.

88. Contributions to Goal 17 include the following:

(a) The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability serves as secretariat of the 175-member Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development network, which facilitates multi-stakeholder collaboration at the local level;

(b) Researchers of the UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources analysed how the design principles of citizen science projects in water-quality monitoring affect their outputs and outcomes, providing a basis for the future implementation of more successful projects.

## **IV. Knowledge dissemination and outreach**

89. UNU seeks to ensure that relevant knowledge reaches those who need it most – practitioners, policymakers, academics, affected populations and the general public – in a timely manner and useful form. The University does this through five main channels: publications, events, training opportunities, briefings, and mass media and online outreach.

### **A. Publications**

90. UNU researchers disseminate the findings of their projects through a variety of publication types, such as books or chapters in edited volumes, articles in peer-reviewed journals, articles and op-eds in magazines and newspapers, reports, policy briefs, working papers and discussion papers. Many of these publications are available in both print and online form.

91. Over 6,900 UNU publications are accessible online at the Collections at UNU website (<http://collections.unu.edu>), including more than 250 published in 2020. Other publications not in the Collections database are available for download from the websites of the institutes that prepared them.

92. In 2020, UNU researchers wrote, co-wrote or co-edited 20 books, primarily through academic publishers such as Oxford University Press, Routledge and Springer; contributed 145 chapters to edited volumes and 337 articles to peer-reviewed scientific journals; and wrote or co-wrote 197 magazine or newspaper articles and op-eds. UNU published 290 discussion or working papers, 105 research or technical reports and briefs, and 59 policy briefs and reports, as well as 221 videos or podcasts.

### **B. Events**

93. In spite of the pandemic, the global UNU system managed to convene more than 450 events (such as seminars, conferences, symposiums and lectures) in 2020, most of which were conducted online. Serving to extend the impact and reach of UNU research, many of the events were open to the general public free of charge, while others were targeted at specialized audiences.

### **C. Postgraduate education and specialized training**

94. UNU organizes specialized postgraduate degree and non-degree training sessions as well as project-based learning opportunities. Options include master's degree programmes in geography of environmental risks and human security (Bonn, UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security, and University of Bonn), public policy and human development (Maastricht, UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology, and Maastricht University) and sustainability (Tokyo, UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability), and doctoral degree programmes in integrated management of water, soil and waste (Dresden, UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources, and Technical University of Dresden), innovation, economics and governance for development (Maastricht, UNU-Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology) and sustainability science (Tokyo, UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability). In 2020, 324 students (235 master's degree candidates and 89 doctoral degree candidates) were enrolled in these



programmes, of whom 38 per cent were developing country nationals and 57 per cent were female.

95. UNU also organized 147 specialized non-degree training opportunities in 2020, ranging from single-day workshops to multi-week courses on topics running the gamut of the University's thematic areas of focus. The events were attended by more than 8,900 students. Owing to the pandemic, many planned training sessions were cancelled, while others were conducted online.

96. To complement the formal study programmes and courses, many institutes provide research-based training opportunities that enable young scholars and researchers to enhance their skills and knowledge by working alongside UNU staff. In 2020, however, such opportunities were limited by the global pandemic.

#### D. Briefings and presentations

97. UNU experts are regularly invited to hold in-person briefings or presentations for influential policy- and decision-makers, government officials and key stakeholders. At such sessions, UNU researchers provide advice in the form of tailored findings and analyses and address the fundamental needs and concerns of stakeholders.

98. Experts at the UNU Centre for Policy Research, for example, participated in several high-level discussions relating to United Nations sanctions, a briefing by the Senate of the United States of America on finance against slavery and trafficking, and a round table organized by the United States Department of the Treasury. The Centre also provided briefings to a group of resident coordinators and national policy advisers from the Governments of members of the Security Council members on its Missions Transitions project, as well as addressed a Security Council Arria-formula meeting on the reintegration of young people affected by conflict.

#### E. Mass media coverage and online outreach

99. UNU utilizes traditional media outlets and outreach via the Internet, social media platforms and a monthly email newsletter to increase the University's visibility, raise awareness about its work, generate public support and facilitate engagement. Examples include:

(a) **Mass media.** In 2020, more than 16,800 articles about UNU and its research were published worldwide;

(b) **Internet.** During 2020, UNU websites received 5.69 million pageviews, including more than 1.8 million pageviews for the global UNU system website (<https://unu.edu>) and 1.1 million pageviews for the University's Our World research newsletter (<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en>);

(c) **Social media.** As of year-end, UNU had almost 155,000 Twitter followers and more than 134,000 Facebook followers;

(d) **Email.** "Insights", the monthly email newsletter of the UNU Office of Communications, reached more than 28,000 subscribers.

## V. The United Nations University at 45

### A. Historical impact

100. In 1969, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, proposed the creation of a United Nations University, truly international in character and devoted to the Charter objectives of peace and progress (A/7601/Add.1). After a feasibility study by a panel of experts, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2951 (XXVII) on 11 December 1972, by which it decided to establish the United Nations University, and adopted the Charter of the University in its resolution 3081 (XXVIII) on 6 December 1973.

101. The General Assembly further accepted an offer by the Government of Japan to provide headquarters facilities for UNU in Tokyo and to contribute \$100 million to establish an endowment fund, thereby enabling UNU to commence operation on 1 September 1975.

102. Ten years later, in 1985, the first of the University's institutes, the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research in Helsinki, was established. Since then, the global UNU system has grown to encompass 14 institutes in 12 countries, each focused on a specific set of policy-relevant issues.

103. The 45-year history of UNU is defined by collaboration and thought leadership. By working consistently to answer important policy questions and positioning itself as a think tank unafraid to challenge the status quo, UNU has come to be recognized as an independent, respected voice within the United Nations system.

104. As UNU does not often make headlines, unlike many larger and better-funded agencies of the United Nations system, the University's contributions to knowledge development and policymaking are frequently overlooked. However, UNU is consistently active behind the scenes, feeding evidence-based research and advice into the multilateral policy process.

105. Operating as a network of institutes addressing specific issues or problem areas, UNU has been a pioneer in developing knowledge and expertise that transcends traditional scientific boundaries, reflecting the complex and intertwined nature of global systems and issues. UNU has also provided top scholars and practitioners worldwide, but in particular in the global South, with access to policymakers in the United Nations system and vice versa.

106. The University's position within the United Nations system enables it to convene a range of actors that might seldom engage directly. A recent example is the research by the UNU Centre for Policy Research in collaboration with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs of the Secretariat, which brought together representatives of all Security Council members for a frank, Chatham House-style discussion.

107. For the past 45 years, UNU has always been there, helping to develop innovative research and new ways to measure sustainable development and assess human welfare. The examples below cannot begin to encompass the totality of the University's impact over the past four decades; they merely highlight a few noteworthy trees in the broader forest.

108. The detailed case studies of countries in the global South conducted by the UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research in the latter half of the 1980s were instrumental in spurring a global paradigm shift that challenged one-size-fits-all structural adjustment programmes, pushing the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to be more diagnostic in their responses to the macroeconomic crises

of that decade. The work of the Institute also helped to mainstream the idea that policy solutions for developing economies require an experiential and evidentiary approach.

109. Through its project on hunger and public action, the Institute similarly encouraged a shift away from envisaging development mainly in terms of gross domestic product and income and towards a capability- or human development-based approach. The research helped to change the prevailing discourse and quickly spread through the global development economics community and beyond.

110. A Vice-Rector of the University served as the lead writer of the 2002 report of the Secretary-General entitled “Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change ([A/57/387](#)).

111. The Institute’s project on personal assets from a global perspective, initiated in 2004, contributed to the development of the first estimates of the distribution of global household wealth, revealing that 2 per cent of households owned half of all global wealth. The creation of the World Income Inequality Database by the Institute in 2008 further opened up research opportunities on inter- and intranation income inequality.

112. The UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security was an early contributor to research on the topic of environmental migration. Its studies addressed the issue of involuntary displacement after the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005, at a time when environmental migration was not yet on the scientific or political agenda. The Institute’s research played an important role in the decision to include migration and displacement in article 14f of the Cancun Adaptation Framework of 2010.

113. UNU has long been active in advancing the global biodiversity agenda, most prominently around the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010, at which the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability co-launched the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative as a tool to better understand and support human-influenced natural environments for the benefit of biodiversity and human well-being. As well as serving as the secretariat for that Initiative, the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability co-organized the global launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity; supported the Member States in their efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; played an active role at the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the Conferences of the Parties; and was closely involved in developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

114. The Director of UNU Office at the United Nations (now merged with the UNU Centre for Policy Research) played a pivotal role in formulating the code of ethics that now binds the President of the General Assembly, which was drafted in 2015.

115. Through its Sustainable Cycles Programme, UNU has been a global leader in e-waste-related research and training for nearly two decades, playing a pivotal role in research dissemination and synergizing with other United Nations entities.

116. Since 2005, the Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies has led or been actively involved in several large European Union-funded consortium projects that have influenced external policies of the bloc. The Institute also played a pioneering role in developing indicator systems for monitoring regionalization and globalization, in collaboration with other United Nations system entities and regional institutions.

117. The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability worked closely with UNESCO in the United Nations Inter-Agency Committee for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014); helped to develop its successor framework, the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable

Development; played a prominent role in the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development held in 2014, which launched the Global Action Programme; and led the organization of the International Conference on Higher Education for Sustainable Development held also in 2014.

118. The annual International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance, the flagship event of the UNU Operating Unit on Policy-Driven Electronic Governance launched in 2007, has become established as a major global conference in the domain of digital governance.

119. In response to the absence of a global assessment of multi-hazard risk, the UNU Institute for Environment and Human Security co-developed the World Risk Index and co-published, from 2011 to 2016, the annual *World Risk Report* that provided a disaster risk ranking for 171 countries.

120. Research conducted by the UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability on governance for sustainable development contributed to the international process that formulated the 2030 Agenda, with several of the institute's policy proposals reflected in the 2014 outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Institute has been helping to advance its implementation through research on the science/policy interface and governance structures.

121. The UNU Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources has helped to co-design sustainable solutions for improved wastewater and sludge management and treatment for urbanized regions, particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean.

122. A recent high-profile example of the work of UNU across the United Nations system was the clarification by the UNU Centre for Policy Research of the role that the resident coordinator system can play in conflict prevention. The policy paper prepared by the Centre in 2018 is regularly used for reference in the training of resident coordinators.

123. The Institute for Water, Environment and Health headed a global assessment of desalinated water and brine production that, in 2019, vividly demonstrated for the first time that the world produces more brine than actual desalination water. It also highlighted the need to reduce the volume of brine and to treat or use it in economically viable and environmentally friendly ways.

124. The Institute for Water, Environment and Health provided the primary expert contribution to the process, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, of quantifying the concept of environmental flows and incorporating it into the monitoring methodology of indicator 6.4.2 of the Goals, relating to water stress.

## **B. The way forward**

125. UNU strives to be agile and adept, in both its global organizational structure and resources as well as its strategy and priorities, to ensure that its research remains relevant to the evolving nature of the world's most pressing global issues. Key to this ongoing effort has been the development of a succession of multi-year strategic documents. The year 2020 was the first of the latest iteration, the UNU Strategic Plan 2020–2024, in which the University emphasizes the policy orientation of UNU research, prioritizing the policy needs of the United Nations and its Member States and the needs of policymakers in developing countries in particular. The strategic plan encompasses three overarching themes – peace and security; environment, climate,

and energy; and social change and economic development – that establish the framework for the University’s global research programme over the next five years.

126. UNU anticipates that continued United Nations reform initiatives will generate future demand for its research and policy advice to address specific needs, addressing such interdisciplinary topics as the impact of new technologies (electronic governance, labour- and cost-saving innovations, digital and social inequalities, artificial intelligence and mobile and blockchain technologies), migration-related issues (including policy challenges related to human mobility), water-related challenges (from wastewater management to water-induced migration) and good governance.

127. Going forward, UNU will build upon the foundation that it has established over the past 45 years, using the successes that it has achieved and the lessons that have been learned to generate knowledge. UNU will continue to collaborate with diverse global stakeholders in order to equip policymakers and decision makers with the evidence and insights they will need to help the United Nations and its Member States create a secure, equitable and sustainable future for all.

## Annex

### Members of the Council of the United Nations University

#### Appointed members<sup>1</sup>

Angela Kane (Germany), (Chair, Council of the United Nations University) – Senior Fellow, Vienna Centre for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament; Professor, Political Science (Paris)

Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz (Brazil) – Senior Vice President, Elsevier Research Networks

Denisa Čiderová (Slovakia) – Associate Professor, Department of International Trade and Liaison for Idea Puzzle, University of Economics (Bratislava)

Comfort Ero (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) – Programme Director, Crisis Group

Xin Fang (China) – Professor, University of Chinese Academy of Sciences

Isabel Guerrero Pulgar (Chile) – Executive Director IMAGO Global Grassroots; Lecturer at Harvard Kennedy School

Adam Habib (South Africa) – Director, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London

Segenet Kelemu (Ethiopia) – Director General and Chief Executive Officer, International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology

Radha Kumar (India) – Policy Analyst

Tsuneo Nishida (Japan) – Special Advisor to the President of Kanagawa University; Honorary Director of the Institute for Peace Science, Hiroshima University

‘Funmi Olonisakin (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Nigeria) – Vice-President and Vice-Principal International and Professor of Security, Leadership and Development, King’s College London

Brenda Yeoh (Singapore) – Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, National University of Singapore

#### Ex officio members

Rector of United Nations University

Secretary-General of the United Nations

Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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<sup>1</sup> The profiles of the Council members are available at <https://unu.edu/about/unu-council>.