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Chairman: Mr. Mbayu (Vice-Chairman) (Cameroon)
later: Mr. Seixas da Costa (Chairman) (Portugal)

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In the absence of Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal), Mr. Mbayu (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 104: Training and research (A/56/615)

1. **Ms. Schmidt** (Chief, Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/615), said that due note had been taken of developments in United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), and of the large number of training courses and variety of activities the Institute had been able to implement. The Secretary-General had also noted that UNITAR had taken steps to diversify its activities, such as the provision of comprehensive programmes to preserve valuable lessons drawn from United Nations peacekeeping operations and the development of online training courses. The Institute had worked hard and successfully to consolidate its network of partners and it was evident that Member States valued its training services.

2. The Institute's fragile financial position had prevented it from continuing training programmes in Vienna and Nairobi and had made it impossible to inaugurate new programmes in other cities hosting United Nations regional commissions. The Secretary-General hoped that Member States would increase or resume their contributions without delay.

3. With regard to the longstanding request, contained in General Assembly resolution 55/208, to "reclassify" the rental and maintenance rates charged to UNITAR, the Secretary-General stated that he was not in a position to reconsider the matter unless the General Assembly decided to make an express exception to its resolution 41/213 and in regard to recommendation 36.

4. **Mr. Boisard** (Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) said that the activities of UNITAR were evolving within the categories identified during its restructuring phase. Training, in the strict sense, was giving way to capacity-building, thereby involving an increased emphasis on individual and institutional skills in beneficiary countries. Within its areas of expertise, UNITAR had focused its services to Member States on human resource development and the strengthening of institutional capacities.

5. In spite of its limited means, UNITAR had carved out a niche for itself within the United Nations system. Its programmes were designed to meet real needs and continued to attract funding. However, all efforts to mobilize additional non-earmarked voluntary contributions had proved fruitless and the situation of the General Fund therefore remained fragile. As a result, UNITAR had been unable to inaugurate new training programmes, as requested by the General Assembly, and might even have to cut back on existing programmes. During the 1990s, the number of programmes had risen by 440 per cent and the number of participants by 630 per cent yet contributions to the General Fund had fallen. The Institute was like a tree whose branches (the special programmes) were spreading but whose trunk (the General Fund) was starved of sap. It could not continue like that for much longer.

6. On a more positive note, he was pleased to state that UNITAR had been cited in 27 documents prepared for the current session of the General Assembly for its training activities in areas as diverse as regional cooperation, debt management, climate change and post-conflict rehabilitation. In recent years, the Committee had often reiterated the desire to grant a more prominent role to training. Significant progress had been achieved to that effect, with encouraging results.

7. With reference to document A/56/615, he highlighted the consolidation of partnership networks with institutions within and outside the United Nations system, adding that UNITAR activities had become increasingly country driven and country executed. Such collaborative efforts had provided opportunities to forge links between governmental bodies, major industrial entities, scientific research institutions, civil society and public interest groups.

8. UNITAR and its peers recognized that individual and institutional capacity-building necessitated in-depth study of the objectives and methodology of training. Among the projects undertaken in the area of environment, the Institute had had the opportunity to respond to a request by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for assistance with a guide for self-assessment of country capacity needs for global environmental management. Likewise, the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships had backed UNITAR research on the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change in 33 developing countries. The process of in-depth study of training goals and methods was equally relevant to the design, drafting and dissemination of training material in hard copy or electronic form.

9. In conclusion, he said that with the mandate, role and status of UNITAR within the United Nations system now well established, it was time to ensure its sustainability. That required a minimum of non-earmarked funding. If Member States were not in a position to make the necessary contributions, consideration should be given to the possibility of annual appropriations from the regular budget; another possibility would be to reduce or eliminate certain training programmes, such as courses for diplomatic personnel accredited to the United Nations.

10. **Mr. Asadi** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted with satisfaction that the activities of UNITAR were increasingly country driven and country executed. However, much remained to be done. For one thing, higher priority must be placed on enhancing the capacity of developing countries not only to deal with globalization and its consequences, but also to address emerging issues, including information and communications technology.

11. The group had noted the progress made in carrying out the restructuring and revitalization of UNITAR, particularly in furthering cooperation within the United Nations system and it appreciated the partnership approach whereby the Institute sought the involvement and commitment of national and regional institutions. UNITAR deserved the support of the donor community. The Group of 77 and China noted with deep concern that voluntary contributions to the General Fund remained inadequate, and that, despite repeated calls from the General Assembly for a resumption of or increase in contributions to the Fund, the response of the donor community had been disappointing. Developed countries should increase their voluntary contributions to the Institute so as to place it on a solid financial base. The contributions of developed countries to the General Fund had not kept pace with the increased participation of such countries in the training programmes. The Second Committee should give in-depth consideration to that matter. At the same time, it was reasonable to expect that UNITAR would ensure greater efficiency in its work, including in financial matters.

12. To prevent the situation from deteriorating further, the Secretary-General should waive the rental and maintenance costs for the premises occupied by UNITAR in Geneva and New York. Other similar organizations affiliated with the United Nations enjoyed such privileges, and there was no reason to deny the same exemption to UNITAR.

13. **Mr. Kawaguchi** (Japan) after expressing his satisfaction at the activities carried out by UNITAR, said that Japan had supported the Institute both by contributing to the General Fund and by providing special-purpose grants for a variety of programmes and would continue to do so, notwithstanding the difficult economic and financial conditions it was facing. His delegation hoped that more countries, especially those that had participated in and benefited from the Institute's programmes, would make voluntary contributions, particularly to the General Fund. At the same time, UNITAR should continue to be efficient in formulating and implementing its programmes in order to ensure the continued support of Member States for its activities.

14. **Mr. Murat** (Haiti), speaking on behalf of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that a greater effort must be made to provide UNITAR with the resources it needed to ensure the continuity of its programmes. The General Assembly should adopt a formal decision authorizing the Secretary-General to bear the Institute's rental and maintenance costs. The CARICOM countries appealed to the developed countries to increase their voluntary contributions for the amounts involved were not too high, and the funds would be put to good use. The CARICOM countries welcomed the strengthening of links between UNITAR and the various research agencies of the United Nations system.

15. **Ms. Waldvogel** (Switzerland) said that the Institute should concentrate its activities in certain fields and cited, by way of example, its programmes on management of chemicals, on climate change, on environmental law and on environmental information systems. Her Government noted with satisfaction that a seminar had been held in Switzerland in connection with the programme for briefing and debriefing special and personal representatives of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

16. UNITAR had made substantial progress in implementing reforms and was to be commended for

its efforts to build partnerships and promote inter-agency cooperation. Its environmental programmes were also promising. Despite the widespread recognition that UNITAR enjoyed, its financing remained a problem. Contributions to the General Fund were inadequate and, in recent years, contributions to the Trust Fund had dropped in absolute terms. The overall budget of the Institute was financed by a limited number of donors; furthermore, the bulk of the Trust Fund was provided by a single donor, namely, Switzerland. It was not healthy for the Institute to rely so heavily on a single donor. She invited other countries, particularly the industrialized countries that had availed themselves of the services offered by the Institute, to participate in its financing so as to ensure the long-term viability of its programmes.

17. **Mr. Al-Hadid** (Jordan) said that the Institute performed a valuable capacity-building function, offering workshops and training courses in important fields, and, as the body responsible for providing free training services to developing countries, should be given every kind of support by Member States, especially the more advanced among them, by the Organization and by the Secretariat.

18. **Mr. Osio** (Nigeria) said that it was a positive strategy on the part of UNITAR to design its training and research programmes in collaboration with beneficiary governments. The range of subject matters covered by the programmes made them very useful for developing countries. It was encouraging to note that developed countries had also benefited from the programmes, which UNITAR provided free of charge. Such interaction between developing and developed countries should promote common understanding. Such understanding would be most helpful when it came to providing the resources that UNITAR needed in order to continue to carry out its functions free of charge. As the report of the Secretary-General (A/56/615) pointed out, the General Fund had been declining. The call made in 2000 for the developed partners to increase their voluntary contributions to the General Fund in concert with their increasing participation in UNITAR programmes remained valid. Nigeria, for its part, intended to continue its longstanding permanent endowment arrangement whereby the Institute received a minimum of \$50,000 every year as his country's contribution to the General Fund.

19. In light of the fact that the Institute's training programmes were available to all Member States free

of charge, it was important that the rental and maintenance costs of UNITAR premises in Geneva and New York be borne by the regular budget of the Organization. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would decide that those facilities should be made available to UNITAR free of charge.

20. *Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal) took the Chair.*

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (continued) (A/C.2/56/L.6 and L.7)

Draft decision on the Office of the President of the Economic and Social Council (A/C.2/56/L.6)

21. **Mr. Mbayu** (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman reporting on the outcome of the informal consultations on the draft decision expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

22. **Ms. Kelly** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the draft decision had potential programme budget implications, which were contained in document E/2001/L.47/Rev.1. Therefore, if the draft decision were adopted, it would be submitted to the fifth Committee for consideration.

23. *Draft decision A/C.2/56/L.6 was adopted.*

Draft resolution on the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (A/C.2/56/L.7)

24. **Mr. Mbayu** (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman reporting on the outcome of informal consultations on the draft resolution expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

25. *Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.7 was adopted.*

Agenda item 100: International migration and development, including the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on international migration and development to address migration issues (continued) (A/C.2/56/L.4 and L.28)

Draft resolution on international migration and development (A/C.2/56/L.4 and L.28)

26. **Mr. Mbayu** (Cameroon), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.28, which he was submitting on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.4.

27. *Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.28 was adopted.*

28. *Draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.4 was withdrawn.*

29. **The Chairman** announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 100.

Organization of work

30. **Ms. Kelley** (Secretary of the Committee) said that certain delegations had suggested rescheduling agenda item 106 on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries because the Secretary-General's recommendations on the follow-up to the conference, requested under the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (A/CONF.191/11, para. 116), were not yet available in all languages.

31. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to postpone its debate on agenda item 106 until 29 and 30 November.

32. *It was so decided.*

33. **Mr. Mirafzal** (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, requested that the deadline for the preparation of draft resolutions on agenda items 12, 102 and 104 be extended to 30 November.

34. **Mr. Goffin** (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union, emphasized the importance of respecting procedural rules and deadlines; however, his delegation would not object to extending the deadline.

35. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee agreed to extend the deadline as requested.

36. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.