



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Board of Trustees
Fifty-first session

UNITAR/BT/51/5

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CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) convened in Brazzaville from 21 to 22 November 2011 for its fifty-first session.
2. The following members of the Board were present or represented at the session:

Mr. Lakhdar BRAHIMI..... (Academia)

Mr. CHEN Jian..... (China)
Represented by Ms. ZHANG Xiaon (Designated alternate)

Mr. Simon COMPAORE..... (Local authority)

Ms. Shirin EBADI (NGO)

Ms. Geraldine FRASER-MOLEKETI..... (UN)

Ms. Radha KUMAR..... (Academia)

Mr. Henri LOPES (Chair)..... (Congo-Brazzaville)

Mr. Valery LOSHCHININ..... (Russian Federation)
Represented by Mr. Yury ROMANOV (Designated alternate)

Mr. Jean-Baptiste MATTÉI.....(France)
Represented by Mr. Jean-François VALETTE (Designated alternate)

Mr. Nicolas MICHEL (Vice Chair)..... (Academia)

Ms. Anne Kristin SYDNES.....(NGO)

Mr. Alfredo VALLADAO(Academia)

Ex Officio:

Mr. Carlos LOPES, Executive Director, UNITAR

Secretary:

Mr. Brook BOYER, UNITAR

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Ms. Amal MEDANI, Associate Director, Governance Unit
 Mr. K. Offei DEI, Chief, Administration and Finance Section
 Ms. Colleen THOUZ, Senior Advisor, Governance Unit
 Ms. Elena PRODEN, Office of the Executive Director

3. The Chairman welcomed members to Brazzaville and the fifty-first session of the Board. He spoke on the symbolic nature of the session, highlighting the fact that the largest proportion of the Institute's beneficiaries comes from the African continent yet this was the first time the Board was convening in sub-Saharan Africa. He also announced that the fifty-first session coincided with the fifty-first year marking the Independence of the Congo.
4. Before giving the floor to the Executive Director, the Chairman announced that he had approved the designation of Mr. Yuri Romanov as the representative of Mr. Valery Loshchinin, Mr. Jean-François Valette as the representative of Mr. Jean-Baptiste Mattéi, and Ms. Zhang Xiaon as the representative of Mr. Chen Jian, in accordance with the Board's rules of procedure. The Chairman announced that with the presence of 11 members, including the members represented by the approved designated alternates, the Board had constituted quorum.
5. The Executive Director thanked the Chairman for his welcome and also noted the special venue of the session, the careful preparations undertaken by the host, and the support received from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Scientific Research and National Protocol. Among other items proposed for discussion, he noted that the session would be an occasion to take stock of the achievements of the strategic plan, which has contributed to growth in the number of beneficiaries, expected to reach nearly 45,000 by the end of the current biennium. He also noted that during the course of 2011, the Institute has continued to receive praise from various bodies, including a favorable resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) at its 2011 session and a positive report from the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). In terms of budgets, he noted that while many organizations were decreasing budgets in a time of financial crisis and uncertainty, UNITAR had increased its budget and succeeded in meeting financial targets by mobilizing income from new donors and increasing contributions from existing ones less affected by the crisis. From a programming perspective, he confirmed that UNITAR continues to develop new initiatives and activities in training and research, citing cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (satellite monitoring of humanitarian vehicles); the United Nations Convention for Climate Change Secretariat (preparation of delegates for the conferences of the parties); and new methodologies for multilateral negotiations, through cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme. In ending, the Executive Director drew the Board's attention to the annexed documents under this item, including the long list of United Nations reports citing UNITAR during the 2010-2011 biennium. **The Board took note.**

6. Under item 2, “Adoption of the agenda”, the Chairman reviewed the proposed provisional agenda as submitted by the Executive Director and invited members to comment. There were no observations, and **the Board adopted the agenda as proposed.**
7. Under item 3, “Organization of work”, the Chairman proposed that the Board conducts its business from 9:30 to 12:30 and from 14:00 to 17:30 on Monday, 21 November 2011. For Tuesday, 22 November, he suggested that the Board reconvenes at 9:00 with a view to move forward with discussions on the conclusions and recommendations in order to adjourn by 12:30. **The Board adopted the organization of work as announced by the Chairman.**
8. Under item 4, “Follow-up from the fiftieth session”, the Chairman drew the Board’s attention to the corrigendum circulated by the secretariat on sub-item 4a, “Fellowship Fund”. The Executive Director briefed the Board on the background of the Fellowship Fund and its relationship to efforts to address the core diplomatic training deficit and the transition to the new business model as part of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan. He regretted the fact that only three Member States, namely, Austria, the Bahamas and Malaysia, had made contributions to the fund, amounting to \$79,169, most of which was earmarked for developing country beneficiaries of core diplomatic training (CDT).
9. One member noted the relationship with item 6 of the agenda, “ECOSOC”, and asked if sub-item 4a should be addressed together. In acknowledging the connection, the Executive Director proposed that it be discussed in relation to the budget and the requested delegation of authority. He recalled the General Assembly resolution welcoming the Fellowship Fund as a mechanism to ensure continued access of developing country beneficiaries to CDT with the transition to the new business model. While noting that a single large donor to the fund could make a significant difference, the Executive Director unfortunately did not think such a scenario was likely. As an alternative, he suggested that need for the Institute to administer its financial resources with more flexibility and efficiency, and that one way to do so would be through delegation of financial authority (sub-item 5e).
10. One member asked why there was a lack of contributions to the Fellowship Fund and whether the current low level was related to issues of visibility. Another member suggested the possibility of decentralizing multilateral programming or linking activities with other themes, such as corporate social responsibility or economic development. Another member took the floor and expressed satisfaction on the role of UNITAR training representatives from developing countries, and that the Fellowship Fund should play a more active and visible role in supporting the Institute’s training programmes.
11. The Executive Director clarified some issues related to the Fellowship Fund and explained that the low level of contributions is largely the result of donors preferring to provide ear-marked contributions to programming. **The Board took note.**
12. Under sub-item 4b, “Local development training in relation to the opening of the Antwerp International Training Centre for Corporate Opportunities”, the Executive Director recalled that UNITAR has been actively engaged with the private sector in local development training and is now involved in a more structured approach with the launching of corporate social responsibility (CSR) training in the diamond and jewellery industry in the framework of an international training centre sponsored by the City of Antwerp and Government of Belgium. Operating under the guidance of UNITAR and the United Nations Global Compact, he underscored that the centre is not an out-posted office, but a separate organizational entity of which UNITAR is a member and has

seconded a staff member. It is expected that the centre will expand in the future to cover other thematic areas, such as chemicals.

13. One member requested clarification on whether CSR training was based solely on UN values and principles or whether the training would also include values and principles beyond the United Nations, including best practices. Another member was encouraged that CSR programming fell within the scope of the strategic plan to reach out to new cohorts of beneficiaries and that the centre could eventually expand and include, for example, conflict minerals. The member suggested that it would be worthy to consider promoting, parallel to CSR for business representatives, similar initiatives targeting government responsibilities, which appears to be lacking.
14. The Executive Director then invited the Associate Director of the Governance Unit to provide a brief overview of the centre, including the governance of the centre, the thematic sub-areas and list of partners.
15. One member requested further information on the content of the courses, noting that the main objective of the corporate world is to make profit. As such, a course on CSR should stress that CSR is good for business, that businesses need to be convinced of the social standards of worker rights and that embracing such practices can produce profits. Another member felt that the framework and best practices could be integrated into the model, including examples on risk management and stakeholder dialogues.
16. Another member commended the Institute on the initiative and that based on the presentation understood that a different structure governs the development of curriculum. The member requested clarification and whether resources were considered to be sufficiently sustainable for moving the centre forward and, if not, who would make the funding commitments.
17. The Executive Director responded and indicated that on course content there is an advisory committee including CSR specialists. He also emphasized that the initiative has the backing of the Global Compact, and that UNITAR has implemented activities on CSR prior to the establishment of the centre, including a joint study with the Boston Consulting Group on shortcomings in the industry to adopt CSR best practices. He also confirmed that UNITAR has an active presence in the Niger Delta region with funding of some \$5 million (biennially) in the framework of the Port Harcourt Project Office under the Local Development Programme, and has collected best practices on job creation and stakeholder dialogue. These activities have benefited from contributions from the private sector and that local content was developed with Norwegian partners. The Executive Director added that funding was sustainable with 360,000 Euros in 2011 and additional annual commitments of some \$1 million thereafter for core expenditures. **The Board took note.**
18. Under item 5 of the agenda, "Finance and administration", the Chairman reviewed the five sub-items and drew the Board's attention to the report of the fourth session of the Committee on Finance, which took place on 15 November. As none of the Committee's members was present at the session, the Chairman proposed and the Board agreed to address each of the five sub-items in turn, with reference to the Report of the Committee on Finance.
19. Under item 5a, "Interim financial statements for the twelve-month period of the biennium 2010-2011 ended 31 December 2010", the Executive Director informed the Board that the Controller had certified the financial figures. In comparison to 2008, he indicated that income was higher, liabilities were less, and that there was more cash on hand resulting in an increase in reserves.

20. Several members congratulated the Executive Director on the financial situation and the prudent management of funds. One member commented that the comparison did not include the current financial period, and suggested that it may be of use to synchronize the strategic planning cycle with the financial period.
21. The Executive Director replied that the requested comparison with current year figures is found in annex 6 (item 5b, Proposed Programme Budget), and that in practice it is the first years of the biennia which are compared. He took note on the recommendation on synchronizing the strategic plan with the budget, and confirmed that management would align the subsequent plans, with the next plan scheduled to take effect 2013 and also cover 2014-2015 biennium. **The Board took note of the observations of the Committee on Finance.**
22. Under item 5b, "Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2012-2013", the Chairman gave the floor to the Executive Director, who then requested the Chief of the Administration and Finance Section (AFS) to address the Board. The AFS Chief indicated that while Management is optimistic on the prospects for 2012-2013, it remained cautious with a \$2.7 million or 6.4 per cent increase over the revised 2010-2011 budget. The AFS Chief confirmed that the document was presented to the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on 28 October 2011.
23. The Executive Director added that ACABQ commended UNITAR, with the exception of observations in paragraph 12 on the tardiness of the report and comments on the Advisory Committee purportedly not having been consulted prior to the staffing table being approved by the Board at its fiftieth session. He informed the Board that Management objected to the two observations and would respond to the Advisory Committee. In making reference to the anticipated slight decline of reserves for the 2010-2011 biennium, the Executive Director confirmed that Management succeeded in reversing this projection by mobilizing support from new donors, including Algeria, Malaysia (Fellowship Fund) and Russia (General Fund and programming), as well as renewed support from the United States government after more than a decade of absence. The Executive Director also recognized several countries having increased voluntary contributions, including Switzerland, which almost doubled its support from 2010 to 2011, and Sweden, Norway and Finland. He also announced support from United Nations agencies, including UNDP and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.
24. Several members congratulated Management on the projected budget growth, with two members making reference to the reasoning behind the 6.4 per cent increase. Another member noted the return of the United States and requested clarification. While noting the positive trend, two members questioned if the nominal increase could be met and if the Institute had not underestimated challenges given the current economic climate and uncertainty.
25. The Executive Director provided clarifications on the funding from the United States, and announced that some \$800,000 was to support gender-related work in Afghanistan and Iraq, and some \$100,000 to support chemicals-related programming. On the question of how prudent UNITAR is in accumulating reserves, he mentioned that he expected more income to materialize based on "hard" pipeline activities, and that the Institute saw strength in the reserves to be important in order to increase autonomy. In making reference to the staffing table and the gap between approved and budgeted posts, one member questioned how UNITAR could aim for budget growth and more activities. The Executive Director responded by emphasizing the requirement to tie new

posts to results-based management indicators and also noted the sharp increase of interns to support programming, with some 100 interns working for UNITAR in 2011.

26. The Board took note of the Report of the Committee on Finance and approved the Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2012-2013.

27. Under item 5c, which was considered in tandem with the Proposed Programme Budget, **the Board took note of the Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.**

28. Under item 5d, "Update on the 2010 external audit", the Executive Director informed the Board on the unqualified audit opinion received for the past two biennia. For the unqualified opinion for 2010, two recommendations were on the presentation of accounts, and one was in relation to a clearer delegation of authority of staff members in procurement activities. There was also an observation on the unsettled issue of the previous audit and the agreement on services agreement with the United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG).

29. One member requested an update on the status of the recommendation for an internal audit. The Executive Director recalled that the matter was presented to the Board at an earlier session, and that the issue remains outstanding as a result of a difference in opinion on the funding arrangements.

30. The Board took note of the observations of the Committee on Finance.

31. Under item 5e, "Delegation of authority for limited financial functions", the Executive Director informed the Board that the Institute requested delegation of authority for limited financial functions, received the support from UNOG, but was refused delegation of authority by the Controller. He then provided a more thorough background to the request, and confirmed that the Institute has the required systems and procedures in place to justify approval of delegation of authority. In his consideration of the request, the Controller reasoned that he could not approve the request on the basis of the regulatory and governance framework of the Institute and in particular Article VIII paragraphs 11 and 13 of the UNITAR Statute. The Executive Director mentioned that the two provisions could be interpreted differently, however, with one interpretation being that the Institute should perform such functions itself as extra costs shall not be incurred against the United Nations regular budget. He confirmed that currently, in the absence of delegated authority, financial functions such as processing accounts and payments are being duplicated, which results in costs currently estimated in the order of some \$1 million for the biennium. If authority would be delegated to the Executive Director, duplication would be avoided and inefficiencies would be eliminated. In making reference to the Controller's letter to the Director of the Division of Administration, UNOG, the Executive Director informed the Board that the Controller regretted he would not proceed with delegation of authority without amending first the Statute. He informed the Board that under Article XI of the Statute, the Board could consult with the Secretary-General on possible amendments.

32. A number of members acknowledged the different interpretations that could be given to Article VIII and expressed dissatisfaction with the costs and resource inefficiencies stemming from the duplication of financial functions.

33. In thanking members for their observations and suggestions, the Executive Director explained that arriving at this stage took more than a year of consultations and negotiations. He also recalled the 2009 meeting convened by the Secretary-General of the heads of the United Nations research and training institutes and the mandate that

UNITAR received from the Secretary-General to review existing arrangements and propose ways in which the institutes could become more efficient in administrative and financial matters. Taking into consideration the role that the Secretary-General played in initiating discussions, the Executive Director suggested that the best possible avenue would be to bring the matter back to his attention by the Board.

34. After having considered possible changes to the language of Article VIII, paragraphs 11 and 13, and the consequences which could result from an amendment, members considered a proposal for the Chairman of the Board to write to the Secretary-General and present two options, focusing on the rationale for issuing delegation of authority and the possibility of addressing the concerns raised by the Controller. One member suggested bringing the matter on payment of services forward as a separate matter, and the need to ensure sufficient supporting evidence.
35. **The Board took note of the observations of the Committee on Finance and unanimously decided to request its Chairman to write a letter to the Secretary-General with a view to obtain delegation of authority for financial functions and, if necessary, an amendment to paragraphs 11 and 13 of Article VIII of the Statute.**
36. Under item 6, "Report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council," the Executive Director referred to the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report to the Economic and Social Council, E/2011/115, including the challenges on addressing the declining non earmarked voluntary contributions related to core funding, the lack of financial resources for the Fellowship Fund and office space constraints. The Executive Director indicated that the Secretary-General also recommended that a group of friends be formed to identify concrete actions, which may include the establishment of an endowment fund by 2015 when the Institute celebrates its fiftieth anniversary.
37. In observing that funding is a challenge for all organizations, one member supported exploring the setting up of a group of friends and suggested that all members of the Board should investigate if their respective countries would be willing to be active members of such a group and provide contributions on a regular basis. Several other members supported the idea, with one member commenting that joint programming with other agencies or the launching of new programming initiatives could be used as leverage to mobilize friends. Another member supporting the suggestion said it would be useful for Management to conceptualize what the group of friends would do. It was also suggested that the different parts of the UN system, in addition to other actors, such as the private sector and civil society, could constitute such a group.
38. **The Board took note and recommended action to reverse the alarmingly decreasing trend of non-earmarked voluntary contributions to the General Fund and the regrettably weak contributions to the newly-created Fellowship Fund. The Board agreed to review methods of financing the Institute with a view to ensure a more predictable and sustainable funding base and propose action, which may include, as recommended by the Secretary-General, the establishment of an Endowment Fund by 2015, to ensure the effectiveness of the Institute's future operations, their continuity and in relation to the Institute's autonomous character.**
39. On the issue of premises, the Executive Director briefed the Board on the background and informed members that prior to the fifty-first session, the Swiss government proposed additional office space of some 700 square meters at a separate (and fourth) Geneva location. He indicated that while the proposed location may be a short-term solution to the pressing constraints, UNITAR could not continue to disperse staff and

personnel and at the same time operate efficiently and effectively with such an atomized structure.

40. One member suggested that it may be worthy to identify countries interested in hosting headquarters of international organizations and placing them in a bidding competition to see which one submits the best offer. Two members, recognizing the presence in Geneva of important financial and wealth management services, questioned if it would not be possible to investigate being sponsored with premises provided in-kind, possibly similar to the Antwerp arrangement. Other proposed suggestions including closer collaborations with universities, particularly with the research functions. The advantages of Geneva were well known with the presence and concentration of international organizations and permanent missions. However, moving the Institute's headquarters closer to its main client base, such as South Africa or India, was suggested by yet another member. One member cautioned, however, that moving away from Geneva would need to take into consideration the impact of the decisions and indirect costs.
41. The Executive Director responded and divided the proposals in the short, medium and long term. In the short term, he indicated that Management may need to accept the proposed fourth office space location in Geneva, but he also noted concerns that the costs of rent and infrastructure were very high and that moving to other premises would need to take into consideration installation costs. In the medium term, the Executive Director recognized the important synergies in Geneva, particularly with regard to the presence of environmental, human rights and humanitarian agencies, and that the possible transfer of the Institute's headquarters to another host city would always entail UNITAR maintaining an important presence in Geneva. The Executive Director informed the Board that the proposed recommendation is to enable Management to explore all options, but that the Institute's interlocutors would continue to be first the Swiss government.
42. **The Board took note of action to resolve the headquarters' premises problem, and mandated the Executive Director to explore diverse ways likely to provide a cost-effective and sustainable solution to the problem in the medium to long term.**
43. Under item 7, "2011 review on the implementation of the 2010-2011 Strategic Plan", the Executive Director drew the Board's attention to the plan's monitoring matrix in annex 13 of the session's documents. He explained that the indicators/performance measures falling under each of the four strategic priorities were colour-coded to reflect the status of implementation. While a large number of indicators were shaded in green, reflecting achievements or expected achievements by the end of 2011, there were a number of indicators shaded in yellow to reflect partial achievements or work in progress. Several indicators were not met and shaded in red as a result of factors including the delayed implementation of the credit card system, the cost-structuring of fee-based courses, etc. In order to focus on achieving postponed indicators which are considered to be of greatest strategic importance, the Institute identified a number of indicators (shaded in light red) which may be postponed or eventually deleted. The Executive Director informed the Board that the Institute has made some adjustments to performance measures, including decreasing the target of mobilizing self-generated income for the 2010-2011 biennium.
44. The Chairman invited members to comment. One member inquired why the open-ended scenario-building futures/ task force related to training and research on knowledge systems (falling under priority I) was identified as one of the indicators for possible deletion. The Manager of the Monitoring and Evaluation Section explained that while the indicator was relevant to the priority on identifying and responding more

effectively to beneficiary needs, action required close liaison and consultation with other research and training institutes, and given the limited remaining period in the plan's cycle, it was considered to be more important to focus on other priorities, such as enhancing the quality and diversity of products and services.

45. Another member took the floor to express satisfaction with the rigor applied in the monitoring exercise and indicated that it was useful to be prudent in adjusting indicator targets. The Executive Director mentioned that in addition to closely monitoring performance indicators of the Strategic Plan, the Institute has been tracking a number of key performance indicators which are generally aligned to the strategic priorities (e.g. beneficiary outreach; number of e-learning courses; evaluation, including perceived overall value of training, etc.).
46. **The Board took note of the 2011 review of the 2010-2011 Strategic Plan and the adjustments made as recorded in the plan's implementation monitoring matrix.**
47. Under item 8, "Programming matters", the Chairman reviewed the five sub-items and gave the floor to the Executive Director.
48. Under item 8a, "New peacekeeping courses for 2012", the Executive Director briefed the Board on the outcome of the third session of the Peacekeeping Training Programme Advisory Board and the Advisory Board's approval of new courses for delivery in 2012. The Executive Director emphasized that the Institute is focusing on 'softer' topics not offered by other peacekeeping training centres around the world, and drew attention to the planned multidisciplinary senior leaders' course which would integrate a case study and role play as learning methods. He indicated that it would be the first time that UNITAR would focus on the development of a case study and would make the content available in an 'open source' format for peacekeeping training centres world-wide. Finally, the Executive Director mentioned the relationship between UNITAR and Integrated Training Services of the Department of Peacekeeping Training Operations (ITS-DPKO), and the request by the Secretary-General for a more robust partnership to take shape between the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC), UNITAR and ITS-DPKO.
49. A number of members expressed satisfaction on the design and development of new PTP courses planned for 2012 and made a range of comments, including suggestions on course contents, training methods and approaches, and the need to ensure that courses target those individuals who are directly concerned with on-the-ground peacekeeping missions (e.g. army, police or civilian sectors). One member who had observed the delivery of PTP courses expressed concern that the level of participation was at times uneven and recommended Management to address this issue when announcing courses and selecting participants. In recognizing the further diversification of the training catalogue, another member asked if course designs took into consideration the level of education. Among other comments, a number of members recognized the quality of the PTP Advisory Board. While expressing satisfaction on the development of a course related to the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, two members questioned the title of the course on Gender, Leadership and Peacebuilding, and suggested that "women" would seem to be more appropriate than "gender" in the course title and content.
50. The Executive Director replied to one of the member's comments on the level of PTP participants and underscored that the training was part of a pilot phase to review the delivery of course content and the reaction from beneficiaries. **The Board took note.**

51. Under item 8b, “International migration”, the Executive Director invited the Senior Advisor to address the Board. The Senior Advisor emphasized that international migration is an area of growing attention in international relations and that in 2012, UNITAR would be launching its Human Mobility Programme to capitalize on the need for capacity development by way of a coordinated approach in part through the established a UN coordination mechanism targeting all migration stakeholders. The programme’s components would include strengthening local governance, regionalizing global policy dialogue, establishing an integrated service training platform and developing online migration courses.
52. Board members inquired about the programme’s general emphasis, including how it would capture circularity and integration dynamics. Two members shared national circumstances on migration, including challenges, opportunities and threats, with one member emphasizing the importance of ensuring that migrants have access to legal documents and the need to promote learning on and the respect for civilizations and cultures. Another member encouraged active involvement of CIFAL Centres and, joined by others, expressed a desire for HMP to address specific contexts of vulnerability including the situation of undocumented migrants, the protection of migrants’ human rights; human trafficking, migrant smuggling, fostering inter-cultural dialogue, among others. **The Board took note.**
53. Under item 8c, “Activities on Youth for Leadership and Development”, the Executive Director invited the Associate Director of the Governance Unit to take the floor who then spoke of the developments during and after the ‘Arab Spring’ of 2011, and mentioned that it could be viewed as testimony to the necessity for ensuring governance structures are revamped through a ‘youth lens’ as the driver in the formulation and implementation of social, economic and political platforms both in the Maghreb region as well as in the wider African continent. Citing Africa as having the world’s youngest region, with 44 percent of its population under age 15, the Associate Director provided an overview of the Youth Targeted Training (YTT) Programme for 2012-2014, with three areas of focus: local actors, young entrepreneurs and dialogue and social media. In this context the proposed youth-related programmes undergoing design in Tunisia and Algeria were presented with an emphasis on entrepreneurship development, including connecting training-for-prospective-business employment. Moreover, the African Interregional Training Network (AITN) proposed the establishment of additional CIFALs in Africa to train, inter alia, local authorities and youth beneficiaries to promote income generation solutions for young urban/rural populations. The main elements of the UNDP/UNITAR Youth and Africa’s Conference scheduled for mid 2012 was presented with the aim of garnering new ideas for youth-sensitive employment policies, youth inclusive participation in development programmes’ design and public-private partnerships, while ensuring innovative use of social media instruments.
54. Board members expressed overall support for the YTT programme; one member seconded the critical need to ensure youth programmes to forestall any further destabilization or “Africa Spring”; and another noted the need to ensure a pragmatic approach for UNITAR SME support by ensuring access to financing or “freedom for access to credit” to ensure success and sustainability. On the planned conference, another member made reference to the importance of joint programming and inter-agency initiatives, and recommended close collaboration and thematic alignment with the upcoming Africa Governance Forum in August 2012.
55. One member felt that the activities appeared ambitious and theoretical, and stressed the need to bear in mind the economic and political problems that need to be taken into account. The member recommended that this could be part of the peacekeeping training programmes elaborated earlier and mentioned that it was important to alleviate

tensions in order to prevent conflict from erupting in the first place, rather than working to resolve conflicts. The member recommended that the Institute should consider expanding and targeting other countries, such as Libya. Another member said that the stability of Africa will depend on these two themes and expressed satisfaction on the initiative to involve the local authorities to resolve these issues through training. On the recommendation to expand youth-related training to Libya, the Executive Director noted the nature of funding the Institute's activities and indicated that it would depend on mobilizing support from donors. **The Board took note.**

56. Under item 8d, "UNITAR programming related to preparations for Rio plus 20", the Associate Director and Senior Advisor outlined UNITAR's activities pertaining to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) which will take place in Rio de Janeiro Brazil in June 2012 to mark the 20th anniversary of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The UNCSD will address two themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development. Management noted that in early in 2011, the Institute established an internal Task Force on Rio plus 20 to support the process, and announced that a number of activities are planned which include a *Knowledge Exchange Fair for Green Technology Transfer*, in addition to the "Rio Preparation Forum" Dialogue Series (2011-2012) at the UN in New York; e-learning courses on institutional reform and Green Economy; and grass-roots initiatives such as "Green Dreams" and Scenario 2012.
57. While congratulating UNITAR on the creativity of the approach, one member cautioned that UNCSD is moving towards a focus on development and noted that the Institute's *Knowledge Exchange Fair* is all the more welcome. Another member inquired about specific courses targeted to preparing for Rio+20, and how UNITAR is involving civil society organizations into its work.
58. The Executive Director mentioned that Management was aware of players working to promote the development agenda, and he reiterated the two online courses on the Green Economy and Environmental Governance, financed by the Government of Korea, targeting delegates of the Rio + 20 Conference. The Institute has also planned four awareness raising workshops for New York based diplomats, and is looking for green technology partners for the knowledge sharing fair. **The Board took note.**
59. Under item 8e, "Turin UN Summer School", the Executive Director informed the Board that UNITAR, UNSSC and the International Labour Organization's International Training Centre (ILO-ITC) are engaged in developing a United Nations Executive Summer School programme. He indicated that the Turin campus shared by UNSSC and ITC would provide an excellent intellectual environment for such an initiative and that the three organizations would leverage their respective strengths with a view to provide a space for learning and debate around contemporary issues, as well as promoting intellectual and practical knowledge sharing among various players. **The Board took note.**
60. The Chairman expressed much satisfaction on the quality of the presentations, both in terms of form and content. The Chairman noted that in some regions the activities of the Institute may be unknown and/or poorly understood, and called on Management to prepare study on how to strengthen the dissemination of information on UNITAR and its activities to Member States and the general public, and to report to the fifty-second session of the Board. **The Board took note.**
61. The Board paid tribute to Mr. Loshchinin, whose second term is due to expire at the end of November 2011.

62. The Board expressed its appreciation to the Government of the Republic of the Congo for hosting the fifty-first session and for the high quality of services and warm hospitality extended to trustees during the session.
63. Under item 10 of the agenda, “Adoption of the report and setting of dates for the fifty-second session of the Board”, the Chairman proposed that the session takes place from 4 to 5 June 2012, in Geneva. **The Board agreed.**
64. The session was adjourned.