



**unitar**

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

**Board of Trustees  
Forty-eighth session**

UNITAR/BT/2009/2

13 November 2009

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**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF  
THE FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

1. The Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) convened in Geneva from 12-13 November 2009 for its forty-eighth session.
2. The following members of the Board were present or were represented at the session:

- Mr. CHEN Jian.....(China)  
Represented by Ms. LIU Hua (Designated alternate)
- Mr. Simon COMPAORÉ..... (Local authority)
- Ms. Shirley FRANKLIN ..... (Local authority)
- Ms. Geraldine FRASER-MOLEKETI.....(UN)
- Ms. Radha KUMAR..... (Academia)
- Mr. Henri LOPES..... (Congo)
- Mr. Valery LOSHCHININ..... (Russian Federation)
- Ms. Elena MARTINEZ.....(Inter-governmental organization)
- Mr. Jean-Baptiste MATTÉI.....(France)
- Mr. Nicolas MICHEL.....(Academia)
- Mr. Tõnis NIRK (Chairman)..... (Estonia)
- Mr. Henri PROGLIO ..... (Private sector)

Represented by Mr. Dominique HÉRON (Designated alternate)

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

**Ex Officio:**

Mr. Carlos LOPES, Executive Director, UNITAR

**Secretary:**

Ms. Charlotte DIEZ

**Observers:**

Ms. Marielza Oliveira, Associate Director, Governance Unit, UNITAR

Mr. Brook Boyer, Manager, Monitoring and Evaluation Section, UNITAR

Mr. Offei Dei, Chief, Finance and Administration Section, UNITAR

Mr. Jocelyn Fenard, Chief, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Section, UNITAR

3. The Chairman welcomed members to the forty-eighth session of the Board and thanked them for their continued support. He then paid special tribute to the members of the Board's Committee on Finance, Ms. Shirley Franklin, Ambassador Loshchinin and Ambassador Mattéi who met on 10 November for the first session of the Committee.
4. The Chairman then announced that in accordance with rule 15 of the Board's rules of procedure, as amended at the 47<sup>th</sup> session, the participation of Ms. Liu Hua and Mr. Dominique Héron as the designated alternates of their respective members was approved.
5. The Chairman announced that the Board would take into consideration the recommendations made by the Committee on Finance under item 6 and then invited the Executive Director to make an introductory statement. The Executive Director indicated that both the Strategic Plan and the programme budget for the biennium 2010 – 2011 were the result of a participatory process that had mobilized the entire Institute and ensured staff ownership of both documents. He also mentioned that he and his team could not deliver on two commitments previously made to the Board. The first concerns the implementation rate of the revised 2008 – 2009 budget. The revised 2008 – 2009 budget represents an increase of 55 per cent compared to the 2006 – 2007 budget; however, the estimated implementation rate will be some 36 per cent and this is partially attributable to the financial crisis. The Executive Director also indicated that the online real-time access to UNITAR's accounts that he had promised to the Board and oversight bodies could not be implemented due to financial and IT constraints. In light of such constraints, the Executive Director committed to provide the Committee on Finance with budget implementation reports on a quarterly basis until such time as full access is possible. **The Board took note of the intervention of the Executive Director.**
6. Under item 2, Adoption of the agenda, the Chairman invited the Board to consider the provisional agenda. There were no comments, and the agenda was adopted.
7. Under item 3, Proposed organization of work, the Chairman proposed that business would be conducted from 10:00 to 13:00 on the first day, after which members would be invited to a luncheon. A private tour of the Foundation Bodmer followed by a dinner offered by the Swiss Federal authorities would begin at 18:00. For the second

day, business would be conducted from 10:00 to 13:00 followed by a public panel discussion in the afternoon, where several Board members would address the issue of the protection of civilians. The organization of work was adopted as proposed and the Board extended its thanks to the Swiss authorities for the reception that was organized

8. The Chairman then introduced item 4 of the agenda, Follow-up from the forty-seventh session of the Board, and proposed that the Board address each sub-item separately.
9. Under sub-item 4a, Update on implementation of the delegation of authority for procurement, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to provide a brief report. The Executive Director recalled to the Board that following the consolidated legal opinion issued by the Office of Legal Affairs he was personally delegated procurement authority up to \$100,000 in December 2008. He announced that the delegation was implemented through the establishment of a Committee on Contracts and a dedicated policy to review procurement transactions. He noted that the policy had met the requirements of the UN Department of Management.
10. The Executive Director explained that the delegation was not extended to include transactions operated outside Geneva and travel services. He further mentioned that the Institute was building a case to gain further delegated authority for travel procurement.
11. **The Board took note of the update on the implementation of the delegation of authority for procurement.**
12. Under sub-item 4b, Update on implementation of the delegation of authority for the classification of posts, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to elaborate. The Executive Director informed the Board that following the interpretation of the Office of Legal Affairs, the authority to classify posts up to the P5 level was delegated to UNITAR. He reported that two staff members had been trained for job classification so that the Institute was fully operational. One member praised the progress made by the Institute for the harmonization of personnel management in a view to enhance the Institute's efficiency. **The Board took note of the implementation of the delegation of authority for the classification of posts.**
13. Under sub-item 4c, List of partnerships in the area of Environment, the Chairman gave the floor to the Executive Director who was pleased to announce that many activities conducted in the area of environment were undertaken in partnership with other UN and inter-governmental organizations as indicated on the list. **The Board took note of the list of partnerships in the area of environment.**
14. Under sub-item 4d, Report on feasibility to include judicial issues into training activities at UNITAR, the Executive Director reminded members that a discussion had taken place at the forty-seventh session so as to assess the feasibility of introducing international justice in the Institute's programming. He mentioned that consultations were held with some Board members and experts from international judicial organs, leading to a proposal of a comprehensive e-learning course in the area of international justice.
15. A number of Board members expressed their satisfaction and welcomed the comprehensive and innovative approach that was proposed. They also emphasized that the course would respond to critical needs in the judiciary. Several members also mentioned that proposed activities should also be delivered in French and Spanish

and tailored to fit the needs of beneficiaries in various regions. Some members also offered support to mobilize academic partners and potential donors.

16. In his response, the Executive Director mentioned that provided that the Institute is successful in mobilizing resources it would be feasible to develop the course in English, French and Spanish and reach a large number of beneficiaries through e-learning and, later, adding other languages. **The Board took note of the proposal submitted and the explanation provided under this item.**
17. Under Item 5, UNITAR 2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan, the Chairman invited the Executive Director to elaborate. The Executive Director mentioned that the proposed 2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan is more ambitious and visionary than the 2007 – 2009 Reform Plan which focused primarily on internal reforms. On the basis of recent achievements, he mentioned that it was time to move towards more innovative training service delivery and improve resource efficiency by strengthening results-based management and introducing a new, client-focused business model. The Executive Director indicated that while the Institute had undergone unprecedented growth and reached the largest visibility ever in its history, the current donor-dependent business model was hampering further expansion. He emphasized the important need to achieve more financial predictability and embrace technologies such as e-learning. He indicated that the proposed Plan includes a component to begin a process of charging fees for training through a payment system, which would be complemented with a fund to sponsor beneficiaries in need of financial assistance. In concluding his introductory remarks on this item the Executive Director requested Mr. Brook Boyer to deliver a short presentation of the Plan.
18. Prior to introducing the four new directions, Mr. Boyer indicated that the planning exercise began with a stocktaking exercise of the current plan. After highlighting several past achievements, he summarized each of the four new priorities: innovating, and anticipating changes in societies; enhancing the quality and diversity of products and services; strengthening resource efficiency, effectiveness and accountabilities in delivering results; and increasing autonomy. Before concluding his presentation, Mr. Boyer indicated that a results-based matrix with specific actions and performance measures would guide implementation and track progress towards achieving the expected results, and that progress would be reported to the Board on an annual basis. He then presented a short video on how new technologies are changing the way in which societies communicate.
19. Members congratulated the Executive Director and his team for putting forward an ambitious, inclusive and innovative set of priorities, and expressed general support for the new, outward-looking strategic direction.
20. A number of members welcomed the move to modernize training tools with technologies, and several members pointed to the need to balance expanding outreach, diversity and new programming, on the one hand, with a continued focus on high quality products and services which have already given UNITAR much acclaim, on the other. Members also generally emphasized the need to go further than cost-recovery for training services to achieve resource stability, and they encouraged looking for horizontal approaches to maximize efficiency gains.
21. Several members inquired about the geographical distribution of the Institute's beneficiaries. One member raised concern on the way in which the first priority area was worded, cautioning that innovation, and anticipation of changes in societies, would be extremely challenging.

22. The funding structure required to sustain proposed changes was a concern that members generally expressed, and several members emphasized the importance of ensuring that developing country beneficiaries continue to have access to the Institute's training. One member advised for caution so as to maintain the Institute's unique mission in addressing training and research needs in various international development fields, adding that the new approach would require the identification of new beneficiaries to be sustainable.
23. One member offered suggestions and support to explore partnerships with regional organizations and broaden the Institute's presence in various regions. One member requested clarifications about how the effort of the United Nations family on system-wide coherence relates to UNITAR's services.
24. The Executive Director thanked the Board for demonstrating much interest in the Institute's proposed new strategic direction and, in response to general concerns on the level of ambition of the Plan, recalled that the Board reacted similarly in 2007 to the Reform Plan, yet most of the objectives were achieved. While recognizing that the new Plan reflects a higher degree of ambition, he expressed much confidence and cited the energy displayed by the Institute's staff during the consultative process and their determined drive to pursue growth and progress towards achieving the Institute's goal.
25. The Executive Director responded to questions on geographic distribution, indicating that a large majority of beneficiaries came from developing countries. He indicated, nevertheless, that a more precise accounting of beneficiaries could only be done manually given IT constraints, and that a plan is in place to develop a database to easily provide such information in the future.
26. He further explained that self-generated income would come from e-learning and flagship activities, and that a pricing policy would enable programmes to raise an average 15 per cent of their budget through paid fees and that a fellowship fund would ensure fair distribution of beneficiaries. Moreover, the Executive Director informed the Board that a new and attractive package would be presented to donors to sponsor blocks of fellowships. The Executive Director clarified that the new approach would broaden rather than replace existing partnerships, and called for the Board's support to the proposed approach.
27. The Executive Director mentioned that growth is expected to proceed from paid services, increased contributions from the private sector and emerging donors such as Brazil. On expanding outreach, the Executive Director also informed the Board that representational offices are expected to be established in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with the signing ceremony of the first office to take place in Brasilia in a week's time. Negotiations are progressing well with South Africa, and discussions regarding the establishment of an office in Asia will be initiated in 2010. The Executive Director also announced that a UNITAR project office dedicated to satellite imagery activities and funded by a consortium of Norwegian institutions will open in Bergen, Norway.
28. On resource stability, the Executive Director mentioned that the Institute was increasingly contributing to One-UN initiatives, including UNITAR leading a consortium of nineteen agencies to establish a One UN Training Services Platform on Climate Change and chairing the Global Migration Group on behalf of fourteen agencies in 2009. The Executive Director also mentioned that UNDP had seconded three staff members to work on those UN-wide initiatives.

29. Regarding questions on quality concerns, the Executive Director informed the Board that updates were provided regularly on the programmes under the respective units, and he explained that the Institute had ensured that several programmes that did not meet the quality standards were closed and focused on core programmes, and the Strategic Plan would not imply an overall increase of activities to be delivered but rather an increase in the quality of delivered products.
30. In concluding discussions on this item, the Executive Director indicated that the Institute would make slight revisions to the proposed Strategic Plan to reflect key points raised by the Board.
31. **The Board welcomed the efforts and achievements of UNITAR in putting in place the 2010–2012 Strategic Plan and took note of the proposed Plan.**
32. Under Item 6, Finance and Administration, the Chairman proposed to take up each subitem separately.
33. Under sub-item 6a, Unaudited Interim Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2008, the Executive Director mentioned that the Controller and the Board of External Auditors took note of the satisfactory financial situation of UNITAR. From 2006 to 2008 total assets had increased by 20 per cent and liabilities by 64 per cent due to a new UN system-wide requirement to include the provisions for post retirements liabilities in the financial statements.
34. The Chair of the Committee on Finance, Ambassador Mattéi informed that in reviewing sub-item 6a the Committee had requested the secretariat to provide additional information on the financial situation for the current year so as to have an overview of the full 2008 – 2009 biennium especially in the context of the financial crisis. Ambassador Mattéi mentioned that the Committee had obtained clarification on the expected level of income and expenditures by the end of 2009 to ensure that the budget would be balanced. **The Board accepted the recommendations made by the Committee on Finance to take note of the Unaudited Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2008.**
35. Under sub-item 6b, Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010 – 2011, the Chief of the Administration and Finance Section, Mr. Offei Dei, introduced the budget. Mr. Dei explained that the budget was presented using the result-based management framework. He mentioned that the 2009 revision represented a 55 per cent growth from the previous to the current biennium, and that the 2010 – 2011 budget presented a 17 per cent growth compared to the current budget. Mr. Dei then provided comparative financial figures over five biennia from 2002 – 2003 to 2010 – 2011 to show the significant growth of the Institute over the years. He mentioned that the budget is in line with the strategic priorities of the Institute and it emphasizes the need to mobilize self-generated revenue and have this category represent some 15 per cent of the total income of the Institute by the end of the 2010 – 2011 biennium. Mr. Dei also indicated that the gap between the income and expenditures of some US\$ 3.5 million represented investments in the infrastructure to enable the Institute to implement the 2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan.
36. The Chair of the Committee on Finance reported that the Committee had noted a difference between the level of income and expenditures and obtained clarification that UNITAR intends to temporarily reduce the reserves to cover improvements in infrastructure, and that the reserves would be replenished as soon as possible. Based on the information received and the note that was prepared by the secretariat on planned infrastructure investments, the Committee on Finance recommended that

the Board approves the 2010 – 2011 proposed programme budget and asked for the Board's authority to follow-up on the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions' review. The Committee on Finance further recommends that all attempts be made to quickly replenish the reserve. Any additional income should be directed for that purpose.

37. In his response, the Executive Director explained that the use of the reserves was meant to fund the corporate requirements of the Institute that were not appropriately covered by donor funding or non-earmarked funds. He also mentioned that the proposed approach and the initial infrastructure investments including a significant increase in office rent were critical to ensure a successful implementation of the 2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan. As a case in point, he indicated that UNITAR is in need of appropriate office space given the enormous constraints it is currently facing. The Executive Director also mentioned that the proposed budget does not include any additional regular post.
38. One member asked clarification on the funding alternatives for the core diplomatic training (CDT) planned for 2010 – 2011. In responding, the Executive Director mentioned that three options were being explored. The first involved a one-time approval from the General Assembly to fund CDT for two years. The second involved finding a group of 'like-minded' countries to fund the CDT. The third was to start charging for the CDT activities and establish a fellowship fund for those countries that are least likely to afford the cost of the training.
39. **The Board approved the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010 – 2011 and delegated authority to the Committee on Finance to follow-up on the ACABQ's review and formulate any further recommendation.**
40. Under sub-item 6c, Update on external audits at UNITAR, the Chief of the Administrative and Finance Section indicated that, for the interim audit of UNITAR's financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2008, the Board of Auditors made five recommendations in the draft report. He also reported on the implementation rate of the previous financial periods. Of the 12 recommendations eight have been implemented, two are in progress, one was not accepted by the UN Controller and one had been overtaken by events. The Committee on Finance then informed that it deemed the implementation of the audit recommendations satisfactory. **The Board accepted the recommendation of the Committee on Finance and took note of the update on external audits of UNITAR.**
41. Under sub-item 6d, Update on services provided by OIOS, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to elaborate. The Executive Director explained that the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) had planned to conduct a risk assessment of UNITAR which terms of reference should be approved by the Board in line with its decision at its 45<sup>th</sup> session. The Executive Director suggested that the Committee on Finance be delegated the authority to review the terms of reference on behalf of the Board. Ambassador Mattéi then reported that the Committee on Finance had recommended that the Board amends its Rules of Procedure. **The Board accepted the recommendation made by the Committee and decided to amend its Rules of Procedure in adding a rule 28bis reading as follows:**

Rule 28bis

The Board delegates to the Committee on Finance the approval of the terms of reference for services provided by the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services.

42. Under sub-item 6e, Update on partnerships and resource mobilization, the Chief of the Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Section, Mr. Jocelyn Fenard, was invited to take the floor. He indicated that several partnership models had been tested and would be implemented across the Institute in order to increase funding predictability, including a cost-recovery scheme, the development of new partnerships with the private sector and the participation in global initiatives such as the One UN Training Service Platform on Climate Change. Mr. Fenard showed the evolution of income from 2008 – 2009 to 2010 – 2011 which emphasizes a partial shift in projected contributions from governments to self-generated income in the next biennium.
43. The Chair of the Committee on Finance then mentioned that service provision was a potential risk that could be mitigated in the long term by entering into multi-year agreements with donor countries. The Committee congratulated the Institute for the achievements and **the Board decided to take note of the update provided on the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy.**
44. Under sub-item 6f, Update on Administrative Circulars issued in 2009, **the Board took note of the Administrative Circulars mentioned under this subitem.**
45. Under Item 7, Report of the Secretary-General on UNITAR submitted to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for its Substantive session in 2009, the Chairman asked the Executive Director to provide an update. The Executive Director explained that following its introduction by the Vice-President of the Council, ECOSOC had adopted resolution 2009/27 acknowledging the progress made by the Institute. **The Board took note.**
46. Under sub-items 8a and 8b of the agenda, the Institute's activities and strategy in the area of governance, Ms. Marielza Oliveira, Associate Director and Head of UNITAR's Governance Unit, presented the three programmes grouped within the Unit.
47. Ms. Oliveira proceeded by presenting the achievements in 2008 and 2009 of the three Governance Unit programmes, which include the Local Development Programme, the Public Finance and Trade Programme, and the e-Governance Programme. She emphasized the good performance achieved in terms of gender balance and the significant shift towards e-learning activities, representing 48 per cent of the total activities delivered in 2009 in the governance area. Ms. Oliveira explained that face-to-face activities were delivered in 26 different countries during the biennium, and that participants from 112 countries engaged in Governance e-learning activities. She emphasized the increased share of participants from Latin America following the expansion of activities offered in Spanish language.
48. Ms. Oliveira specified that courses were designed to take advantage of UNITAR's expertise in the highest standards in pedagogies and methodologies for professional training, and contributed to overcoming barriers to capacity development in both face-to-face and e-learning activities.
49. The Associate Director then introduced the plans for the future, focused on increasing UNITAR's external outreach capabilities and in answering new thematic demand in specific areas. In order to meet such objectives, she mentioned the consolidation of the CIFAL network, the deployment of mobile learning platforms and the expansion in the number of languages in which courses are offered. As part of the thematic demands, she highlighted Migration, Basic Service Provision, and Science, Technology and Innovation.



50. The Executive Director then provided details on the UNITAR's contribution to the Global Migration Group and the foreseen expansion of activities in the field of migration, with the financial support of Spain and other donors.
51. Several members congratulated the secretariat for the excellent work and praised the effectiveness of UNITAR's governance approach, implemented through a state of the art e-learning platform and via the CIFAL network to meet the needs of local governments. They expressed satisfaction for the formula combining external expertise with innovation in learning environments. One member also pointed out the role of e-learning as a complementary tool to offer mentoring support as a follow-up to face-to-face activities. Another member encouraged the secretariat to focus on interlinkages and develop partnerships with the private sector to deliver top level learning in the field of science, technology and innovation. A third member suggested to also consider bottom-up approaches in capturing existing knowledge at civil society level into learning products.
52. To clarify concerns raised, the Executive Director informed that a Monitoring and Evaluation Section was recently established, so as to support the Institute's teams in improving their evaluation methods and processes. He further noted that results-based management was being implemented by the Institute improving the tracking mechanisms for performance at the programme and individual levels. The Executive Director was also pleased to announce that the city of Jeju, Republic of Korea, had confirmed its commitment to establish a CIFAL. In taking note of the members' comments, the Executive Director pledged that the Institute would pursue excellence in focus areas where UNITAR has demonstrated added-value, in particular in the field of executive training and research on methodologies for adult training.
53. The Chairman expressed his appreciation for the presentation made by the Secretariat. **The Board praised the achievements of UNITAR in the field of governance and took note of the presentation on the Governance Unit, including in the area of migration.**
54. Under Item 9, the Chairman announced that his term would expire at the end of 2009 and that the Board should proceed with the election of the new Chair of the Board. He then opened the floor for suggestions. One member took the floor to express his deepest appreciation to the Chairman for his dedication and put forward the nomination of Ambassador Henri Lopes, which was seconded by other members. **Ambassador Henri Lopes was elected by the Board as next Chairman by acclamation.**
55. The Chairman extended a special thanks to the Board for its trust and to the Executive Director and the secretariat for their continued support.
56. The Executive Director informed the Board about the negotiation for the venue of the next Board meeting in a location outside Geneva and was pleased to report that most likely an invitation for the meeting to take place in Beijing will be possible.
57. The Chairman then paid tribute to Ambassador Carlos Antonio da Rocha Paranhos whose second term will expire on 31 December 2009. The Chairman also extended his deepest appreciation to other members whose term is scheduled to expire on 31 December 2009 and in particular to Mayor Shirley Franklin and Mayor Simon Compaoré for their dedication and support without prejudice to the possibility of their mandate being renewed by the Secretary-General. The Executive Director also extended his special thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Paranhos for his

contribution and to Ambassador Tõnis Nirk for having chaired the Board and for his continued support to the Institute during his term.

58. The Board decided that its next session would take place in June 2010.