



unitar

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Knowledge to lead

Newsletter Summer 2010

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Editorial

Summertime is indeed a busy season for UNITAR!

It is a time when the Institute is reviewing progress and recent achievements against a series of key indicators with regards to the implementation of its Strategic Plan 2010-2012, and the UNITAR units and programmes are releasing new developments in the area of research on knowledge systems innovation, monitoring and evaluation, in line with UNITAR's orientations and the introduction of a new business model.

In June, the Board of Trustees held its 49th session in Beijing. First time ever in China, the meeting ended with approval of new conditions of admission for courses and endorsement of the actions taken by the Institute over the last 6 months. These included the way UNITAR handled recommendations and requests from oversight bodies and the implementation of the new strategic plan.

In conjunction with the Board, a series of events took place hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and facilitated by the UN Association of China. The most important was the joint UNITAR-Counselor's Office of the State Council (COSC) Conference on China-Africa relations. The meeting was a great success in terms of participation and quality of the discussions.

Unfortunately, this summer also brought its share of disasters in Pakistan and in Kyrgyzstan, with thousand affected people. There again, UNITAR was engaged through its UNOSAT programme.

Summer will end with two major events: The preparation and organization, jointly with the UN System Staff College of the retreat of the UN Secretary-General with its senior management; The organization of the UNITAR week at the Shanghai Expo 2010 from 19 to 25 September at the UN Pavilion, where a series of exciting events will take place showcasing the broad range of UNITAR activities.

InFocus

United Nations Secretary-General visits Hiroshima for the first time

August 6th marked an historic occasion for UNITAR's Hiroshima Office as H. E. Ban Ki-moon became the first United Nations Secretary-General to visit the historic city. He delivered a speech during the memorial ceremony of the 65th Anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and also presented a floral offering at the cenotaph commemorating the victims of the atomic explosion.



Here he is shown during his visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum where he was accompanied by Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Japan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations and the Head of the UNITAR Hiroshima Office, Mr. Alex Mejia.

UNITAR to promote the advancement of women in the United Nations system

New York, 7-8 June 2010: UNITAR engaged senior level female diplomats and UN personnel in the 1st skills building workshop for female delegates as part of the UNITAR/Olof Palme Memorial Fund 2010 Negotiation Series "Towards a level playing field".

Historically, the role of women in diplomacy has remained marginal, at best, evidenced by the low-though increasing rates of women's participation in senior level positions in the UN system. Among diplomats to the UN in New York, currently, women account for 23 of the 192 permanent representatives and observers. Women's participation at senior level positions in the UN system also remains dismal. As of 2009, women represent only 27 of the 120 UN officials at the ASG level and above, at the UN Secretariat; and 15 of 43 senior level officials of funds and programs.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women - operational in January 2011 - the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization's goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Grounded in the vision of equality enshrined in the UN Charter, UN Women will, among other issues, work for the elimination of discrimination against women and girls, the empowerment of women, and the achievement of equality between women and men as partners and beneficiaries of development, human rights, humanitarian action and peace and security.

The dismal participation of women in diplomacy coupled with the effectiveness of policy outcomes where they participate highlights the importance and relevance of UNITAR's activities in this area.

Trends & Activities

The 17th UNITAR-IPI Fellowship Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy concludes in Norway

Conflict prevention, as one of the major obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, requires Member States and the UN Secretariat to develop and nurture the necessary talent and knowledge in their diplomats and staff to keep up with international best practices and to equip them with the latest conflict resolution skills.



During two weeks, 38 participants, including diplomats from 20 countries and from six UN departments and agencies, analyzed

violent conflicts and their resolution; studied and applied negotiation and mediation theories and techniques; benefitted from lessons and best practices drawn from case studies from Asia, the Middle East and Africa presented by world-renowned resource persons; and engaged in practical conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation exercises.

A simulation, based on a current conflict was developed to give participants the opportunity to practice mediation and negotiation between parties using a real-world conflict situation. UNITAR's interest-based, problem-solving approach to negotiation and mediation encourages the exploration of all parties' interests, so that innovative options can be developed to address parties' concerns and aspirations.

UNITAR Executive Director visits Tianjin for Model UN Conference

Tianjin, 23 June: On the occasion of his recent visit to China, UNITAR Executive Director Carlos Lopes delivered the keynote opening of a model UN conference.



Dr. Lopes' speech served two purposes: addressing the issue of climate change – the major theme of the conference – and giving the students insight into how the UN works and what a career in the UN is like. A lively questions and answers session was catalyzed.

Dr. Lopes, who was accompanied by the Vice-President of the UN Association in China, Ms. Zhang Xiaolan, also met the Vice-Mayor of Tianjin, His Excellency Ren Xuefeng, and the President of Tianjin Foreign Studies University, Professor Xiu Gang, who hosted the event.

Fifth International Water Forum organized by CIFAL Atlanta

Atlanta, 22 – 23 July: CIFAL Atlanta in partnership with the City of Atlanta's Department of Watershed Management hosted the Fifth "International Water Forum: Financing Water Systems and Governance", bringing together representatives from Brazil, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Uruguay, Colombia and major cities from the United States.

Financing urban water infrastructure is not easy and typical investments involve a high capital outlay and long pay-back periods, as well as greater risks and lower rates of return than other forms of infrastructure. The International Water Forum provided a platform for dialogue among policy makers, stakeholders and senior level water experts from the Americas on affordable finance strategies for water infrastructure.



A group of 65 participants benefited from experts' plenary talks, panel discussions, and were able to use both the formal sessions and the informal time to

UNITAR opens cooperation with the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) of India

Geneva, 12 July: In line with its partnerships strategy, UNITAR has entered into cooperation agreement with the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), one of the premier national law universities of India. In addition to teaching, GNLU provides research, advisory, training services at state and national level to government departments, industry, judiciary, other academic and research institutions.

In the framework of this collaboration, students from Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) will be able to undertake internships at UNITAR. In this regard, UNITAR is pleased to welcome the first collaborator from the Gujarat National Law University (GNLU) who will work at the Institute for 6 months.

UNITAR Executive Director holds Environment and Chemicals-related Meetings in Beijing

Beijing, 24 – 25 June: On the occasion of the UNITAR Board of Trustees meeting in Beijing, a series of key meetings were held with the Chinese government and academia in view of strengthening the already close cooperation between UNITAR and China.



Dr. Lopes met with the Vice-Minister Li Ganjie of the Ministry of Environmental Protection on 25 June 2010. Recalling on the long history of close cooperation between MEP and UNITAR in the area of sound chemicals management, the Vice-Minister immediately accepted that China acts as a pilot country for amended guidance on implementation of the Stockholm Convention as part of a new Global Environment Facility project.

The UNITAR delegation also met with Prof. Yu Gang, the Dean of the Department of Environmental Science & Engineering at Tsinghua University in Beijing, with which cooperation has been established in the environmental field, including a recent Asia-Pacific

Regional Workshop on Nanotechnology and Manufactured Nanomaterials. Future plans including the holding of other regional and national workshops, closer cooperation on technical assistance activities, and the possibility of students from the department undertaking internships at UNITAR were also discussed.

UNITAR/FAO to offer online courses on knowledge management



The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNITAR have agreed to jointly deliver a series of online courses on knowledge management and web 2.0 technologies for developing countries.

The UNITAR/FAO interactive tutor-facilitated online courses will be certified using internationally recognized quality standards schemes and based on a series of self-paced e-learning modules developed by FAO.

The first online course to be delivered in September in cooperation with Sulá Batsú Cooperative is entitled "Innovative Collaboration for Development". It covers social media tools, social networking, collaboration and knowledge exchange. It focuses on capacitating development professionals to adequately use the potential of social media tools to enhance the efficiency of their work, increase the outreach of their organizations, and contribute to the improvement of the effectiveness of the work-related social issues. The UNITAR/FAO partnership aligns with the United Nations calls for enhanced interagency collaboration and improved synergies among agencies implementing capacity building activities.

Sulá Batsú, a cooperative of professionals based in San José, Costa Rica, seeks to contribute to social transformation through creative work with knowledge sharing and collective creation spaces, social economy models and information and

communication technologies. Its expertise on the utilization of web 2.0 tools to enhance work effectiveness and facilitate networking within communities, particularly in developing countries, is a valuable contribution to the successful implementation of the course.

UNITAR and Sulá Batsú expect to expand their collaboration on the customization and implementation of the course for Spanish speaking audience.



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