Introducing the structure and activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) - as an example of United Nations organisations within Japan that are strengthening her international contribution (Essay in honor of Prof. Katsuo TSUBURAYA Prof. Kiyokatsu SATO Prof. Ernst Lokowandt on the occasion of their Retirement)

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Introducing the structure and activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) – as an example of United Nations organisations within Japan that are strengthening her international contribution

James Daniel Short

The United Nations is involved in a wide variety of peace-related activities in various contexts throughout the world. In Japan, the Hiroshima Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) was established in 2003. Due to the fact that the activities of UNITAR are not widely known within Japan, this paper will present an introduction of the creation of the institute, its structure and main activities and in particular the peace-related activities carried out at its Hiroshima Office where the author was employed from January – May 2005 and from September 2006 – March 2008.

1. The establishment of UNITAR

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (hereafter referred to as UNITAR) was established in 1965 with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations through the facilitation of appropriate training and research. Representing one of a number of important organisational developments made within the UN during the 1960s in support of the goals of the first UN Development Decade launched by the General Assembly in December 1961\(^{(1)}\), UNITAR was established
Introducing the structure and activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) during a period that saw the creation of several other major developmental and environmental agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations University (UNU). These developments took place during the tenure of the third Secretary-General, the Burmese diplomat U Thant, who led the organisation from November 1961 to January 1972.

During the early 1960s, discussions relating to the goals of the first UN Development Decade held within the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and General Assembly (GA) drew attention to the need for specific measures to improve the professional competencies of personnel working directly for, and in cooperation with, the United Nations and its specialized agencies(2), with a particular emphasis placed on personnel from developing countries. These discussions led to the passing in 1962 of the first GA resolution referring specifically to the creation of a specialised "UN training and research institute" (3). In that year, the GA’s Seventeenth Session passed resolution 1827 which stated that “the provision and training of personnel of the highest calibre, particularly from the developing Member States, for national service and service with the United Nations and specialized agencies are important to fulfil the objectives of the United Nations Development Decade.” (4) The resolution called upon the Secretary-General to investigate the desirability and feasibility of establishing a specific training and research institute which would focus on: “a) Training of personnel

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(2) United Nations specialized agencies are autonomous organisations working with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of the Economic and Social Council; they include the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) founded in 1945, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) founded in 1945 and the World Health Organisation (WHO) founded in 1948. For a full list see:
http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/unagencies.html

(3) United Nations General Assembly, Seventeenth Session, Resolution 1827; document 1827 (XVII).

(4) Ibid, paragraph 4.
for administrative and operational assignments with the United Nations and the specialized agencies, both at Headquarters and in field operations, and for national service; b) Advanced training for persons now serving in such posts; c) Research and seminars on operations of the United Nations and the specialized agencies."\(^{(5)}\)

In response to this resolution, discussions held during the following year at the thirty-sixth Session of ECOSOC\(^{(6)}\) culminated in the submission to, and passing of, resolution 1934 by the GA in December 1963 which approved the establishment of UNITAR. The first two clauses of this resolution stated the relevance of the establishment of the new UN agency to the furtherance of the fundamental principles promulgated in Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter, thereby grounding the activities of UNITAR within the policy framework of the organisation as a whole. The resolution began thus: "Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as set forth in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter, [and] the close interrelationship between economic and social development and the achievement of peace and security, and the dependence of both of these on international cooperation..."\(^{(7)}\) In this way UNITAR was established as the training and research arm of the UN, and by means of carrying out its brief, was to contribute towards the maintenance of international peace and security, and the solving of the problems facing the international community in a cooperative manner.

In keeping with the frame of reference described in resolution 1827 passed in the previous year, resolution 1934 stated that the beneficiaries of UNITAR's activities should be not only individuals who had direct involvement with the UN or its

\(^{(5)}\) Ibid, paragraph 7.
\(^{(6)}\) Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Thirty-sixth Session, Annexes, agenda items 4 and 5; document E/3780.
\(^{(7)}\) UN General Assembly Eighteenth Session, Resolution 1934; document 1934 (XVIII), paragraphs 1-2.
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specialized agencies, but also personnel who were contributing to national service within their own Member States – in other words, governmental staff and leading figures in civil society. Furthermore, in order to increase the effectiveness of its activities, UNITAR was encouraged to seek cooperation with other organisations and institutions operating in the field of training and research around the world: "The proposed institute can make its most effective contribution by supplementing and cooperating with existing organisations engaged in training and research, including regional and other qualified institutes, and by avoiding duplication." (8) In accordance with the stipulations of resolution 1934, UNITAR commenced operations in March 1965 and its finalised Statute was promulgated to the international community by Secretary-General U Thant in November of the same year. (9)

2. The mandate, structure and funding of UNITAR

Mandate

The mandate of UNITAR is to enhance the effectiveness of the UN in achieving its major objectives, particularly the maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of economic and social development, through the facilitation of appropriate training and research. (10)

In order to carry out its mandate, as its name implies, UNITAR has two main functions: training and research. Despite the fact that in GA resolution 1934 these functions are given equal importance, for much of UNITAR's history the majority of its activities have been focused on training due to the fact that the institution has developed considerable expertise in this area. UNITAR is one of only three agencies within the

UN system that has a specific mandate emphasizing training\(^{(11)}\), whilst research activities are carried out by a number of different agencies, most notably by United Nations University.\(^{(12)}\) UNITAR provides a broad range of training “at various levels to persons, particularly from developing countries, for assignments with the UN or the specialized agencies and for assignments in their national services which are connected with the work of UN, the organisations related to it, or other institutions operating in related fields.”\(^{(13)}\)

Its main activities are focused on the organisation of thematic workshops and conferences, usually lasting for three to five days, which bring together actors from national and local governments, the UN system, academia, and the NGO community to discuss specific topics or themes of particular importance to the UN or the Member States. The activities facilitate a systematic exchange of opinions, experiences and lessons learned in relation to a specified topic or theme; the outcomes of these meetings are recorded and disseminated in the public domain as a contribution to future initiatives in the respective fields.

In terms of research, UNITAR conducts research related to the functions and objectives of the UN, in response to the requirements of the Secretary-General, other UN bodies and the specialized agencies.\(^{(14)}\) This research is directly linked to the institute’s training and capacity-building programmes and is intended to promote a continued evolution and improvement of UNITAR’s training activities. UNITAR supports applied, action-oriented research within individual countries which aims to equip national teams with

\(^{(11)}\) The other agencies are the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW) and the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC).

\(^{(12)}\) Other UN research agencies include the United Nations Inter-regional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).


\(^{(14)}\) Ibid, Article 3.
the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to undertake their own research in support of national development. The institute also seeks to establish and strengthen cooperation with other inter-governmental organisations, faculties and academic institutions in order to enhance the effectiveness of both its training and research activities.

**Structure**

UNITAR is headed by an Executive Director\(^{(15)}\), who also holds the rank of Assistant Secretary-General, and who is a member of its governing body, the Board of Trustees. The members of this Board, who number no fewer than 11 and no more than 30 people, are appointed on a broad geographical basis by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the presidents of the GA and ECOSOC. Board members are leading international figures drawn from the diplomatic community, academia and the private sector who serve for a period of three years and for usually not more than six years. The Secretary-General, President of the GA and President of ECOSOC are *ex officio* members of the Board, highlighting the importance UNITAR holds within the UN system. Until 2006, the Executive Director submitted a regular Report of Activities to the GA on a biennial basis. In a decision taken in 2008 it was agreed that this report should henceforth be submitted to ECOSOC, in accordance with the same timescale, in order to streamline reporting procedures.\(^{(16)}\)

UNITAR’s headquarters are located in Geneva, Switzerland. It has out-posted offices in New York, in the United States, and Hiroshima, Japan; it also has small field offices in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. One of the smallest bodies within the UN, it currently has a staff of approximately 80 people, including external experts who cooperate with the institute on a part-time basis for specific programmes; these

\(^{(15)}\) The current incumbent is Dr. Carlos Lopes of Guinea-Bissau who assumed the post in March 2007.

\(^{(16)}\) Report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council, June 2008; document E/2008/72, paragraph 2.
external experts are given the title of Associated Fellow.

Funding
Since its establishment, UNITAR has been an autonomous institution within the framework of the UN. In order to fulfil its mandate of providing appropriate training and research in an effective manner in response to requests received from within the UN system and from Member States, it was agreed by the General Assembly in 1965 that overall authority for directing UNITAR's activities and operations should be delegated to its Board of Trustees. Over and above the terms of reference stipulated in Articles 1 and 2 of its Statute, UNITAR does not receive specific directives from the GA regarding the types of training and research it undertakes, and as a result decisions taken with regard to specific requests are left to the discretion of the Board. In exchange for this condition of autonomy, it was similarly agreed that UNITAR should not receive any direct funding from the UN regular budget and should seek its own funding sources. Consequently, since it first commenced operations, UNITAR has been, and continues to be, an entirely self-funding institution.\(^{(17)}\)

UNITAR derives the majority of its funding from voluntary contributions made by governments, inter-governmental organisations, foundations and other non-governmental sources, including from individual donations.\(^{(18)}\) This funding is divided into two main categories: General Fund resources and Special Purpose Grants. General Fund resources constitute UNITAR's regular budget which finances the institute's administrative operations, staff salaries, certain training activities and research carried out into the UN system. Special Purpose Grants fund specific programmes and projects, particularly those concerning assistance to developing countries, including

training for economic and social development, research on energy and natural resources and other subject areas. In order to secure this type of funding UNITAR’s Executive Director signs an agreement with a representative of a funding source for a Special Purpose Grant project, pledging that financial resources will be used solely for the agreed purpose. Funds raised from these sources provide the majority of financial support for the institute’s training programmes.

The fact that UNITAR does not receive any direct funding from the UN regular budget has been a cause of major difficulty during much of the institute’s history since UNITAR has been consistently unable to secure reliable alternate sources of funding to finance its activities. This situation has led to a succession of serious financial difficulties which have yet to be fully resolved.

3. UNITAR’s core activities – its training programmes
UNITAR’s training programmes for personnel of the UN, the specialized agencies and Member States represent the ‘raison d’être’ of the institute. Covering a broad range of subject areas and drawing upon a broad network of internationally recognised experts who serve as Resource Persons, these programmes are organised under two main clusters of activity: training in International Affairs Management and training and capacity building in Economic and Social Development. The first category refers to programmes designed to address the needs of diplomats and staff of ministries within Member States who are called upon to negotiate in multilateral contexts. The second category refers to activities directed towards capacity building in the sense of strengthening national human and institutional capacities.

Since the early 1990s, UNITAR has seen a rapid expansion in both the number of its programmes and the number of people participating in them: from a total of around 40 in 1991, UNITAR now runs up to 150 different training and capacity building
programmes annually, spanning five continents. During the biennium covered in the most recent Report of Activities submitted to the GA by UNITAR’s Executive Director (the period of 2004-2005), the following statistics were reported: “Over the last two years, more than 57,000 participants have benefited from UNITAR activities, specifically 13,200 through workshops, seminars, fellowships and field-based capacity-building activities, while close to 44,000 persons followed the institute’s distance learning and E-learning programmes.” (19)

The following section describes the specific training programmes organised from UNITAR’s three main offices of Geneva, New York and Hiroshima.

**Training Programmes at Geneva Headquarters**

The majority of UNITAR’s training programmes are organised from its Geneva headquarters where most of its staff are located. The majority of the beneficiaries of these programmes are from European (particularly eastern European) and African countries. (20) Under the two categories described above, the individual programmes are as follows:

1. **International Affairs Management**
   - Peacemaking and Conflict Prevention
   - Environmental Law Programme
   - International Migration Policy
   - Peacekeeping Training
   - Women and Children in and after Conflict.

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2. Economic and Social Development

- Chemicals and Waste Management
- Climate Change Programme
- Debt and Financial Management (Legal Aspects)
- Foreign Economic Relations
- Decentralized Cooperation Programme
- Technology and Information Systems for Sustainable Development
- UNAIDS/UNITAR AIDS Competence Programme. (21)

Training Programmes at the New York Office

In contrast to the programmes organised in Geneva whose beneficiaries come from many different parts of the globe, the programmes of UNITAR's New York Office have a highly specific target audience: they are designed to address the training needs of delegates to the Permanent Missions at UN Headquarters in New York. Established in 1996 with an emphasis once more on personnel from developing countries, the UNITAR New York Office designs and conducts approximately 30 training events per year which are conceived on the basis of the most pressing needs of the Missions. They are grouped according to the following three categories:

1. The UN System and its Functioning

- Orientation Course for New UN Delegates
- Principal Organs of the UN
- Main Committees of the General Assembly
- Election to UN Organs
- UN Reform
- Structure, Retrieval and Use of UN Documentation.

2. **International Law and Policy**
   - Peace and Security
   - Environment and Sustainable Development
   - International Trade, Economics and Finance
   - Information, Communication Technology (ICT) Policy and Governance
   - Migration and Development
   - Law of the Sea.

3. **Skills Strengthening**
   - Drafting of UN Resolutions
   - Negotiation and Mediation in Multilateral Conferences
   - Negotiation of Legal Instruments
   - Public Speaking and Presentation Skills
   - Computer Training.\(^{(22)}\)

**Training Programmes at the Hiroshima Office**

Established in 2003 to serve as the centre of UNITAR’s activities in the Asia-Pacific region, in the same fashion as Geneva headquarters, the Hiroshima Office organises training programmes for staff of the UN and specialized agencies, governmental personnel and leading civil society figures. Its training programmes are as follows:

- International Peacekeeping
- Post Conflict Reconstruction – The Fellowship for Afghanistan
- Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites
- Sea and Human Security
- Biodiversity and Climate Change

4. UNITAR’s peace-related activities

The following section discusses UNITAR’s activities that are specifically related to peace. Representing a principal element of its mandate, peace-related activities are central to the work of the institute and take place in a variety of forms at its three main offices. The differences that exist between these activities can be seen both in terms of the specific objective, participating actors and methodological process employed, and they provide a reflection of the variety of approaches taken towards achieving the goal of peace across the UN system as a whole. They also reflect the complexity of defining what precisely is the actual ‘peace’ that is being sought.

The challenge of defining ‘peace’ is a most important one since it naturally has a direct influence on the policy strategy pursued in order to achieve it. Within peace theory, a lively debate has continued for a number of years in relation to this issue. (24)

It is fair to say that humans have considered questions about what precisely peace means and how it can be achieved in order to better conditions for humanity for many millennia. However, since the 1960s, within academic discourse there have been strong challenges put forward against the so-called ‘traditional’ conception of peace that has dominated international relations since the mid 18th century, in which peace is seen as a condition where there is no war or armed conflict. Prominent amongst these challenges has been the contention of several scholars that this conception is too narrow since it should be considered that someone’s existence in an environment without war would

(23) UNITAR Hiroshima Office Work Programme 2007, pages 14-19
not necessarily be ‘peaceful’ if he or she was at the same time faced with other severe privations in their daily life such as poverty, hunger, disease, political oppression and illiteracy, which has been and continues to be the case for a large percentage of the world’s population. Proponents of this position argue for a broader definition of peace which is based on concepts of social justice, as conceived on a global scale. This contention emphasizes the central importance of human rights and defines peace as a condition where the human rights of all people are protected and they are able to fulfil their full potential as individuals. In this theoretical debate no solid consensus has yet emerged regarding a universally-accepted conception of peace which could provide a sound intellectual foundation for policy enacted in the international community.

With regard to the activities of the organisations that make up the UN system, especially those which are most directly concerned with matters of peace, the Security Council and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a unifying framework exists in the form of Articles 1 and 2 of the UN Charter, which also, as has been stated, provides the intellectual foundation for the activities of UNITAR. Without defining precisely what the actual condition of peace is, Article 1 states that the principal purposes of the UN are:
i) to maintain international peace and security;
ii) to develop friendly relations among nations;
iii) to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems and

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promoting respect for human rights; and

iv) to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.\(^{(28)}\)

However, in respect of these Articles, a central question that has challenged the international community over the more than 60 years since the UN was established is what are the most effective means of achieving these purposes?

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the Sixth Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali put forward a concrete framework for action based on these purposes in the 1992 strategic planning document "An Agenda for Peace". In this document specific proposals were presented regarding how the UN could contribute more effectively to the promotion of peace in the new era. Emphasis was placed upon the UN strengthening its capacities in four areas: preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building. These capacities were defined as follows:

- **Preventive Diplomacy** is action to prevent disputes from arising between parties, to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflicts and to limit the spread of the latter when they occur.

- **Peacekeeping** is the deployment of a UN presence in the field, hitherto with the consent of all the parties concerned, normally involving UN military and/or police personnel and frequently civilians as well. Peacekeeping is a technique that expands the possibilities for both the prevention of conflict and the making of peace.

- **Peacemaking** is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, essentially through such peaceful means as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the UN Charter.

- **Peacebuilding** is action to identify and support structures which will tend to

\(^{(28)}\) Charter of the United Nations, Article 1, paragraphs 1-4; Department of Public Information, United Nations, New York.
Preventive diplomacy seeks to resolve disputes before violence breaks out; peacemaking and peacekeeping are required to halt conflicts and preserve peace once it is attained. If successful, they strengthen the opportunity for post-conflict peacebuilding, which can prevent the recurrence of violence among nations and peoples. (30)

In the years since 1992, the international community has been faced with a number of serious challenges to international peace and security, including state failure, increases in internal armed conflicts, the deliberate targeting of civilians, the rise of violent non-state actors and the proliferation of small-arms. In order to meet these challenges, the UN has sought to instigate a range of innovations such as the reform of UN peacekeeping, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the creation of international criminal justice mechanisms and the expansion of training programmes specifically related to these issues undertaken by UNITAR.

The following section examines the specific peace-related activities organised at UNITAR’s three main offices, looking in particular at those taking place at the Hiroshima Office which have a unique resonance due to the fact that the office is located within a city which is an International City of Peace.

**Peace-related activities at Geneva HQ**

Under the aforementioned category of International Affairs Management, there are two training programmes organised from UNITAR’s Geneva HQ that are specifically...

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(30) Ibid, paragraph 21.
related to peace: Peacemaking and Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping Training.

Peacemaking and Conflict Prevention
Launched in 1993, this programme aims to enhance the effectiveness of UN Member States' efforts to facilitate conflict prevention and resolution in a variety of contexts. The programme consists of five subject areas:

1. Programme for Briefing and Debriefing Special Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General – Aiming to preserve and pass on valuable lessons and experience gained by Special Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) who have led UN missions in war-torn parts of the world.

2. Fellowship Programme in Peacemaking and Preventive Diplomacy – Offering advanced training in conflict analysis, negotiation and mediation to mid and senior-level UN staff, diplomats and representatives of regional organisations in order to prevent and resolve disputes by means of the negotiation channels of the UN. Senior UN staff members, including SRSGs and respected academics introduce the latest knowledge and field practice, including case studies of conflict situations.

3. Regional Training Programme to Enhance Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Africa – As Africa continues to be affected by conflicts that undermine development efforts, this programme aims to increase the number of senior-level African governmental and non-governmental officials who are trained in conflict

(31) A Special Representative of the Secretary-General is a highly respected international expert who has been appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to represent him in meetings with Heads of State or other key national or regional leaders in war-torn areas. The representatives carry out country visits to investigate allegations of human rights violations and act as negotiators on behalf of the United Nations.
analysis, negotiation and mediation. It is designed to strengthen coordination and collaboration among various actors and institutions, and to create a pool of highly trained personnel who can be called upon to assist peace missions in Africa.

4. Sub-Regional Training Programme to Enhance Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in Southern Africa – Providing advanced training in conflict analysis, prevention and resolution to mid and senior-level professional staff in order to address specific issues of peacemaking in the Southern Africa region. It addresses the challenges faced by practitioners and decision-makers in their efforts to assess and respond to current and potential conflict situations.

5. Training Programme to Enhance the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Capacities of Indigenous Peoples’ Representatives – Providing advanced training in conflict analysis and negotiation to representatives of indigenous peoples. It utilizes a problem-solving negotiation approach in order to strengthen participants’ capacity to negotiate effectively, while also promoting constructive relationships between members of their own communities and those in the dominant community.

Peacekeeping Training

As of August 2008 there were a total of 88,576 military and police personnel serving in 16 different UN peacekeeping missions in different parts of the world. (32) Established in 1995 in close cooperation with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) so as to ensure an accurate reflection of UN practices and policy, this correspondence training programme is currently undergoing a process of restructuring.

Under its former terms of reference, it sought to address the training needs of the wide variety of actors involved with UN peacekeeping missions, both military and civilian, which include UN staff and humanitarian workers from national and international NGOs. The programme provided a range of distance learning courses for personnel who are in preparation for, or currently deployed in, UN peacekeeping missions. It consisted of the following four elements:

1. E-Learning Programme for African Peacekeepers
2. E-Learning Programme for Latin American and Caribbean Peacekeepers
3. Distance Learning Programme for Organisations
4. Programme for Employees of Non-Governmental Organisations.

**Peace-related activities at the New York Office**

At the New York Office, specific peace-related activities take place within the institute’s Peace and Security Seminar Series. This series is designed to offer a forum for the presentation of analysis, policy strategies and best practices on topics related to peace and security that are currently under discussion at UN Headquarters. It is intended to facilitate exchanges of views among different stakeholders, including representatives of Member States, the UN, other international organisations and civil society, and seeks to contribute towards more effective overall policy coordination. Seminars and Briefings conducted within this Series focus on the following topics:

1. Comprehensive Approaches to Post-Conflict Situations – In recent years the need for increased integration, harmonization and coordination has been a recurring theme in relation to international responses to post-conflict situations. This seminar discusses the interplay between the efforts of different actors and examines the connections between security, governance and development in post-conflict contexts.
2. Preventing Genocide – Against the backdrop of the endorsement of the Responsibility to Protect in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document\(^{(33)}\), this seminar examines the means by which the international community can work together more effectively to prevent genocide. It focuses on both the structural and operational aspects of prevention, examining the legal, educational, economic, political and military tools the international community has at its disposal in order to address the crucial questions of “Who should act, how and when?”

3. The New Tools of the Security Council – The Security Council has recently expanded the mechanisms it utilizes to address threats to international peace and security. Closer cooperation with regional organisations such as the African Union and the referral of the recent crisis in Darfur to the International Criminal Court represent examples of this trend. This seminar analyses such “outsourcing” in view of the Security Council’s primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

4. A Humanitarian Dilemma: Protecting Civilians and Promoting Justice – Humanitarian action aimed at assisting and protecting civilians is increasingly challenged by the growing complexity of conflict situations around the world. The emerging regime to promote justice and end impunity for those accused of committing crimes against civilians serves the same long-term goal of protecting civilians. This briefing identifies means by which humanitarian organisations and international justice mechanisms can reconcile their respective mandates in order to cooperate more effectively in the interest of victims.

5. Children and Armed Conflict: New Resolve to Protect the Most Vulnerable – In

\(^{(33)}\) United Nations General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Resolution 1, paragraphs 138-140; document A/RES/60/1.
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conflicts throughout the world children are frequently the primary victims of serious human rights violations. This briefing discusses developments in this area in the aftermath of the publication of the landmark 1996 UN report "Impact of Armed Conflict on Children" (34), and highlights priorities for future action in order to provide better protection for children caught up in conflict situations.

Peace-related activities at the Hiroshima Office

At UNITAR’s Hiroshima Office it could be argued that the subject of peace influences most if not all of the activities undertaken within the office, to a greater or lesser extent. Since commencing operations in August 2003, the office has sought to contribute towards the peace-related activities of the UN in a variety of ways, particularly with regard to the issues of nuclear disarmament, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in post-conflict environments. An important initial development in this regard was the actual opening of the office in Hiroshima since heretofore the UN had had no formal representation in the city which was the first in history to experience a nuclear attack, and which had succeeded in recreating itself as an International City of Peace. The new UNITAR office assumed the role of representing the UN in Hiroshima and simultaneously established a strong institutional link between the city and UN headquarters. This link provided the foundation for the development of a growing symbiotic relationship between the UNITAR Hiroshima Office and the bodies which are its principal sources of funding, the Hiroshima Prefectural and Municipal Governments. It also created a new channel for the promulgation of Hiroshima’s ‘message of peace to the world’ and provided notable gravitas to UNITAR’s training activities organised in the city.

Within the institute as a whole it was held that locating the new office in Hiroshima had


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significance on both a practical and symbolic level. On a practical level, prior to 2003 UNITAR had no administrative centre in the Asia-Pacific region, creating a situation where nationals from countries located in the most populous region of the world had only limited access to UNITAR activities in comparison to counterparts from other parts of the world. In addition, UNITAR’s existing programmes organised from the Geneva and New York offices were not specifically tailored to the needs of participants from the Asia-Pacific region, thus leading to a relative lack of geographical focus in terms of content. On a symbolic level, the organisation of specific peace-related training activities in Hiroshima was seen to have significance due to the fact that the historical legacy of the city underlined the importance of pursuing such activities in that location. In relation to this, the Foreword of the Hiroshima Office 2007 Work Programme states the following:

“Hiroshima’s experience of reconstruction is as long as the history of the United Nations. In the last 60 years, people in this city have made great efforts to recreate it both as a social and commercial centre, and as a powerful symbol of a people’s desire for peace. This is the context within which UNITAR works - Hiroshima inspires us to continue to convey its message throughout all of our activities. Since 2003, almost 800 experts from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond have come to Hiroshima to participate in UNITAR’s training activities. Many of them have been deeply impressed by the experience, marked as Hiroshima is by great contrasts - devastation and recovery, tragedy and hope, sombre reflection and modern prosperity. Hiroshima is a place where all have the opportunity to open their hearts and minds to thoughts, meditation, prayer and action, to remember our common humanity and what we live for. And open hearts and minds naturally to enhance the process of learning.”

1. Nuclear Disarmament

With regard to nuclear disarmament, in spite of the fact that there is currently no
specific training programme focusing on this issue organised from the Hiroshima Office, the office has hosted a number of speeches given by leading international disarmament experts, and staff from the office have participated in an official capacity in several disarmament events that have been organised by other bodies in Hiroshima.\(^{(36)}\) Through these activities the office has served to add in a direct and unequivocal fashion the voice of the UN to the ongoing, multifaceted international campaign for nuclear disarmament promulgated from Hiroshima.

2. **UN Peacekeeping**

In 2003 the Hiroshima Office became UNITAR’s administrative centre for the high-level conference series on UN peacekeeping which the institute has been running in conjunction with the Institute of Policy Studies of Singapore (IPS) since 1994. Co-chaired since its inception by Ambassador Tommy Koh of Singapore, Judge Hisashi Owada of the International Court of Justice and Dr. Marcel Boisard the former Executive-Director of UNITAR, during the course of seven conferences this series has brought together eminent academics, government officials, senior UN staff,


Nuclear disarmament events held in Hiroshima at which staff of UNITAR have participated in an official capacity include: Dialogue with United Nations Foundation Members, "Message of Hiroshima for Today's World", organised by the United Nations Foundation, Hiroshima University and UNITAR, 28th October 2006; The Hiroshima International Peace Summit, an Audience with three Nobel Peace Laureates, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Mrs. Betty Williams, organised by the Hiroshima International Peace Council, 1st and 2nd November 2006; Symposium on Peace and Disarmament, hosted by the Hiroshima Peace Media and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, 31st August 2008.
representatives of international NGOs and military experts to address critical issues relating to UN peacekeeping and to analyse the record of the UN and Member States in this area.

Taking place in the volatile international climate following the commencement of the second Gulf War, the seventh UNITAR/IPS conference entitled “United Nations as Peacekeeper and Nation-Builder: Continuity and change – what lies ahead?” was held in Hiroshima on 28th – 29th March 2005. During the Opening Session of this conference, a message was delivered from the then serving UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan which stressed the significance of the holding of a conference focusing on UN peacekeeping within an International City of Peace:

“It is a pleasure to convey my greetings to all the participants in this conference. It is singularly appropriate that you meet under the auspices of the new UNITAR office in Hiroshima. As you contemplate the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, I urge you all to bear in mind that, whatever challenges confront the world today, the human family has travelled a long way since the darkest days of the war which led to the founding of the United Nations. One reason for that progress is the work of the Organisation, which, through sixty tumultuous years, has helped avert or end countless wars, and prevented the recurrence of violence through the deployment of peacekeepers in many parts of the world.”

3. Peacebuilding

In terms of peacebuilding, there are three programmes organised from the Hiroshima Office related to this issue: Post-Conflict Reconstruction and the Fellowship for Afghanistan, the Training Series on the Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites and the Pilot Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction and the Fellowship for Afghanistan

In order to contribute towards addressing the great challenges of national regeneration faced in a country which has endured several decades of conflict, the UNITAR Fellowship for Afghanistan is a long-term capacity building initiative aimed at enhancing management and leadership skills, and providing technical and institutional support to a group of Afghan government officials, academics and practitioners. Launched in 2003, its long term objective is to create a pool of committed and capable professionals in Afghanistan who can become a common resource for the planning and implementation of capacity building and training activities within the country at both national and local levels.

In contrast to the majority of activities carried across UNITAR as a whole, this programme is carried out over a long time frame with participants joining the Fellowship for a period of approximately seven months; during this period a succession of training events are held in three countries – Afghanistan, India and Japan. Following a process of selection, Afghan participants enter the programme as Fellows who then receive a broad range of training from specific Mentors who are located in different parts of the world; these Mentors are renowned experts in fields such as governmental

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(38) Excerpt from the Message from the Secretary-General to the Seventh UNITAR/IPS Conference on UN Peacekeeping, delivered by Ambassador Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General, 28th March 2005.

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finance, educational development, health and social welfare, amongst others. By means of distance learning mechanisms such as audio-web and video conferences, e-mail exchange and also on-site workshops, Fellows receive specialist training in the fields in which they are working within the Afghan government. On entering the programme, Fellows are also assisted by a group of Afghan Coaches who are former participants of the Fellowship. Specific training provided during the Fellowship focuses on the following areas:

- Civil service and institutional development
- Project design and management
- Management of capacity building
- Communication techniques, proposal and report writing.

Series on the Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites

Focusing on effective management and conservation techniques for the world's unique natural and cultural treasures, this series is ideally located in Hiroshima since the city possesses two World Heritage Sites, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) and Itsukushima Shinto Shrine. Involving leading international actors in the field of world heritage management, the series seeks to utilize UNESCO's 1972 World Heritage Convention on natural and cultural heritage to identify strategies for more effective national policy making and planning for world heritage conservation in the Asia-Pacific region.

In terms of peacebuilding, a major element of this series focuses on how protection of world heritage can directly contribute towards the promotion of peace. At the present

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(40) Representatives from UNESCO, the Getty Conservation Institute, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).
time, the World Heritage Convention recognizes the outstanding universal value of a total of 878 individual sites located in different parts of the world.\(^{(41)}\) Signatory Parties to the Convention have agreed that the protection of these sites represents a matter of concern for the whole international community and that these sites should receive special attention should they come under threat during times of conflict. In recent years, several cases have shown that inscription of sites on the World Heritage List or recognition as 'World Heritage in Danger' has served to reduce damage in times of conflict and also enhanced restoration in post-conflict periods, such as in the cases of Bamiyan, Afghanistan, and Angkor, Cambodia. In this way a particular site has the potential to become a 'symbol of peace' since it is recognised as being a treasure held on behalf of all of humanity, and not just that of the people of the land in which it is located. Furthermore, inscription of new sites on the World Heritage List or efforts made towards achieving inscription, in itself a complicated process requiring considerable negotiation and cooperation between many stakeholders, has the potential to provide a healing effect within war-torn societies. In this way it is held that the protection of heritage can play an important role in supporting peacebuilding efforts; this thinking represents a key element of the training series. The pre-workshop Information Leaflet for the 2008 session of the series entitled "Conservation for Peace" states the following:

The Hiroshima Peace Memorial was inscribed on the World Heritage List due to the fact that "it is a stark and powerful symbol of the achievement of world peace for more than half a century following the unleashing of the most destructive force ever created by humankind." In many ways the conservation history of the Memorial mirrors Japan’s post-war reconstruction history and it has contributed both to the recovery and positive development of Hiroshima and its identity – from a military city to a 'City of Peace'.

\(^{(41)}\) The World Heritage List at: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list

\(^{(303)}\)
Utilizing the power of heritage to unite and mediate between concerned parties and stakeholders, a number of peacebuilding projects have been implemented through the medium of heritage management [in other parts of the world.] A proposal to inscribe the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea was inspired by this movement. The advisory body evaluation for Shiretoko, a Japanese natural World Heritage site inscribed in 2005, suggests the possibility of developing the site with neighbouring islands in Russia, as a wider “World Heritage Peace Park”. The cases of Angkor in Cambodia and Bamiyan in Afghanistan demonstrate that World Heritage recognition can enhance the post-conflict reconstruction of these areas. (42)

Pilot Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding

Launched in 2007, this programme is an initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan to enhance the capacity of professionals in Asia, notably mid-level staff of governmental ministries and NGOs, in responding to growing global needs for civilian personnel in peacebuilding operations. Drawing upon its international network of experts in the field of peacebuilding, the UNITAR Hiroshima Office participated in this programme in cooperation with its principal Japanese academic partner, Hiroshima University. Currently in the second year of a three year pilot phase, the programme consists of six weeks of lecture-based coursework in Japan led by prominent international experts, followed by five months of overseas on-the-job training in an international organisation or NGO engaged in peacebuilding. In September 2007 the Hiroshima Office was responsible for delivering one week of the coursework which was focused on the specific roles and responsibilities of UN staff both at headquarters and in the field. The module was entitled ‘International Public Servant’ and consisted of the following topics:

(42) 5th Workshop on the Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites – Conservation for Peace, Information Leaflet for 2008 Session, page 2-3:
http://www.unitar.org/hiroshima/programmes/whs08/materials/WHS08_Infonote_Eng.pdf
Introducing the structure and activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

- Information Management and Reporting Skills
- Communication Skills
- Leadership and Organizational Management
- Crisis Management and Measures in Emergency Situations
- First Aid
- Stress Management

5. Recent developments and future prospects for UNITAR

Since the appointment of the new Executive Director Carlos Lopes in March 2007, the institute has undergone a number of structural changes, both internally and externally. With regard to its personnel, as a consequence of the autonomous position it held within the UN, during the course of its operating history UNITAR developed something of a unique system with regard to the job titles given to, and contracts that were held by, its staff. Following the arrival of Lopes, these personnel arrangements were rationalised in order to come into line with human resource policies applied across the UN as a whole. Subsequently, after a period of internal consultation, the branding of UNITAR was updated through the promulgation of a new logo and institutional motto for its training material and correspondence. Its websites were similarly redesigned in order to present a new public image of the institute to the international community.

An additional policy change instigated by Lopes was an attempt to address the institute's most significant long-term weakness – that of financial insecurity. Upon receiving approval from the Board of Trustees in July 2007, he began the process of


(44) Redesigned UNITAR websites can be found at the following URLs: http://www.unitar.org/, http://www.unitar.org/en/, http://www.unitar.org/hiroshima/index.htm

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seeking funding from the UN's regular budget for a specific element of UNITAR's training activities by making a formal request to the Second Committee of the General Assembly which is responsible for economic and financial matters.\textsuperscript{(45)} This request was underlined in a report submitted to ECOSOC in June of this year which stated that the unique training the institute organises for UN diplomats has, due to a consistent lack of funds, been running at a loss, and that due to the fact that it represents a service which benefits the UN as a whole, should be funded from the organisation's regular budget.\textsuperscript{(46)} Negotiations on this issue are ongoing at the present time.

Further structural reform can be seen in the appointment by current Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of Lopes as the transitional Director of the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) in December 2007, in addition to his responsibilities at UNITAR. This appointment is aimed to "facilitate and enhance further synergies between the two UN leading training institutions."\textsuperscript{(47)} Efforts are also underway to expand UNITAR's field of operations in geographical terms through the opening of new offices in other parts of the world; the countries of South Africa, India and Brazil are being considered as candidates for these offices. With regard to the Hiroshima Office, discussions are ongoing in relation to whether Hiroshima should henceforth become the centre for the majority of the institute's peace-related activities. Should this occur, it is possible that the Hiroshima Office will recommence its participation in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Pilot Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding in a similar fashion to its activities carried out in 2007.

\textsuperscript{(45)} "United Nations Institute for Training and Research undergoing fundamental shift to focus on methodology, new Executive Director tells Second Committee", press release 13th November 2007; Sixty-second General Assembly Second Committee 26\textsuperscript{th} Meeting; document GA/EF/3198.

\textsuperscript{(46)} Report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council, 5\textsuperscript{th} June 2008; document E/2008/72.

\textsuperscript{(47)} "Secretary-General Appoints Carlos Lopes as Director of the United Nations System Staff College", UNSSC press release 6\textsuperscript{th} December 2007, \url{http://www.unssc.org/web/news/new.asp?id=45}. 

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With regard to the future development of UNITAR as a whole, it seems clear that the central challenge facing the institute as we approach the start of the second decade of the 21st century remains a financial one. Building upon the stabilisation efforts carried out by former Executive Director Marcel Boisard, the current incumbent is seeking to place the institute on a generally more stable financial footing. However, the fact that the current request before the Second Committee refers solely to one element of UNITAR’s activities organised from its New York office reveals that further efforts to develop its training and research activities will clearly be reliant on securing alternative sources of funding. In particular, the opening of additional offices in other parts of the world will almost certainly be dependent on securing reliable sources of financial support from within those countries.

The UNITAR Hiroshima Office faces similar financial constraints. Its two main donors, the governments of Hiroshima Prefecture and Hiroshima City, currently provide funding for the day to day operations of the office and for three of its training programmes – the Fellowship for Afghanistan, the training series on the Management and Conservation of World Heritage Sites and the training series on Sea and Human Security. This situation actually represents a reduction in the financial commitments that these donors entered into when the Office was opened in 2003, since hitherto the training series on International Economics and Finance had also been funded by these donors. In accordance with their broader budgetary priorities however, funding for this programme was brought to an end following the conclusion of the 2006 cycle, meaning that it is not currently in operation. With regard to the other activities organised from the Hiroshima Office, the conference series on UN Peacekeeping and the training series on Biodiversity and Climate Change, in line with the funding policy enacted across the institute as a whole, these activities have been financed by Special Purpose Grants received from alternative sources, which were provided for a clearly defined time period. Their current status is uncertain since the grants provided for them by the
Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs came to an end in May 2005 and July 2008 respectively.

It is clear that if these activities are to continue or other new initiatives begun, identifying new sources of funding will be essential. However, it is the author’s opinion that herein lies an opportunity for the UNITAR Hiroshima Office to address an important issue with which it has yet to engage in a systematic way – that of nuclear disarmament, in cooperation with other key actors in the city. As stated above, there is currently no specific training or research programme dedicated to this issue organised at the office, but it has contributed towards nuclear disarmament-related activities organised by other actors such as the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation and the Hiroshima Peace Institute. A proposal to launch an annual seminar series on issues relating to nuclear disarmament to be hosted at the Hiroshima Office was submitted to the governments of Canada and Norway in 2007, but it has thus far failed to receive approval. Therefore little progress has been made on carrying forward this initiative due, principally once again, to the recurring obstacle of lack of finance. In spite of this, the author believes that potential exists for the development of a more coordinated approach between the many actors engaged with disarmament issues in Hiroshima to generate a new initiative which could have an important impact on negotiations taking place at an international level.

In relation to a specific significant forthcoming event, the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be held in April-May 2010 in Vienna, Austria. Regarding this, the author feels that the timing for a new Hiroshima-based nuclear disarmament initiative could be highly opportune considering potential changes in the international climate which may accompany the transition from a hawkish Republican administration to a more conciliatory Democratic one in the United States, following the electoral success of President-Elect Barack Obama. Consequently, the
author is of the opinion that a new initiative organised at the UNITAR Hiroshima Office, perhaps along the lines of the aforementioned high-level conference series on UN Peacekeeping, which draws upon the continuing efforts of the Hibakusha in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the growth of the anti-nuclear movement within civil society led by the Mayors For Peace Campaign of the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation\(^{(48)}\), and the activities of academic institutions such as the Hiroshima Peace Institute\(^{(49)}\), could have the potential to identify means to advance the international agenda for nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, facilitating cooperation between these different actors could also serve to identify adequate sources of funding which could be utilized to finance this endeavour.

In forthcoming research the author will seek to identify areas of synergy between the activities of the leading nuclear disarmament actors in Hiroshima, including UNITAR, with a view to articulating a more coordinated strategy which could serve to advance the cause of international nuclear weapon abolition more effectively in the run-up to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference of 2010.

—James Daniel Short

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\(^{(48)}\) The Mayors For Peace Campaign at: [http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/ip/index.html](http://www.mayorsforpeace.org/ip/index.html)

\(^{(49)}\) The Hiroshima Peace Institute at: [http://serv.peace.hiroshima-cu.ac.jp/index.htm](http://serv.peace.hiroshima-cu.ac.jp/index.htm)

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