

nothing ever came of it because, although some foundations indicated interest in funding that sort of thing for a year or two, none was interested in funding it forever, and none of the ambassadors really believed they could get the General Assembly to pick up the cost in perpetuity. So there still isn't anything, and it is a matter of real regret.

"That was why I felt we in UNITAR were in a unique position, because we could get into whatever there was, both into the filing cabinets of those who were working in the Secretariat and also into those boxes stored way down on lower Fifth Avenue. No outside agency could do that. So that when, for example, it came to examining the work of seven disaster relief operations to see whether there were certain common elements, which could be systematized so that you didn't each time have to start from scratch to negotiate about health regulations, priority access to ports and things of that sort, we were able to do that; and we were therefore able to staff a series of meetings between diplomats that led to the eventual drafting of a set of common terms for the initiation of disaster relief operations.

"I thought that that was where UNITAR had a real role to play, that they could be useful ... in looking back at what had happened to see [the] lessons [that] were to be drawn from the past [and] that would help to make the future a little less repetitious—make it possible not to have to leap through all of the same hoops again—and, prospectively, it could afford to look at a series of probable middle-range futures [to] see whether the existing machinery of the UN was well adapted to dealing with those kinds of contingent futures. And we did that ... [W]e also did a lot of harebrained things: we did attitude surveys of what diplomats thought, in which they told us how little they thought of various projects in the UN system. Always anonymously, of course.

"In the prospective sector, while I was there, we did 14 or so studies, called Policy and Efficacy Studies, which looked at the prospects, over usually 10 years ahead, of various established institutions to see what kinds of problems they were likely to encounter, and whether the established machinery was sufficiently adaptable to be able to meet the requirements of the contingency needs that those futures were likely to pose.

"It's not quite fair to say that we picked the institutions out of a hat. In each of the three years I was there, we had a two-day meeting of a broadly based group of diplomats who seemed to be sympathetic to what we were trying to do at UNITAR. They would help us to identify the institutions [that] they thought were either most vulnerable, because of inelasticity of their structures or their procedures—of which the International Law Commission was one and ECOSOC was another—or [they] would help us pick institutions [that] they thought had become in some way radically different from what had originally been intended. The object, then, was to see whether that departure from the original intent was justified and would continue to be justified in the future. An example ... was the Joint Inspection Unit (which was a particularly interesting subject [and] which we never did study, though it was on our list), because a lot of the more thoughtful diplomats at the UN felt it was important that somebody inspect the inspectors....