



**STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL
PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

Policy brief guidelines

1) Before a policy brief is initiated, the following needs to be considered:

- Strategic relevance of the subject for SIPRI
- Main message of the policy brief
- Types of recommendations expected.
- Target audiences
 - primary
 - secondary
- Distribution channels
- Role delegation/involvement in policy brief drafting
 - project management
 - external/internal author(s)/reviewer(s)
- Time plan for
 - text development
 - production
- Resources (money, time)
- Evaluation/impact (how, when?)

2) If it is agreed to proceed with the policy brief, the following content guidelines should be followed:

The policy brief is a 4–8-page (1000–3000 word) document to present a convincing story advocating for specific lessons (policy principles, delivery mechanisms or activities) learned from SIPRI activities, knowledge and networks. It is aimed at stimulating and underpinning policy debate on the issues SIPRI has been dealing with.

Content-wise, each policy brief should build its argumentation based as much as possible on the following outline:

- *Building block 1.* an outline of the specific issue/problem that is addressed by the policy brief
- *Building block 2.* The relevance of this specific issue/problem, highlighting:
 - its significance in the relevant framework or context (policy objectives, issue on the agenda, missing element, etc.) and possible international process
 - its ‘empirical’ relevance (in terms of people or organizations concerned, demonstrating that it is not a ‘singular’ problem, etc.)
- *Building block 3.* The presentation and explanation of the new solution(s)/thinking presented by SIPRI, outlining:
 - the factors identified that can make a difference,
 - the specific policy principles, delivery mechanisms, activities
 - the evidence that demonstrates the advantage/value added (in terms of hard facts, credible witnesses/champions, etc.)
 - Identified ways of transfer (opportunities to organize the integration of the solutions into policy and practice; defensive points for handling counter-arguments and sceptics)
 - The experience, expertise, tools, guides, training material, quality standards, etc, that can be shared.

In addition, the argument should be illustrated by: the presentation of (or reference to) practical examples highlighting the evidence of advantages/value added. A practical example is the description of specific elements of good practice drawn from specific experiences (quantitative, qualitative, testimonial).

- *Building block 4.* Conclusions: policy recommendation/recommended approach/lessons learned. Please note that the key conclusions should also be highlighted in the summary at the beginning of the document.

Each policy brief should be presented in such a way that it can stand on its own, but appropriate references to relevant other literature would be included.