



Meeting Notes

Attended

40 staff members, incl. Jair van der Lijn connected by Skype (the list of participants is attached).

Notes

Made by Damir Esenaliev

Agenda

1. Minutes and any matters arising
2. Governing Board Meeting 20 November: Report back
3. Annual budget 2018
4. Other topics

1. Minutes

No comments to the minutes of the RSC meeting held on November 09, 2017.

2. Report back from Governing Board meeting on Nov 20, 2017

The Board met virtually; the participation was lower compared to an in-person format. However, the discussion was at a high intellectual level. Discussed items were: report on the Institute's budget for the 2nd half of 2017; new Board members; advisory committee; future research and activities.

Board staff observer. Jan Eliasson, Chair of the Governing Board, welcomed the staff observer's role (by Mark Bromley). He sees this innovation as an additional channel to interact with SIPRI staff. His networks and experience are to be utilized for reaching out to partners and stakeholders.

Board members. Nomination of Jessica Tuchman Matthews as a new Board member was endorsed. The Board discussed several more candidates who can represent Europe, Asia, and Africa. In total, three slots at the Board to be filled around Spring 2018. Below is the list of names of potential new Board members that was discussed at the Board:

From Europe: Helga Schmid (Germany), Laurent Fabius (France) and Jean-David Levitte (France).

From Africa: Nabil Fahmy (Egypt), Rantame Lamamra (Algeria), Mohamed Ibn Chambas (Ghana) and Ibrahim Gambari (Nigeria)

From Asia: Vanu Gopala Menon and Chang Heng Chee (both Singapore).

Other names brought up were Muhamed ElBaradei (Egypt), Masashi Nishihara (Japan) and Christiana Figueres (Costa Rica).

Note, that no particular name was endorsed by the Board. Before the next RSC discussion of the candidate names, the RSC members are encouraged to add more suggestions.

Advisory committee: All members have been contacted and some have already responded. The Board agreed that the Advisory Committee will be augmented by SIPRI's Distinguished Associate Fellows.

Research: North East Asian research was discussed as well as the organization of a future Middle East program, and in particular whether it should be based on a theme, such as water security or governance, or on geography.

Strategic plan: This will be an important task in 2018. The current strategic plan adopted in 2016 is largely fulfilled: SIPRI has established Senior Management team (SMT); the job descriptions are finalized; operational processes are streamlined. Now, it is time for new round of discussions on new research areas, themes, priorities and choices. The Board will be a part of the discussion. We aim to finalize the Plan in the 2nd half of 2018.

Training for line managers is planned; service quotes are being collected from the two identified consultants. Two training sessions are planned in the 1st half of 2018; and more long planning is under way.

3. Annual Budget for 2018

Budget for 2017: Total revenues are 70M SEK is income for 2017 (the budget projections are in Annex 1 in these notes).

Budget 2018: Budget is compiled from a combination of top-down (what we need) and bottom-up (what we have) approaches. Total projected income is 85.6M SEK; this includes additional 3M SEK in the core grant. A surplus of some 970,000 SEK is projected for 2018. In 2016, SIPRI received 3M SEK extra added beyond normal

allocation due to adoption of the collective agreement which led to tenure contracts of a number of SIPRI staff. This was a one-off addition. The increase by 3 million for 2018 and beyond takes the core grant from Parliament to its highest level ever. At present, grants that have been secured plus applications on which we have high confidence amount to 87% of budgeted income for 2018. Income that is yet to be identified amounts to only 13% of budgeted revenue (from project grants). This is a low number as normally the share of unconfirmed income could be as high as 40-50%.

Increased costs relate to several new positions to be filled (several research and technical positions, including an accountant). Several investments are planned: a new MILEX database; a new financial management system; management trainings and cross-cluster meetings; two Board meetings in Stockholm instead of one.

Reserves are around 5M SEK currently with an increase of just under 1M SEK projected for 2018. Overhead contributions are growing in line with the increasing number of projects. SIPRI needs to increase its reserves to be in line with the recommendations of auditors. It is important to have larger reserves to make investment decisions. Dan's experience is to allocate 2.0-2.5% of the budget to the reserves.

Additional questions raised during the discussions

Overheads standardization for new grants is not entirely possible as the donors have their own requirements. The approach has been to be flexible and to maximize overhead rates.

Billable days: the donors tell us what their approved levels are. Again, it is difficult to set our own levels. Time sheets and actual time spent often diverge, depending on the duration of the grants. It was agreed that a guidance document on grants discussion would help SIPRI staff to communicate with the donors.

Political considerations. SIPRI's core grant is unlikely be reduced in medium-term. Largely, collaboration and contacts with the Government and the Parliament including the opposition parties (except one) have been productive. However, given the Parliament elections next year, SIPRI needs to maintain the communication and awareness raising with all political parties . It was agreed it would be useful to organize an information event for leaders of the parties to inform about SIPRI's work. We can also intensify contacts with youth committees of the parties.

4. Other issues

Richard Ghiassy suggested we think about establishing a peer-to-peer informal feedback and information sharing mechanism. This may be set up using the IT technologies, or take a form of small group discussions across clusters and individual staff. While we have the RSC, the Cooperation Group, trade unions, the safety officer and the HR officer to inform and discuss the issues and ideas, this informal mechanism could be a useful addition to the existing channels in order to provide SIPRI staff a platform to address the concerns, issues and suggestions. As *Amiera* noted, SIPRI staff come from different working cultures and this platform could be a sense checking, feedback providing space. *Pieter* noted that the existing institutions should reach new staff to explain their own roles. *Lena*, a safety officer, emphasized that confidentiality is assured from HR and safety officers when meeting with the staff members.

Dan raised a question on the frequency of the RSC meetings. There were eight in 2017, compared to the aim of six times per year. There was no objection to the more frequent meetings though the short notice given for meetings can be a problem. *Dan* will try to schedule meetings with more advance notice. We will also try to make the RSC meeting notes in a short period – by noon the next day.

NB: Following the RSC meeting, it was recalled that two new RSC representatives are to be elected to the Cooperation Group as *Vincent Boulain* is leaving to paternity leave, and *Vitaly Fedchenko* wishes to step down having served for a time. We have two candidates to replace *Vincent* and *Vitaly*: they are *Nan Tian* and *Alexandra Kuimova*. *Vitaly* will send a survey request for voting to elect the two candidates.

Annex A: List of participants

SIPRI RESEARCH STAFF COLLEGIUM

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Date: Dec 06, 2017

Subject(s): Gov. Board Meeting ; Annual Budget 2018

Name	Name
1. Damir Ezenashev	19. Andre Fluesat
2. Timo Smit	20. Helene Françoise Palmgren
3. Richard Glassy	21. Alexandra Hanolache
4. Neil Muli	22. Johanna Trithenbach
5. Suyoun Jang	23. La Ali
6. Zai Gorman	24. John HART
7. Kate Sullivan	25. Sharon Keli
8. Pieter Weerman	26. Jyoti Erasto
9. ANASTASIA Aladysheva	27. Sibylle Bamer
10. Alexandra Kuimova	28. Ulla Hurtt Nielsen
11. Lena Kappelin	29. Yeonju Jung
12. Simon Weerman	30. Jean M. Jax
13. Vitaly Fedchenko	31. Harri Thomas
14. Lina Grip	32. Stephanie Dinkel
15. Amiera Sawas	33. Gumpeng cheng
16. Non Tian	34. Helena Berger
17. Maria Copasani	35. Katerina Mansour
18. Christian Eulay	36. Mark Bromley

JAWORS HARTGREN
Skype: Jaitr.

Monika HARTGREN
Dan Smit

Annex B: Budget data [from Maria].