

**Research Staff Collegium**  
**Thursday 17 September, 14.30**

via Zoom



**Agenda**

**1. Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising**

No comments were raised.

**2. Covid-19: Update, questions**

- There are at present no updates compared to the last email on the matter that Dan sent out to all staff (on 2 September).
- Working in the office is possible with a quota (30 people max) and a rotation system. Colleagues can “swap” days between themselves.
- Small meetings (up to the size of most programmes) can take place in person; cluster meetings should be happening virtually, and of course so should bigger meetings. External meetings should take place outside of SIPRI premises.
- As far as international travel is concerned, the bias is still against it. If you deem it essential for your work, it is possible to consider it, but it is important to check both quarantine regulations and insurance prior to committing to any travel (keeping in mind that SIPRI cannot support travel where the insurance is not possible).

Extra agenda item: SIPRI staff extended warm happy birthday wishes to Jan, Dan and Alexandra M.

**3. RSC representative**

During a previous meeting, Nan and Alexandra K. had asked RSC members to volunteer to be an RSC representative to the Cooperation Group, which convenes once every two to three weeks to discuss issues that are central to the Institute. Vane has now volunteered to take up this position.

If anybody has an objection to this, they can communicate to Dan confidentially by Friday 18 September COB. If nobody has any objections, we will confirm Vane’s appointment as RSC representative, formally replacing Alexandra K.

Nan also expressed his wish to step down from his role as RSC representative, after two and a half years, and would welcome volunteers to replace him. He emphasized that this offers a valuable experience in understanding how SIPRI works and how we

try to work together to move the Institute forward.

Colleagues wishing to volunteer are invited to send their names to Nan by Friday 25 September. Nan will circulate a reminder on this.

#### **4. Governing Board meeting 16-17 November**

- **Issues to raise**

The next Governing Board meeting will take place during the afternoons of Monday 16 and Tuesday 17 November.

The agenda has not been set yet, and RSC members are encouraged to raise issues they would like the Board to discuss. They can do this also at a later stage, by communicating with Malin, who is the staff observer to the Board.

#### **5. Autumn activities**

Steph presented an overview of Autumn activities for the coming months, and until the end of December. This list is not exhaustive but covers major events and publications.

- 28 September: major paper in cooperation with MSB. Vincent is leading on this. There will be an online launch of the publication, and a subsequent event yet to be defined on 16 October.
- 8 October: launch of the new edition of Dan's book "The State of the World Atlas".
- (9 October: announcement of the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate).
- 13 October: launch of the report and the videos regarding our regional Horn of Africa cooperation.
- 19 October: launch of Middle East Programme policy paper
- Starting on Monday 26 October: week celebrating the UN 1325 resolution. We will launch a score card infographic (Jair and Timo)
- 29 October: launch of Kolja's work on DPRK
- 2 November: launch of several reports and of a video by Vicent and Kolja in the framework of our cooperation with the German MFA on the conference "Rethinking arms control" (of which SIPRI is a knowledge partner).
- 12-13 November: EUNPDC Conference. Launch of three major publications by Petr and Tytti, José and Ian.
- Week starting on 16 November: Governing Board meeting, followed by Stockholm Security Conference
- 30 November: embargo material ahead of the launch of the Arms Industry data. This year we will look at the trends in the arms industry and how COVID-19 has been impacting the supply chain.
- Early December: milestone report by Jair in cooperation with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- 7 December: Arms Industry data go live.
- 11 December: branding work on our cooperation with the LANCET-SIGHT Commission.

- 15 December: updated paper on Chinese military expenditures.
- 17 December: paper on new relationships on arms transfers.

It is important to note that there are also many activities ongoing but still not scheduled in the Outreach calendar.

Dan and Steph will discuss the opportunity for SIPRI staff to have access to an online version of the Outreach calendar.

## 6. Possible future SIPRI research questions and issues: continuing the discussion, partly in the light of Covid-19

The conversation moved from what we are currently doing to what we are thinking in terms of future research questions and issues.

**Shannon** introduced two forward-looking areas of potential research for the Nuclear team over the next couple of years:

- 1) Assessing a future nuclear arms control agenda – which will have to take into account new technological and strategic realities, and will be based on a more expansive notion of arms control stability. Two main questions:
  - a. What will a future nuclear arms control agenda that can maintain strategic security look like?
  - b. Which states will take part in the future arms control agenda?
- 2) Examining the strategic interdependence between offensive missiles, missile defence and outer space weaponization, and its implications for nuclear deterrence relationships. The aim would be to offer some useful ideas on how to use diplomacy to find a new path for arms control.  
The nuclear team recognizes that this project will have synergies with some of the work that has been done by other programmes and look forward to discussing potential areas of cooperation.

**Gregory** presented four thematic research pillars that the Sahel West Africa programme will include in their coming projects. These build on the finding that in all countries in the Western and Central Sahel region the COVID crisis has not had any significant impact on the population's habits so far, but the situation has had some serious implications on the way of conducting research.

- 1) Human security: vulnerable groups (women, youth and migrants) have to remain the top priority for research for us. We need to include them and think of new methodological tools to better target them.
- 2) Political: the recent military coups in Niger and Mali, the forthcoming elections in Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, the long standing situation in Cameroon are all pointing to the same issues: the non-renewal of political elites and the difficulty for the new generation of actors to play an active role in state management unless they decide to seize power, with huge consequences in terms of stability

and violence. There is a clear need to better monitor these election transition processes, which are a major source of instability in the region.

- 3) Security: the security situation in the West Africa region is deteriorating rapidly, with a superposition of threats (international armed groups that are extending their grip in the region and a proliferation of community-based militias, adding an additional level to the existing violence). This is a great challenge for all stabilization efforts, and this phenomenon is so far very poorly documented.
- 4) Role that regional and subregional organizations play or should play in peacebuilding efforts. For now, these organizations are not playing the role they should play, because of internal divisions, lack of means and lack of political will. At present we do not have enough knowledge to support their role.

**Jair** gave a brief description of two projects his programme will be working on.

- 1) The new geopolitics of peace operations, a long-standing project that is currently focusing on the role of peace operations and non-traditional security challenges. For every topic a background paper looks at the literature and the current state of affairs, and then the team organizes dialogue meetings to move the discussion a step further. The results of all dialogue meetings will then be published in a final report that will be launched in New York.  
In the framework of this project, the programme will be working on exploring what peace operations are doing with regards to pandemics and epidemics (COVID but not only), what they should do, what they shouldn't do and how they should coordinate with others.
- 2) "Just Future" programme: SIPRI is part of a consortium that has been granted an "advocacy and lobbying" grant by the Dutch MFA, over the course of five years, to work on six countries: Burundi, Mali, Niger, Afghanistan, South Sudan and DRC. The aim is to set up advocacy activities with regard to three topics: 1) to increase the responsiveness of security actors; 2) to increase the responsiveness of the justice sector; 3) to increase the inclusivity of these sectors, and create civic space for local populations to contribute to policy making.

**Jannie** focused on resilience. At this stage her team is developing the intuition behind a potential proposal departing from the notion that different types of "public bads" - and particularly violence, epidemics and adverse effects of climate change - share a lot of features. The team is looking to explore whether there are certain forms of social organizations or social network structures that are better equipped to prevent and mitigate these types of "public bads".

Furthermore, we are contemplating, together with public health specialists, what we can learn from taking a public health approach to this, and working for instance on the interactions of transmitters. Who plays the role of interrupter at the community level? Who should we work with? How do we prevent further spreads?

It is then obviously important to consider also the longer term normative and attitude changes at the community level.

Jannie and her team will continue exploring this, and there seems to be also room for synergies with different parts of the Institute.

**Dan** brought up the subject of the increasing importance of law and the declining

respect for law. There have been many examples of declining appetite for international cooperation and declining respect for the laws and the norms that underwrite it in recent years, and they haven't been limited to a few states. It might be time to start thinking about increasing our legal capacity in-house and looking at these issues more closely.

In discussion, a few other points were raised:















- The preventive aspect of arms control and upstream approaches (e.g. responsible innovation);
- The pandemic has forced people to think creatively, and it will be interesting to see how long these new and innovative ideas will last;
- Biological and chemical warfare should have moved to the forefront of the international agenda. This has not happened, but it would be good to follow this going forward.
- The topic of the rule of law is also very interesting in the European context, and it is going to be tested in the next few months. The consequences of COVID in Europe are going to be fundamental in the future workings of the institution. And that has triggered a discussion on whether the financial instrument should be linked to conditionality on respect for the rule of law.
- With a global economic crisis possibly looming, SIPRI should monitor public spending choices, including through disaggregating where possible.

## **7. AOB**

Sibylle pointed out the issue of internet security, and that it would be good if SIPRI staff could attend some professional training on the subject.


Dan confirmed we will look into what can be done in that respect.

ATTENDANCE (77 participants)

	Martina Selmi (me)
	Elena Haapaniemi (Host)
	Dan Smith
	Vitaly Fedchenko
	Xia Sun
	Ekaterina Klimenko
	Joey Fox
	alexandra
	Alexandra Marksteiner
	Amal Bourhrous
	Andrea Gadnert
	Andrea Varisco
	Annelies Hickendorff
	Anniek Barnhoorn

CD Caroline Delgado

CT Caspar Trimmer

 Cecilia Bagge

 christina.ekberg@sipri.org

CM Claire McAllister

DM David Michel

d diego.lopes

 Dylan O'Driscoll

EK Ekaterina Klimenko















EE Elin Elmgren

ER Elise Remling

ES Elizabeth Smith

EZ Emma Zetterström

FH Farah Hegazi

-  FS Fei Su
-  Florian Krampe
-  FE Frank Esparraga
-  FD Frederic Daudon
-  GM Giovanna Maletta
-  gc gregory chauzal
-  GA Gulzhan Asylbek kyzy
-  HB Helena Berger
-  IA Ian Anthony
-  Jv Jair van der Lijn
-  JS Jannie SIPRI
-  JM Jenny Mildton
-  JZ Jiayi Zhou
-  JV Joakim Vaverka





Johanna Eliasson



José Alvarado



Karolina Eklöw



Kheira Tarif



Kolja Brockmann



Kristina Tschunkert



Laura-Alina Fabich



Lena Kappelin



Louise Edgren



Luc van de Goor



Lucie Beraud-Sudreau



Lucile Robin



Mamadou Bodian



Maria Kaemmerle



Marina Caparini



Nan Tian



Nikos Politis



Noel Kelly



Olle Persson



Petr Topychkanov



Pieter Wezeman



Rickard Söder



Sepideh Soltaninia



Shannen Young



Shannon Kile



Shivan Fazil



Sibylle Bauer



Siemon Wezeman

TS Timo Smit

t tytti erästö



Ulla Hurtig Nielsen



Vane Aminga

VB Virginie Baudais

VM Vongai Murugani



Stephanie Blenckner