

Research Staff Collegium minutes

Thursday 15 March 2018, 15.00-16:40

Present

45 members of staff (see attached attendance list)

Jan Eliasson joins the second half of the meeting for the discussion on Governing Board (GB).

Notes

Anastasia Aladysheva

Agenda

1. Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising
2. Updated information on budget 2018
3. Update on SIPRI statute revisions
4. Initial thoughts on agenda for Governing Board meeting, 28-29 May
5. Ideas for new members of the Governing Board
6. Diversity at SIPRI
7. AOB

1. Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising

There were no comments.

2. Updated information on budget 2018

SIPRI ended 2017 with a surplus of 321,000 SEK. This was an improvement over 2016 when the year ended with a deficit. The 2017 costs were 68,786,000 SEK, and income was 69,100,000 SEK. Jakob stated that there is a need to build more reserves. Compared to 5 million SEK in reserve at present, SIPRI has to climb up to 10 million SEK to cover unexpected shocks. There is no pre-specified target by the board but good practice is often regarded as the surplus being 2% of annual turnover.

For 2018, SIPRI forecasts income to be just short of 93 million SEK, and expenditure as 92,176,000SEK creating an annual surplus of approximately 790,000 SEK). This estimate of income includes the MFA strategic grant. The growth in income and costs in 2018 is explained by the increase in activities: the Sahel/West Africa programme is recruiting, there is an expansion of communications and administrative teams, and there is the Baltic Sea region conference. The latter does not involve recruitment as much of the staffing requirements are outsourced.

Dan offered some clarifications of the budget lines: “secured funding” is the funding that has been signed, while “forecast funding” has not yet been signed but certainly will be, and “unidentified

funding” is the funding that SIPRI is looking for. The core grant accounts for just under one-third of total income in 2018.

3. Update on SIPRI statutes revisions

Jakob reported that on 22 February 2018 the Swedish government decided on the revision of the statutes. This change has been discussed many times at the RSC as well as at the Board and the government’s decision reflected SIPRI’s preferences. The Director is now a non-voting member of the GB reporting and accountable to the board and it is the Board that will appoint the Director henceforth, having consulted with the RSC and unions.

There were no questions from the staff.

4. Initial thoughts on agenda for Governing Board meeting, 28-29 May

Jakob outlined the structure of the GB meeting, which is to be held on May 28-29 May, and the issues to be discussed there. There is a two-day programme with the Inaugural Annual SIPRI Lecture in the late afternoon of the first day of the meeting. The public lecture is organized for the first time.

During the meeting, the GB members will discuss updates to the rules of procedure (board document about procedures of the institutes and new members), the financial situation, the new EU General Data Protection Regulation, the reports from the Director and Deputy Director, and a new institute strategy.

In terms of how interaction between the GB and the RSC is going to be organized, the meeting discussed three possible arrangements: an open round-table meeting (as last year), parallel meetings in breakout groups, or 15-minute “speed-dating” (one-on-one) approach. The staff mentioned that it is important to encourage engagement between board and SIPRI staff, and small breakout meetings are more focused than the round-table discussions. A discussion group could include 8-9 researchers, or the number of the GB members divided by the number of the staff members. The division could be thematic or regional, academic- or policy-related.

From the staff side, the objectives of the meeting with the GB may include learning from the GB experience, receiving a couple of networking contacts, engaging in interesting conversation. The meeting must be intellectually and politically stimulating. Gary mentioned that there may be a coordination problem with the “speed-dating” approach. Staff members could make a list of questions they would like to raise with the GB as a basis for sorting who will meet with whom. There will also be a meeting between the GB and representatives of the unions (trade union) as last year. The outreach dimension should be covered. The GB members are the door openers for SIPRI in the regional context, so it would be helpful to make more use of the GB regionally.

5. Ideas for new members of the Governing Board

The Director informed the meeting that discussions so far have generated a short list of three possible new Board members: Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Patricia Lewis, and Christiana Figueres. When Wolfgang Ischinger steps down in May, SIPRI will need one new Board member and can have as many as three.

Between them, these three candidates have expertise that is related to all three research clusters, they

all have management experience, and they all have high-level political experience. The issue of diversity was discussed; two are women which is important, but two of them come from Europe which could be an issue.

During discussion, the name of Kofi Annan was brought up and Jan Eliasson agreed to contact him. Jan also noted that Kofi Annan will most likely decline, but he may recommend some names.

Dan proposed that Jan could contact Kofi Annan informally and ask about his willingness to join the Board. If that approach gets a positive response, we could discuss again at the RSC that will be held in April or May; if the response is not positive, Jan and Dan could contact the three candidates. This course of action was agreed.

6. Diversity at SIPRI

Dan briefly expressed the SMT's wish to discuss how best to enhance diversity at SIPRI but, as the meeting was running out of time, the issue will be discussed at the next RSC meeting.

7. AOB

None.