

SIPRI SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

Solna, 20 November 2018

MINUTES

Participants

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Luc van de Goor, Maria Kaemmerle, Gary Milante (via Skype), Dan Smith
Note-taker Elena Haapaniemi

1. MoM approval

- Minutes of the previous meeting on Nov 6 were approved.

2. Matters arising from the previous MoM

- NTR.

3. Report back

- Maria informed the SMT about the auditors' visit during the past week.
- Maria updated the SMT on the ongoing work on the draft 2019 budget. Details around the MFA grant should be clarified internally between all those concerned at the earliest. Dan reminded the SMT that Sigrún remains SIPRI's only liaison point for all financial discussions with the MFA.
- Sibylle reported back on the successful presentation of SIPRI's mandate and activities that she, Dan and Sigrún made earlier that day for the members of Riksdagen's Foreign Affairs Committee. Feedback in the informal discussion that followed suggests this was another step forward in increasing the knowledge about SIPRI and building a good relationship with all political parties in Sweden.
- Luc informed the SMT about the project proposal submitted to the Chinese Embassy for consideration. Follow-up to be decided when we get the Embassy's feedback.
- Luc reported back on a meeting with the director of GRIP (Group for Research and Information on Peace and Security, Brussels-based independent research centre) who visited SIPRI on Nov 19. The SMT agreed that it is worth exploring cooperation possibilities between the two institutions.
- Luc informed the SMT on the meeting he had with the Dutch Ambassador earlier that day. There might be a potential for cooperation with SIPRI, including on the SSC.
- Gary reported back on a very interesting discussion on GReVD he had with Magnus Öberg, director of the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme. Öberg confirmed his strong support for this new SIPRI endeavour which is very positive indeed.
- Steph presented to the SMT the summary of the discussion held by cluster coordinators on Nov 6. While going through it, the SMT reiterated the need to have clear internal guidelines on project management. Elena will present the first draft at the next SMT. Steph will get back to cluster coordinators with the report back from the SMT on the said summary.

4. Staffing & project issues

- Luc brought to the attention of the SMT a request for becoming a guest researcher at SIPRI. In this regard, the SMT reiterated the existing, rather restrictive approach in offering a guest researcher position at SIPRI. The main criteria remain the quality of the researcher and the relevance for SIPRI of the research area and deliverables.
- Gary informed the SMT that Julius Schulte has withdrawn his application for the position of a data scientist researcher.
- Steph reminded the SMT about the need to have an additional position, at least half-time, at the communications department to focus on further developing the visualisation tools. Steph will draft the job description.

5. Data visualisation proposal

- The SMT discussed an offer received from SOAS University of London that offered support in developing visualisation tools for SIPRI data. While underlying the fact that SIPRI does not enter in exclusive partnerships, the SMT agreed that it is worth exploring this possibility. Steph reminded SMT that SIPRI is currently enjoying similar free-of-charge support from a specialist group at Munich University. Dan will follow up.

6. Associate Fellows: systematising our approach

- Looking at the current list of SIPRI associates the SMT noted the obvious need to bring more gender and geographical diversity into it, if and where possible. The SMT then pondered on the dilemma of adopting a strict approach in choosing the associates vs remaining flexible. The latter approach has been chosen as to be able to better adapt to the arising needs of ongoing and future programmes and projects. On the practical note, Sigrún will need to look into extending the expiring contracts for those associates who expressed their wish to remain with SIPRI.

7. AOB

- The SMT flagged the forthcoming follow-up meeting with the MSB scheduled for Nov 28, underlining the need to be well prepared for the strategic discussion that, hopefully, will lead to establishing a partnership with the MSB on common subject matters.

Action Points

- Draft guidelines on project management – Elena
- Feedback on the notes from cluster coordinators' meeting – Steph
- Job description for a digital communications assistant tools assistant – Steph
- Follow-up on data visualisation – Dan
- Follow up on the associates' list including extending the contracts where needed – Sigrún

Next SMT meeting

- The next SMT meeting will be held on Tuesday Nov 27 starting at 14:30.

Items carried forward

- Draft IT user guide & Memo comparing new mail systems.