

SIPRI SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

27 May 2020

MINUTES

Participants

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Maria Kaemmerle, Sigrún Rawet, Dan Smith

Helena Berger (present for item 3)

Note-taker Elena Haapaniemi

The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

1. MoM approval

- The minutes from the SMT meeting on May 19 were approved.

2. Matters arising

- Dan has circulated his notes from the SMT discussion on funding prospects beyond 2020 held at the previous meeting. Dan invited the SMT members to share their thoughts on the subject matter and, where possible, get feedback from clusters and/or program directors. The SMT will resume this discussion on June 2.

3. Corona virus

- The SMT discussed feedback from various teams on how the staff members are coping with the current situation. For many, separating work from private life and keeping more or less strict working hours at home is becoming a real challenge. Under the current circumstances, taking vacations becomes even more important. Helena will send a reminder about the importance – and the necessity – of taking summer vacations to line managers, not in the least in order to avoid that too many staff members have accumulated too many saved holiday days by the end of the year.

4. Report back

- Steph informed the SMT that:
 - o The launch of the new SIPRI data on peace operations is going well. After one day, the story has been covered in more than 100 media outlets. This is the first time that SIPRI has pre-launched this data in a separate fact sheet ahead of the Yearbook launch.
 - o Two of Vincent's reports on emerging technologies are ready to be launched; the first, a result of his work with the ICRC will be launched on June 2.
 - o The YB launch date on June 15 remains firm.
 - o Joey will join one of the SMT meetings before the end of June for a brief discussion on the conflict chapter of the next YB.
 - o The ambition is to have comms department "closed" during the month of July.
- The SMT agreed to allocate around 2000 EUR from the disarmament education part of the EUNPDC for translation of the YB summary in Farsi.
- Maria informed the SMT that meetings to implement the Project Management guidelines have started. There has been a couple of meetings within the A&D cluster and they will continue in the coming weeks with the rest of the programs.

- Maria circulated an updated version of the KPIs for SIPRI's Strategy, inviting SMT to have one final look at the document in each cluster to benchmark between the clusters and check it a final time for consistency and simplicity. Thereafter, SMT will finalise it.
- Sibylle reported back about her meeting with the German MFA as part of the preparatory work for the international conference on rethinking arms control. The format is not yet decided. SIPRI will host its own session on the military use of AI. Sibylle will brief the Swedish MFA's NIS department on the progress, and also write a brief internal memo.
- Sigrún informed the SMT about the internal restructuring at the MFA that resulted in the establishment of three larger multilateral units:
 - o KH and UN division have been now combined into one;
 - o The Global Agenda division that Sigrún will be leading as of August 1 and
 - o The International Law division.
- Sigrún informed the SMT that there will be a debriefing session for the Forum team on June 1.
- Sigrún will participate in the virtual second meeting of the SIGHT-Lancet commission on June 29-30.
- Dan updated the SMT on the development of the partnership with the UNHCR. The current conversation is about figuring out how to proceed smoothly and speedily with the MoU signing and then move on to the substance. There might be a possibility to record a conversation between Dan and the High Commissioner; Dan will follow up with Steph.

5. Staffing & project issues

- The German MFA will fund projects on taking stock of six years of the Arms Trade Treaty and the military use of AI.
- Dan confirmed that the recruitment of the EP2022 team has been completed. Karolina has been appointed as the Project Coordinator, and her JD has been updated accordingly.
- Dan congratulated Helena on the heroic effort in conducting so many recruitments in such a limited time and under such exceptional circumstances.

6. Board meeting: follow-up

- Dan and Sigrún presented the main outcomes of the Governing Board meeting :
 - o Arms control including nuclear non-proliferation and multilateralism. The Board recognized SIPRI's work and solid international reputation in the field of arms control. The Board would welcome SIPRI undertaking more initiatives about new risks that emerge because of the dismantling of the existing international legal regime of arms control and nuclear proliferation. The SMT agreed that some of these ideas might be absorbed within the SSC.
 - o Covid-19 related research. The SMT underlined the quality of the discussion at the Board meeting where all staff took part, and the quality of interventions from both staff and Board members. The SMT agreed to encourage the staff to follow Marina's example and publish blog pieces on the Covid-19. In parallel, Steph will record short interviews with the Board members within the framework of the new comms initiative "SIPRI Conversations corner". The interviews will be available on our YouTube channel. It also makes sense to research the link between the Covid-19 pandemic and food.
 - o 360 degree evaluation. Since the request came from the unions directly to the Board, the SMT agreed to request more information on the nature of the request from the unions so as to be able to plan for an adequate follow up.
 - o New Board members. While the Board retained Marti Natalegawa and Hu Shuli as two viable candidates, the Chair encouraged the Board members to come up with additional names. From its side, the SMT agreed that it is

worthwhile looking into the world of academia for new members. Both Sibylle and Luc will scrutinize their networks for possible candidates, ideally from Asia.

- A to-do note before the next Board meeting:
 - o Dan will update the “Context and Trends” part of the strategy; to be shared with the Board.
 - o KPI document should be submitted to and discussed at the Board meeting.
- Another outcome of this SMT discussion was the idea to engage all staff in a regular conversation about current developments in the field of international peace and security. The idea is not to focus on team’s specific projects and knowledge but to range more widely and try to anticipate things. These discussions do not need to be too formal, lengthy or prepared in advance – rather a spontaneous and quick exchange of opinions. One possible format for such discussions are MMMs, otherwise 1pm on Fridays could be an option. Dan will mention this at the next MMM.

7. Agenda till the summer break

- The SMT did an overview of pending issues that would require its attention before the summer break. These include:
 - o Communications strategy.
 - o Discussion on the YB conflict chapter.
 - o A rough calendar of comms workload until the end of 2020 with pre-allocated slots for publications.
 - o KPIs.
 - o SSC.
 - o The MFA grant which is a moving target.
 - o Briefing by Claire on the EP2022.
 - o Briefing by Martina and Johanna on technical options for virtual events.

8. AOB

- Elena will gather information about SMTs summer holidays.

Action Points

- Follow up recording a conversation between Dan and Filippo Grandi – Dan and Steph
- A memo on the current state of cooperation with the German MFA on the Rethinking Arms Control Conference and other follow ups of the Stockholm initiative – Sibylle
- More details on the nature of the 360° evaluation request – discuss at the Cooperation group
- Candidates for the Governing Board – Luc and Sibylle
- Test the idea of informal staff discussions on “What is happening in the field of international peace and security?” – Dan at the MMM

Items carried forward

- Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Anti-discrimination Policy
- SSC20 speakers & budget