

**Research Staff Collegium**  
**23 February 2017**  
**Conference room**

**Date:** Thursday 23 February 11.00-11.45

**Present:** 40 participants, attendance list is enclosed.

**Agenda:**

1. Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising
2. Nomination of Jan Eliasson as Chairman of SIPRI's Governing Board
3. Changes of SIPRI statutes
4. AOB

**Key points:**

1. Minutes of the previous meeting approved.
2. Staff expressed their gratitude towards the valuable contributions made by Chairman Sven-Olof Petersson
3. RSC nominated Jan Eliasson as Chairman of the Governing Board.
4. Staff will consider the alternative revision of the SIPRI statutes suggested by the MFA.

**1. Minutes and any matters arising**

The minutes from 30/1 were approved without comments.

**2. Nomination of Jan Eliasson as Chairman of SIPRI's governing board**

Current Chairman Sven-Olof Petersson will resign from his position on 1 June 2017.

The RSC, together with the Unions and the Governing Board, shall nominate a new Chair, which the Government appoints. Traditionally, the Government has a clear and strong view on who would be an appropriate candidate, largely based on the Government's comprehensive insight and knowledge of Swedish high-level diplomats, and their suitability and availability for the post.

Continuing this tradition, the Prime Minister has approached Jan Eliasson as new Chairman for SIPRI's Governing Board. After some time of consideration, Jan Eliasson has accepted.

The Director and Deputy Director provided in brief key aspects of Jan Eliasson's background. Jan Eliasson resigned from his position as Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations in December 2016. He previously served as Foreign Minister, President of the UN General Assembly and Sweden's Ambassador to the USA. Jan Eliasson is extremely well known and has extensive national and international networks. His profile is associated with the more recent issues of SIPRI's research agenda (linked to security and development), rather than the traditional SIPRI issues.

The short background briefing followed by staff posing questions to the Director and Deputy Director on the candidate.

The first question regarded whether the management knew of any faults or blemishes of the candidate, which could be negative for SIPRI. The way Jan Eliasson had reacted to the

handling of Swedish whistleblower Andres Kompass by the UN was given as an example. Eliasson's public reaction had been quite cautious, and less outspokenly critical compared to the attitude of the Swedish Government and the broad public. Although his reaction could be faulted, it was not seen as something that had damaged the reputation of Eliasson (and on balance fitted with what could be expected by the then Deputy Secretary-General of the UN). Overall, Eliasson is highly regarded both nationally and internationally. Although a distinctive Social Democrat, he is well respected by both blocks in Swedish politics.

The second question regarded the role of the Chairman, and whether Eliasson's other commitments would stand in the way of him actively engaging as Chairman. If Eliasson would be appointed Chairman, the Director envisions (besides the formal legal responsibilities of any Board Member) the following roles:

- a) Chairing the Board Meetings and generally keeping the Board together
- b) Attracting on to the Board, distinguished individuals with diverse profiles
- c) Opening doors for SIPRI, both nationally and internationally
- d) Adding to SIPRI's fundraising capacity, including with the corporate sector
- e) Engaging in some of SIPRI's dialogues, including by involving professional high-level contacts

Eliasson has had many offers since his resignation from the UN, but has so far only accepted the offer as SIPRI Chairman. He has, for example, not indicated an interest in taking on a position at Uppsala University. Eliasson is currently considering starting a charity foundation with his wife and children, and is currently a WaterAid board member. Eliasson already has in his calendar the SIPRI Security & Development Forum, the spring Board Meeting, a SIPRI Reception on 29 May, and the Secure Cities conference in September. In addition, Eliasson has expressed an interest to come to SIPRI and meet with the staff during spring 2017. If appointed, Eliasson will take on the position as Chairman on 1 June.

The third question regarded Eliasson's view on management culture, given his long international career (of which especially the UN management culture has been criticized). In conversation with the Director, Eliasson has expressed a clear view that he sees management of the institute as the responsibility of the Director, and he will not engage on management issues.

The fourth question regarded how SIPRI will manage to have such a well-known, high-profile figure associated with the institute. The Director responded that SIPRI has had several previous Chairmen of similar rank (e.g. Alva Myrdal) in the past. Such a Chairman is likely to generate more exposure for the institute. Although SIPRI would need to find a way of managing such exposure, it can also assist in giving SIPRI's data and analysis more impact, and allow SIPRI to play a more influential role in times of growing uncertainties.

After the discussion, the RSC unanimously decided to nominate Jan Eliasson as new Chairman for the SIPRI Governing Board.

Staff also expressed their gratitude towards the valuable contributions made by Sven-Olof Petersson as Chairman for SIPRI during a time characterized by many significant challenges, Sep 2014-June 2017.

### **3. Changes of SIPRI statutes**

The RSC has previously discussed changing the SIPRI statutes in a way that would allow a staff representative to be full member of the Governing Board, and therefore hold the right to vote on, *inter alia*, the appointment of SIPRI Directors. The proposed change of the statutes would also include limiting the Director's role on the Board, from full member with voting rights, to a participating member with no voting rights. The RSC proposal was sent to the MFA for consideration in 2016.

The MFA has now shared their comments on the proposal. While the MFA has no objection to the proposal regarding the role of the Director, it has reservations against changing the statutes to include a staff member as full member of the Board. The MFA reasoning is that the scale of the amendment seems major and it also expresses some hesitation towards the role of the government in appointing a staff member to the Governing Board. The MFA has suggested a smaller change of the statutes, which would read that 'the Director is appointed after consultation with the RSC and the Unions'. In addition, SIPRI may introduce a practice that a staff member shall always be present at Board meetings; for this, no change in the statutes is needed.

A member of RSC voiced her concern against the new proposal, as it would limit the role of the staff member on issues of the Board other than SIPRI Director appointments.

The RSC decided to consider the proposal by the MFA and continue discussions on the matter at the next RSC meeting.