



Minute taker: Noel Kelly

Time: 14:30-15:45PM

SIPRI Armament and Disarmament Cluster Meeting

Zoom virtual meeting, Monday 1 February 2021

Participants:

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Alexandra Manolache, John Batho, Elin Elmgren, Lucie Béraud-Sudreau, Andrea Eduardo Varisco, Kolja Brockmann, Giovanna Maletta, Laura Robin, Vitaly Fedchenko, Tytti Erästö, Petr Topychkanov, Lucie Béraud-Sudreau, Nan Tian, Pieter Wezeman, Siemon Wezeman, Diego Lopes Da Silva, Alexandra Kuimova, Alexandra Marksteiner, Vincent Boulanin, Laura Bruun, Luke Richards, Nikos Politis, Elin Elmgren

Agenda

- Updates from Operations
- Updates from Outreach (Communications and Editorial)
- Updates from Sibylle/SMT/EUNPDC
- Reports from the other Clusters
- Presentation - Joey Fox - **SIPRI Writing Style**.
- AOB - Brown Bag events, virtual social meeting space with SIPRI colleagues (to be discussed)

Presentation - SIPRI Writing Style - Joey

The documents used in this presentation were shared with staff following the meeting and are available to be found at any time on the SIPRI Intranet:

<https://intranet.sipri.org/category/editorial/manuels>.

‘The guiding principle of the style guide is represented by the quote: ‘Everything that can be thought at all can be thought clearly. Everything that can be put into words can be put clearly.’
- Ludwig Wittgenstein

Researchers are reminded once again, to read and reference the style guide on a regular basis when planning and in the process of writing. Joey went through the style guide during this presentation and then took questions.

Clarity was sought in the relationship between theory and method and the policy conclusions in SIPRI publications. It was advised that SIPRI does have a broad range of different publications and these should be used to great effect. The idea being with the audience in mind.

How do we make this work if it's co-authorship? No easy answer and comes down to interpersonal relationships and figuring out a way to work together.

There is positioning in academic debate but also a positioning in policy debate and sometimes these are difficult to reconcile. Are there different templates and styles? A lot of the templates are very much based on length and the idea that people have readers in mind. The style and voice from an editorial perspective should be consistent with your audience in mind and writing clearly.

Depending on the methodology involved is there an option to have supplementary information on-line? SIPRI used to do this but part of the problem is not wanting to have information out in vacuum so it can be misinterpreted. There are ways of mindfully doing this, like perhaps an article might need an extra annex on-line, but each case needs to be assessed – so possible.

If one had to briefly explain SIPRI style in terms of how one should write – in neutrality and so forth - how would you do so in a few sentences? It is being profound without being overbearing. You have a research question or point you want to make in an authoritative and meaningful way giving your audience an insight into something they want to understand.

This presentation was very useful and much appreciated by all in A&D. We will be inviting Joey back for future presentations.

Updates from Operations – Nikos

- Nothing to report for this meeting.

Updates from Communications – Stephanie

- There is some flexibility in the current schedule (before the AT data launch in March) if one wants to do commentary pieces then get in touch with Communications.

- If one has been invited to present or speak at any event, then communicate this and one can be featured in our outreach channels. Our social media channels are growing so take advantage.

Updates from Editorial – John

- Ian Davis has been in touch with all about the Yearbook deadlines and this work is progressing along.
- The Editorial department appreciate that A&D have been communicating well during the recent UD funding application processes to check both schedules and for what is possible to offer.

Report from the other Clusters

Conflict, Peace and Security

- We welcomed Louise Edgren to the first cluster meeting in her new role as coordinator standing in for Ekaterina while on a leave of absence.
- C, P&S had an on-line away week, and the feedback was good with a lot of focus on bringing more structure and synergies to the institute. Along programme lines regionalization was discussed and what this would mean to the work and consequently identifying the right funder.
- The MENA Programme right now are focused a lot on Iraq and dialogue activity and discussing how to bring in a more local dimension.
- The Sahel Team are discussing changing the focus from governance and security to more humanitarian protection responding to needs of potential funders that are approaching the programme. Recruitment is ongoing for a new Programme Director and researcher.
- The China/Asia Programme is described as currently under construction.
- The Peace Operations and Conflict Management Programme are discussing general trends and observing the interest going away from human security to state security overall.
- European Security Programme – adding a more localised approach in the work is under discussion.

Peace and Development

- There are a number of colleagues leaving the P&D cluster, (Vane has already taken up a new position, Rickard and Gulzhan will leave in February and Malin will leave in March). There are ongoing recruitments to replace all of them (except for Malin, whose role as Programme Director has been taken up by Florian). P&D are recruiting also for a Researcher or Senior Researcher in the Peacebuilding area.
- On the Forum, as Dan has mentioned at the MMM the event has now been extended to 4 days (4-7 May) and moved to a broadcasting studio in the city centre. Forum organisers are currently working with partners on the Forum sessions and, for what concerns the A&D cluster they are happy to be working with Vincent, Laura and Luke on two sessions: one, titled “*Resilience rather than deterrence: Cyber-incident management and risk of escalation*” is confirmed, while they are waiting for feedback from the MFA before deciding, together with the team, the second one to pursue.

Organisers are also working with Pieter, Alexandra and Siemon on a session on “*addressing arms flows to conflict lessons from the Nagorno Karabakh conflict*”. Noel will come on board as an official member of the Forum team from the last week of March until the event. The Forum organisers are very happy about the A&D cluster involvement in the 2021 Forum.

EUNPDC – report from Giovanna and Sibylle

- The key update is there has been discussions with funders at the EU. Initially we assumed we would do a no cost extension for six months from May (when the contract was due to end) until November 2021, but due to the amount of money left it was proposed we do a longer extension of up to one year, until May 2022. The budget is currently being adjusted to be able to have sufficient funds to keep going for another year. We are waiting for our partners to all send back some reassessed budgets. In SIPRI, this means we can now consider doing the ad hoc seminars that some of you had already made suggestions on but keep them virtual for now. We will come back to you about adjusted timelines and how these can be implemented by May 2022. Given the length of the extension, the likelihood of some events, including seminars, being in person has increased. FRS remain hopeful of hosting an in person consultative meeting later this year. On the EU Non-proliferation and Disarmament Conference, the IAI are hopeful this could now possibly be in person later in the year. We will update you all further as the situation evolves.
- An important clarification on the EUNPDC ad hoc seminars is the topics need to be requested by the EEAS.
- Since our last cluster meeting the following paper had been published titled; ‘*The Importance of Narrative in Nuclear Policymaking: A Study of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*’ by author Dr. Laura Considine from the University of Leeds.

SMT

- SMT had a virtual away day and one of the issues flagged here is the discussion about diversity. SMT looked at the different functions as something we need to examine within Programmes. Is there a good balance between research assistants, researchers, and senior researchers? Do some teams need to reinforce in some of these categories? Looking at the gender balance within SIPRI the more senior it gets the worse it gets. In terms of geographical diversity in terms of Europeans and non-Europeans we should be better. How do we improve this? In terms of advertising, we need to reach out proactively more to our professional networks. We could also sell the attractiveness of the work and the work/life balance of working in Sweden. More ideas and suggestions are welcome.
- The issues of what has changed through the pandemic and what is here to stay needs to be assessed more broadly and in our cluster with our thoughts consolidated. This is suggested as a future discussion point.
- What is the SIPRI spirit? More difficult to convey when people are not in the building but having a community sense and identity is important and thoughts/ideas are welcome.
- Outputs – one of the key things to consider - to reach our audience one does not necessarily need a forty-page report to do so when a two pager might be more than adequate. When one writes a proposal, you should really think about - what is the most suitable output to reach your audience?

AOB

- Brown Bag lunches – it is hoped to reinvigorate these by rebranding what was hitherto an in the building activity by having more in-house virtual seminars for SIPRI staff. We will avoid the lunch time hour and try to arrange a couple each month from this cluster if possible. This coincides with an initiative to involve more the junior staff and new arrivals (A&D NextGen) to SIPRI to partake more in institutional life and get opportunities to speak about or learn about the work of others.
- On Friday 26 February @9:30am, A&D will host and have invited all staff to an in-house virtual seminar presented by Vitaly Fedchenko, on '*Understanding nuclear gadgets: How technical analysis of nuclear weapons and installations helps to control nuclear energy.*'
- It is hoped to organise the next in-house seminar during March with Laura and Luke from the ET project to speak about their work.
- A&D will also host an in-house seminar discussion about a forthcoming book publication with Dr Tarja Cronberg "*Renegotiating the Nuclear Order: A Sociological Approach*". The event will take place during March 2021 with a final date to TBC.

Next cluster meeting

- 15 March @ 2:30PM (switch from 1 March due to sportlov break in Sweden)