

Research Staff Collegium
Thursday 28 October 13.30

via Zoom



Minutes: Vongai Murugani

Dan mentioned that the Corona virus had been a recurring agenda item for the past year, but this was not the case at the moment as there were no new updates.

1) Minutes of the last meeting and any matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted with no comments.

2) Events planning

Steph noted that researchers had the option to use online, in-person and hybrid events and encouraged them, when making their choice, to consider the targeted recipients, their geographic location and how best to reach them. She gave the examples of a book launch event and a webinar to show how the Communications team had worked to engage quite different target audiences. She explained that online events were not necessarily cheaper as they required the same amount of work. She concluded by inviting researchers to consult the Communications team early to discuss the different options available as each case had unique requirements.

Dan agreed that this was an important issue and added that online events were not necessarily cheaper because they involved both the time and effort to get it right and sometimes required expensive equipment. Kolja said he had found that planning the costs and work with the Communications team had been helpful; however, he felt it would be even more helpful to have a book of options, with the related Communications costs. Steph responded that because no two opportunities and situations were the same, it was difficult to generate a template. While they had worked on some options in the past and could use that to provide some general guidance, she encouraged researchers to engage Communications at the funding proposal stage. Lena concurred and encouraged researchers to speak to Communications during the proposal development stage because the team could help with tailoring outreach plans for different donors, funders and audiences.

3) Governing Board meeting 15-16 November

a) Agenda items

Joakim summarised the draft agenda, which he had shared with the meeting. He encouraged all staff to attend the Governing Board session on Tuesday 16 November – “The State of the

world". This will be a platform for the board and staff to share views. He added that some staff members had been invited to participate in a session on SIPRI's work on cyber issues on Monday and some in the Update on Environment of Peace on Tuesday.

Timo said he had circulated an email to staff and would reach out to the other staff representative groups for their input. He added that he was looking forward to having in-person board meetings where it would be possible to engage with board members on the side-lines.

b) New Governing Board member(s)

Joakim reminded the meeting that in the previous RSC we were informed that we needed two new board members. Some names were shared before and even more shared after the meeting. After discussions with Jan, two nominees had emerged as front runners for the positions. The meeting largely approved of the nominees; however, there was debate on whether some nominees would be the right fit for SIPRI.

Pieter asked Dan to clarify what was expected from potential board members. Dan said we were interested in their profile, network, and knowledge. They were expected to bring insight and understanding on where the world is going, SIPRI's role and where SIPRI could contribute, based on their experience. It was also important that they are recognised and respected by different people in their constituencies

Dan then explained the process of getting the nominees approved – the names would be shared with the board and then SMT. Then at the next RSC meeting scheduled for December or January, the board's comments would be shared with the RSC and then a decision would be made. The unions would then be asked to consider the names proposed then the board would decide via email.

Steph asked if there was an opportunity to add more names to the list of nominees. Dan said that we should go with the list of names we had generated in the last RSC meeting.

Joakim reminded the meeting that if members of the RSC had any concerns about a nominee or objected to their inclusion in the board, they should raise these using the available channels so that SIPRI would make an informed decision when proceeding with the selection process.

4) & frankly follow-up

Joakim told the meeting that since the last RSC, SIPRI had dealt with some actions included in the plan of action, these included a new policy on working from home and the Swedish Work Environment Agency inspection, among others. Issues to do with stress and workload, discrimination are being dealt with in other processes. The Cooperation Group was discussing the plan of action in more detail and there was also work to update it by SMT. Joakim explained that these discussions would continue at the next Cooperation Group meeting. He added that the plan of action was a living document and changed as the work unfolded. This was commendable given the limitations arising from doing this work during the pandemic and

SIPRI's capacity.

Dan noted that SMT was working on the issues to do with diversity and discrimination, but that more work needed to be done to get better and clearer understanding on the issues before they took any action. He added that we want real diversity in the institute but simply moving straight into booking some training was potentially risky. There is some evidence that some training in diversity actually entrenches stereotypes. Part of the problem is that this training is often delivered as a commercial service. So, while the process appeared slow, this was because SMT were taking it seriously and were moving carefully.

Claire recommended Bias Recognition Training and Simone noted that the best training she had received was on Implicit Bias Training. Mark mentioned that in the past, SIPRI wanted to improve its recruitment policy – how we draft job adverts, advertise job, how to shortlist and interview and give opportunities to people who may be unfairly treated in hiring processes. He asked if this still an issue of interest or it was linked to the broader discussion on discrimination? Dan responded that this was ongoing work, and SIPRI was still trying to recruit a new HR officer, but for now we have a small HR team. This was more related to diversity but would also focus on discrimination.

Sepideh said it would be worthwhile to conduct an evaluation on diversity and inclusion at SIPRI – is it about implicit bias, and ask questions on how we treat staff or people, who is included and how they are included? Dan added that we need to be clear on what kind of diversity we mean. This would potentially feed into diversity in our different kinds of practise – not just recruitment, but also panel composition, audiences in a forum, who should participate etc. He added that SIPRI was trying to achieve many things with one effort, so that the process would be efficient, but not end up being a tick box exercise. Joakim noted that this issue had been discussed extensively. He pointed out that SIPRI has a policy that has the weakness of including too many aspects under one heading. SMT's preference is to separate issues. The points raised were well taken and had been part of the discussion with the Swedish Work Environment Agency inspectors who had visited SIPRI earlier that day. SIPRI would continue working on this.

5) Returning to the office and Working From Home (WFH)

Dan said that SMT has agreed on a new WFH policy that will now be discussed by the Cooperation Group. There is no timetable yet for a full return to the office. Other institutions were also doing a phased return to the office. A full return could happen early next year. The new WFH policy will then take effect with most staff members allowed up to two days WFH per week and an agreement between SIPRI and each staff member on the terms. SIPRI will remain everybody's primary workplace, which is important both so we can be an intellectual community and for tax reasons.

Dan confirmed that SIPRI would cover the transport costs when employees return office equipment they took home during the pandemic. A question about the tax issue from Elizabeth

was answered by Maria, who said that all who pay Swedish income tax must spend more than 50% of their time at the place of employment. Pieter shared that if one worked from home, they needed to get their working place assessed and approved and Joakim shared a passage from the handbook which explained this in more detail.

6) AOB

Joakim spoke about the Swedish Work Environment Authority inspection that had been conducted earlier in the day. He said it had been positive and helpful. SMT will receive the result in two weeks and would consider the recommendations. A follow up meeting with the Authority would be held in three months.

The meeting ended at 14: 51

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Abeer Ahmad
2. Alexandra Manolache
3. Alexandra Marksteiner
4. Andrea Gadnert
5. Andrea Varisco
6. Anniek Barnhoorn
7. Caroline Delgado
8. Caspar Trimmer
9. Cecilia Bagge
10. Claire McAllister
11. Claudia Pfeifer
12. Dan Smith
13. Daniele Crimella
14. David Michel
15. Diego Lopes
16. Dylan O'Driscoll
17. Elena Haapaniemi
18. Elin Elmgren
19. Elizabeth Smith
20. Emilie Broek
21. Emma Zetterström
22. Evelina Francesca Cristofano
23. Farah Hegazi
24. Fei Su
25. Florian Krampe
26. Frank Esparraga
27. Frederic Daudon
28. Giovanna Maletta
29. Ian Anthony
30. Issaka Souare
31. Jair van der Lijn
32. Jakob Faller
33. Jannie Lilja
34. Jenny Mildton
35. Joakim Vaverka
36. Joey Fox
37. Johanna Eliasson
38. John Batho
39. Jonathan Hall
40. Jurg Staudenmann
41. Katongo Seyuba
42. Kolja Brockmann
43. Kyungmee Kim
44. Laura Bruun
45. Lena Kappelin
46. Luc van de Goor
47. Lucile Robin
48. Magdalena Söderqvist
49. Manon du Bus
50. Maria Kaemmerle
51. Maria Volakaki
52. Marie Riquier
53. Marina Caparini
54. Mark Bromley
55. Martina Selmi
56. Meray Maddah
57. Nan Tian
58. Nikos Politis
59. Noel Kelly
60. Olle Persson
61. Pieter Wezeman
62. Pranav Satyanath
63. Prathamesh Jagtap
64. Sepideh Soltaninia
65. Shannen Young
66. Shannon Kyle
67. Shivan Fazil
68. Shourjya Deb
69. Sibylle Bauer
70. Siemon Wezeman
71. Simone Bunse
72. Sipri logo 1
73. Sipri logo 2
74. Sipri logo 3
75. Stephanie Blenckner
76. Tania Ferre Garcia
77. Timo Smit
78. Tytti Erästö
79. Ulla Hurtig Nielsen
80. Vincent Boulanin
81. Virginie Baudais
82. Vitaly Fedchenko
83. Vongai Murugani