

SIPRI SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

20 April 2021

MINUTES

Participants

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Luc van de Goor, Maria Kaemmerle, Jannie Lilja, Dan Smith, Joakim Vaverka

Note-taker Elena Haapaniemi

The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

1. Corona virus

- NTR.

2. Minutes

- The minutes from the SMT meeting on April 13 were approved.

3. Report back

- Joakim reported back on the following:

- Preparations for the virtual SIPRI lecture with Madeleine Albright are moving ahead smoothly.
 - He has been in touch with the office of Per Bolund, Sweden's Environment Minister and Vice Prime Minister, to set up an introductory meeting with SIPRI. Joakim and Jannie are working on the agenda.
 - He has been nominated to join the board of the new Swedish national knowledge centre for research on nuclear disarmament established by a governmental decision in March 2021 under the auspices of the Uppsala University.

- Maria reminded the DoSes about the need to submit to her their reporting under the KPIs latest by April 23.

- Jannie reported back that:

- Forum preparations are ongoing and accelerating, with most elements being under control.
 - She will be participating in Marfa dialogue for conflict prevention in May as a panelist.

- Steph thanked all those involved in the arms control event featuring Izumi Nakamistu. Dan and some other SMT members have received positive feedback from quite a few interlocutors in the aftermath of the virtual conversation.

- Steph informed the SMT that the Milex data launch has been issued under embargo on April 19; all preparations for the data launch went smoothly and Steph expressed her gratitude to all those who contributed.

- On April 23, Sibylle will have a meeting with UNODA to discuss further collaboration on military expenditure between SIPRI and the UN.

- Following up on her report back from the previous week and on the basis of further discussions in the A&D cluster, Sibylle shared with the SMT an idea (expressed by Alexandra Kuimova) on organising a SIPRI summer school focussed on mentoring of the next generation of disarmament and arms control experts. The SMT agreed it was worth discussing further.
- On April 21, Dan has been invited to speak at a joint meeting of the European Parliament's delegations to Mashreq countries (in particular Egypt), and to the joint Parliamentary Assembly Africa, Caribbean and Pacific – EU. The topic of this meeting will be "*The Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam: Can the EU help to overcome the dispute*". Dan's address will be based on SIPRI Policy Paper "Water Security and the Governance in the Horn of Africa." Florian will join too.
- On April 23, Dan will participate in a joint SIPRI-UNDP high-level panel discussion "*Peace, Development and Humanitarian Action: Getting to a Common Understanding*." The panel is part of the series of the so called UNDP Development Dialogues.
- Dan reported that the Alliance for Peacebuilding has again reached out to invite SIPRI to affiliate; SMT agreed to discuss it at a future meeting.

4. Matters arising

- Magda and her team are working on the timeline for a potential migration from Zimbra to Microsoft Exchange. She has also reached out to DoSes to help identify colleagues that would be part of a test group.
- The SMT endorsed appointing Wuyi Omitoogun as SIPRI Senior Associate Fellow.

5. &frankly Plan of Action

- The SMT discussed in detail the plan of action, drafted by Joakim on the basis of the staff survey results and subsequent discussions in clusters, programs, projects and teams.
- Three identified focus areas, where action is needed, are:
 - (Non) discrimination.
 - Stress levels.
 - Working environment.
- Recognizing that we are currently challenged in terms of HR capacity, the SMT agreed on the need to act on all these three key areas in a way that avoids overloading key staff.
- In practical terms and as first concrete steps, the SMT decided to:
 - Suggest setting up a working group composed of representatives from different clusters and departments to discuss ways of improving the transition to a new e-mail system. This can be done after the Forum.
 - Encourage all staff members to have virtual fikas, virtual lunches, "walk and talk" informal meetings.
 - Recommend keeping, wherever possible, Friday afternoons Zoom-free.
- Joakim continues working on setting up an internal working group to prepare our return to the office in the post-pandemic future.
- The SMT also noted that our Intranet is still under transition which, at times, impedes smooth access to e.g. various internal policies. Maria confirmed that the Operations team is working on updating their part of the intranet.

6. Governing Board meeting agenda

- The SMT endorsed the Governing Board meeting agenda drafted by Joakim.

7. Vacation policy

- The HR department is currently lacking capacity to work on a draft Vacation policy. Such a policy is needed in order to:

- Make sure that all staff members take their holidays timely and avoid accumulating big numbers of unused holiday days that affect financial well-being of the Institute.
- Set ground for a smooth, uniform and timely vacation planning throughout the Institute.
- Reflect and enforce relevant rules and regulations as per Swedish labour law.
- In the meantime, the SMT agreed that:
 - All staff members should submit their summer holiday plans to their line managers as soon as possible and latest by the end of May.
 - All staff members should take at least 20 holiday days during summer 2021.
 - Staff members who will be travelling back to their home countries for a summer break are allowed to remain with their families and work remotely from abroad for up to one month, should they wish to do so.
- On the basis of this discussion, Elena will work on a brief draft policy.

8. Staffing & project issues

- The SMT endorsed granting Geoff Dabelko a Senior Associate status, upon Jannie's suggestion.
- On May 3, Jürg Staudenmann will join the EoP 2022 as a secondee by the Swiss Government. He is expected to come to Stockholm in autumn and will be based in Switzerland until then. The secondment is until September 2022. Jannie thanked Lena and Helena for all their help in setting this up from a practical point of view.

9. Ongoing HR issues

- The next regular HR group meeting is scheduled to take place on April 23.

10. AOB

- The SMT agreed to convene the next RSC at 13:30 on May 19.
- There will be no SMT meeting on May 4 due to the Forum.

Action points

- Reporting under KPIs – DoSes to Maria by April 23
- Associate Agreements for Wuyi Omitoogun, Sten Hagberg and Geoff Dabelko – Joakim and Elin
- Names of the volunteers to the post-pandemic return to the office wg – Joakim to Dan
- Continue working on the follow up of the staff survey including updating the Plan of Action – Joakim
- Draft Vacation policy - Elena
- Convene RSC on May 19 – Dan
- Agenda for the RSC – Dan and Joakim

Items carried forward

- Possible SIPRI affiliation with the Alliance for Peacebuilding