

AGENDA

SIPRI Armament and Disarmament Cluster - Away Day 2020

Stockholm, 4 March 2020

Location: van der Nootska Palace (Little Library), Sankt Paulsgatan 21, Södermalm

Time: 8:30-17:00

Participants:

Sibylle Bauer, Noel Kelly, Shannon Kile, Petr Topychkanov, Tytti Erästö, Vitaly Fedchenko, Tarja Cronberg, Vincent Boulanin, Laura Bruun, Moa Carlsson, Mark Bromley, Kolja Brockmann, Giovanna Maletta, Lucie Béraud-Sudreau, Pieter Wezeman, Siemon Wezeman, Nan Tian, Diego Lopes, Alexandra Kuimova.

To prepare beforehand

Please read the documents we circulate with this agenda, it will help you a lot in preparation and hopefully in fruitful discussions. Moreover, we request each programme of the cluster working as a team prepare a presentation with a discussion on how your work fits in with the A&D cluster strategy and overall Institute strategy.

Questions to consider:

- How do you see your programme's planned activities and vision relate to the 5-year Institute strategy?
- Where in 2020 do you see opportunities to work with other programmes in the cluster or with programmes of other clusters?

08:30 - 09:00 Welcome – Breakfast (coffee and sandwiches served)

09:00 - 10:15 Session 1:

Armament & Disarmament with a Peace Research Agenda

Chaired discussion led by Sibylle Bauer

- How do we fit into the field of peace research?
- What are other peace research institutes doing in this field?
- Why are most peace research institutes northern and male dominated?
- What kind of methods are being used?
- What is the future of peace research?
- How do we define our values?
- Do we apply our own norms and values to our own research?

10:15 - 10:30 Break

10:30 - 11:15 Session 1: Arms and Military Expenditure Programme

Lucie Béraud-Sudreau

11:15 - 12:00 Session 2: Dual –use and arms trade control

Mark Bromley

12:00 - 13:00 Lunch Break

13:00 - 13:45 Session 4: Nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation

Shannon Kile

13:45 – 14:30 Session 3: Emerging Military and Security Technologies

Vincent Boulanin

14:30 - 15:00 Coffee Break

15:00 – 15:45 Discussion on possible indicators and benchmarks for the SIPRI Strategy 2019-2024.

Chaired discussion led by Sibylle Bauer

15:45 – 16:30 Work environment, an opportunity to suggest improvements and discuss problem areas.

Session led by Pieter Wezeman

16:30 - 17:00 Outlook and next steps (All), followed by wrap-up

Sibylle Bauer

Session 1: Armament & Disarmament with a Peace Research Agenda

On the 6-8 December an international meeting of peace research institutes titled, '*A Peace Research Agenda for the 21st Century*' was held in Tokyo, Japan. Sibylle had attended on behalf of SIPRI and reported back on interesting and rare opportunity to think about the very fundamental questions in the pursuit of peace research. A report of the event was published in February 2020 and circulated to the Cluster. On basis of Sibylle's report and the actual report of the meeting the Cluster sought to identify the most pertinent questions in our work from a list given:

- How do we fit into the field of peace research?
- What are other peace research institutes doing?
- Why are most peace research institutes northern and male dominated?
- What kind of methods are being used?
- What is the future of peace research?
- Where does the field currently stand now?
- Do we apply our own norms and values on our own research?

Furthermore, we were asked to keep in mind SIPRI's original mission to aid our discussions. What is SIPRI's mission?

The task of the Institute is to conduct '*scientific research on questions of conflict and cooperation of importance for international peace and security with the aim of contributing to an understanding of the conditions for peaceful solution of international conflicts and for a stable peace*'.

From the list of peace research agenda questions provided and assessed the Cluster focussed for most discussion on the following:

- Do we apply our own norms and values on our own research?
- What kinds of methods are being used?

Discussion on norms and values:

What are those norms and values? Whose norms are they? Do we practice these in our work? What does it mean for our own view and direction of our work? Many others may have very different norms and values but are they less valid?

A balance is needed between institutional values and norms and what we as individuals have in mind.

There is a view that SIPRI has the reputation as being seen as a normative institute that has a pacifist and peaceful agenda or at least perceived so externally. Indeed this

view would match with our original mandate and mission. There is a view that we are neutral and objective but do all share this view? Some NGOs when interacted with and in particular campaign organisations would see SIPRI as being very aligned with governments and very cautious in what is said. The work we do is respected but we can be perceived as an organisation that is willing to be less critical of governments, either because it's what we feel or believe or to certain extent as a result that governments are and can be a source of funding. In summation, we are seen differently by other organisations depending on what their norms and values are.

On the norms and values discussion it is important to make a distinction between external and internal. What are we trying to achieve? What are we trying to promote? The second is how we conduct ourselves internally as an organisation. How we mentor staff? How do we interact with each other? The internal and external interact with each other but we should be clear that we are talking about both.

The discussion on positive and negative peace is an interesting one for SIPRI with different views about this topic. Especially when we examine topics like strategic stability and the nuclear debate. SIPRI traditionally focussed more on negative peace in the classic sense and then with the addition of the other clusters, especially the P&D Cluster that has a classic positive peace research agenda. This is where our agenda has broadened and with it the international perception.

In regards to AMEX issues, the value of transparency is very much there and matches with the objective of the research work. Transparency is a broad value within our work, within the institute, and as something the institute can apply itself in way we are open about where the funding comes from or how we deal with each other.

One thing that used to be made very clear in SIPRI concerned 'neutrality' and something that still does exist but to what extent? In this Cluster the dialogue project activity is a discreet example of SIPRI's roll as a neutral mediator between states. One view with regards the research discussion and being concerned with neutrality is that we provide the facts based on our research collected from open sources. If you want make a policy decision that's the prerogative of the policy makers. The experience of Amex or SIPRI management and representatives is they often get the question - what is SIPRI's position? However, we don't tell you what position to take or what you should do? We give you the facts and analyse the consequences of a decision but it's up to the decision makers. We want the discussion to be as broad as possible but based on proper facts and not false information. As long as we do this we have fulfilled most of our mission.

Another point to keep in mind when we discuss indicators is more and more we are talking about policy impact! Sometimes it could be questioned if we are actually conducting peace research in some areas? Some of the work done is extremely policy focused and orientated. We do and have given policy advice in a very technocratic manner. Is that still peace research? It can be our objective is to promote a policy that based on our research we view as the most appropriate. If we want to hold or define neutrality as an indicator criterion we should then keep this in mind. There are perhaps certain values we should be clearer about. The tendency is to state we are objective and don't impose our values but good to define what they are? We are

against excessive militarization and for the search for truth and should try to be as objective as possible. If one comes to policy recommendations that contain clearly normative arguments or even a moral dimension this is fine once based on principles.

It is important for us to make a distinction between being neutral and objectivity in our research. One thing is gathering the data and being scientifically honest and the other thing is being neutral. As a peace research institute there is a normative stance already embedded that implies with our research and objective scientific methods we promote peace in some way. On the issue of objectivity and neutrality the question is can we do both well?

The Issue of being a mediator between parties and research – how well can we do both at the same time? If you want to convene parties and discuss sensitive security issues then you are in diplomatic role but the other thing is conducting research that may lead to uncomfortable findings for one of the parties involved in those discussions. The question is how far do we compromise one for the other?

It's more important than ever today that we provide accurate facts in a world of 'fake news' and information overload bringing both positives and negatives. However, the world is increasingly complex - can we be friends and neutral to all? There is no doubt but we are reaching a point where it is harder to stay neutral and we provide conclusions that have policy implications. In some areas this will bring more challenges than others.

What would be valuable is creating a culture where we have an awareness and diversity of positions about what we have and do in SIPRI.

Outcomes – some of the topics covered included:

- Objectivity
- Neutrality
- Being evidence based and scientifically honest – 'The gatekeepers of accuracy' as suggested by Dr. Nan Tian.

Methodology:

The methodology question is an interesting one that hitherto, we have not spent enough time on recently in SIPRI. It seems as an Institute we have shifted increasingly towards a more blog type output with shorter opinion pieces being produced. What are the methods we are using in the production of these? Is there a clear methodology for such work? On the longer pieces – there is variety of approach in terms of the mechanism being used. We are a mixed method Institute but whatever method is being used the suggestion is there is real scope for applying these in a more rigorous way.

Some views suggest there has been some decline over time in quality control in the work we are doing. A reason suggested is a mismatch between how we produce things for communication products such as blogs and films that are not properly peer reviewed. It is not always clear who has ownership of the product. It's problematic because we decimate to a large and varied audience of people. Work that is more

communication centric gets more attention than more detailed work that is properly peer reviewed. On the question of methods, a refresher discussion in SIPRI from time to time is important to see what other methods have developed and are being used? Shared learning is welcomed and particularly on new developments for those who have left university some while ago. The quality control now is with the editors but it is not enough and peer process should be more involved.

SIPRI used to have a policy that everything published had to be peer reviewed and persons in-house were required to look at it. One must be assigned the task and be allowed time to review. However, there is a movement at getting things out quicker and one cannot get a blog out on an issue that is current if it must go through a rigorous three-week or more peer review process. Again on the issue of blogs and more generally the dissemination of research it goes back to keeping in mind one of our missions, which is to provide facts and help people have a sound rational discussion.

In order to do this we need to ensure our message gets across and people should receive researched fact but unfortunately people don't have the time to read SIPRI Fact Sheets or Yearbooks at all. Therefore, while a blog is a very short piece of analysis one would expect that from SIPRI it is based on facts and shares the main fact-findings. It was also suggested that people have less time to read and that visuals are effective and more needs to be invested in visuals and good graphics that catch the eye and share facts. Where should the balance be? It is something that needs to be discussed further.

A point is made about methodology used in academic research is of course different to what is used in our type of research. In academic research you might have a theory one is trying to prove but a lot of the work done in SIPRI does not fit so rigidly. Our research is broadly more thematic with mapping studies, describing and analysing current events and there are methods questions of course but more along the lines of source criticism and mechanisms of peer review.

A half-day meeting being dedicated for a constructive methods workshop at SIPRI would be most useful and welcomed by many. It would be nice for everyone to exchange on what they do? How they do it? What the constraints are? How we view methods from each other?

Outcomes

It was suggested that often there is a sense we don't necessarily have a standard approach to research even though often we do the same work. This should be something we think about and discuss as a group.

1. There is a consensus that we should have an internal SIPRI methods workshop.
2. We should establish processes for internal quality control so that everybody that can prioritise the review.

Diversity

Sibylle addressed this question in the summary:

- Why are most peace research institutes northern and male dominated?

We know more diversity is needed in SIPRI as we are still very European dominated. It would be nice to have a discussion as to how we can be more inclusive in our recruitment. Are there different networks we can tap into? Do we advertise in other regions well enough? Are there guest researchers we could be bringing in? We have a budget now for disarmament education and peace capacity building so we could proactively go out and bring in people from other parts of the world. **The issue of diversity is included for further discussion when we cover indicators.**

Indicators: Away-Day Discussion – 4 March 2020

As requested by the Government Board this part of day is an internal discussion on indicators that will monitor how we implement the strategy. Some may already have experience through previous funding proposals and project activity.

Questions one may have gone over and as based on previous experience with the EUNPDC and Networks.

What is the goal? How can we measure that goal? Or this is a good indicator but impossible to measure it?

The process forces one to think through what you consider a success? We are asked to think about what we consider progress in the direction we want to go?

From the document circulated by Dan we see examples of what one needs for a benchmark. For example when we are hiring new staff does it match some of the criteria? The document also covered the different type of indicators and an example of how to measure:

- It can either be the number of activities where one organises a certain number of seminars or events.
- A number of background papers, insights papers, or other publications.

Whatever you can actually count or it can just be text describing the things one cannot measure in easy terms but one considers an achievement.

If one looks at the strategy there are things specific to our Cluster or specific to our Programme and areas that are crosscutting including for example, diversity and gender issues. Are we diverse enough? What steps could we achieve? What measurements or goals could we set for ourselves as a Cluster?

Diversity of staff

What kind of diversity – gender – age – region – educational or professional background. Do we have as many women as men? Do we have the right mix of young scholars as well as age and experience? Do we have good regional representation? Do we have broad selection of people with different backgrounds both educational and professional?

Diversity in project design

The point was made for nuclear related issues work diversity is also needed with representation from non-nuclear states.

A further point was made to check if gender was considered as an element in the project design. What are the indicators for the design of the project? Has it been

implemented? If doing an event – one could/should have a clear list of criteria – including gender balance and wide geographical representation. Such indicators can be set up in an Excel file where one can measure the statistics as you progress through.

Diversity in target groups is also mentioned as important to consider so that we don't target the same audience all the time. We don't want to just inform policy makers of the global north always. Diversity of the audience is important but at times we are targeting a certain audience. It is worth remembering that not all the target group may be professionally English speaking and therefore needs another approach. The translation of our work into various languages is and would be an important development and an indicator of an effort to diversify our audience. We need to consider the different levels of complication in the production – YB summary for well educated – YB summary for core people. This is something we could fit into disarmament education more broadly.

When we talk about diversity – are speaking about specific indicators for research or specific indicators for convening? These are different things. Doing something for the sake of doing it may not always fulfil a project objective.

On the idea of next-generation events – on the one hand it's a good thing to create space for that exchange but it's also limiting as it moves the conversation somewhere else. A next-generation event based on experience has a limited or no real impact on the actual conference. It is suggested to either integrate into a panel or have the diversity there or at least give it a spot within the programme that doesn't move it outside the discussion. It is suggested to include a next-generation event in the SSC but is also suggested a discussion at a dedicated Cluster meeting would be useful.

Back to indicators –

Is our work of quality enough? Is it appreciated? From time to time we should put surveys out to target groups. We very often don't do this actively. We track our progress in media but this is only part of the picture. How credible and impactful are we? Our discussion hitherto is mainly quantitative not qualitative so then what kind of measurement is needed? It is suggested we actively ask for feedback and we have questionnaires and mechanism where we can do a regular annual survey a group of experts. A specialist in survey work could help here. Is SIPRI doing the work you expect it to do? Is the work of good quality and cutting edge?

Two indicators – the actual policy impact and outreach need to be more tightly connected. The general audience is not the target audience. Why are we doing these projects? Who are we targeting? Who are you trying to communicate to and influence? One needs to have a tailor made strategy for each project and metrics to measure the surface of each project.

The indicators we are discussing have a tendency to focus on quantitative outputs but what about indicators for inputs? It is suggested that something measuring the sustainability of our working practices is needed. How much are we enriching ourselves and supporting ourselves as an Institute? All projects should have an agreed outline and plan and be accurately budgeted. At the end of each project one could go

back and see if we budgeted this project accurately. Were we realistic in how much work we had to do? Did we underestimate and work massive amounts of overtime? Did we lose money because we actually had to supplement the work off the core budget? The adoption and use of good practices, processes and systems for project management – are we doing this as an Institute or are we re-doing the same poor mechanism of project management?

Publications – do all publications have an agreed outline and plans? This should include a clear statement of the authors involved and an agreed plan to communications for the outreach scope and focus. The idea that between researchers and communications we need to have an agreement on the outreach policy and that is an indicator.

Working practices – clear guidance on salary coverage for researchers – is it a commitment that we only have to be 80% externally funded? Is that accurately written out and implemented – this is an indicator. Effective systems for monitoring time spent and overtime – are those systems in place in the Institute? This is an indicator.

There is a lot we can do that is quantitative and focussed more on input.

From Dan's document there is a view that the only bit on the research side that reflects some of this is the point on sustained funding. The document is more reflective on the operations side. By being separated off into operations it slightly implies this is Maria's or Lena's job but no this should be within the research teams – researchers manage the project – researchers manage and do the budget – researchers do the applications and manage each other.

Some more output indicators mentioned again – are key stakeholders being reached? We can think about diversity there. Are particular policy processes being informed and influenced and have key stakeholders taken up policy recommendations?

It's not just about a box ticking exercise for the funder but internally what we find satisfactory as an answer for ourselves?

Nikos Politis briefed the Cluster about the use of indicators. From the operation side they have a more logistical view but nice to combine with a researchers perspective.

Points to remember:

- We are measuring strategy indicators – described as high level and not go too deep as then it becomes very complicated.
- We are talking about an agreed strategy and that means some certain targets are put on the Cluster to achieve or maintain.
- Not only identifying the indicator – the benchmark and success level – but how and who is going to measure this?
- It's about being able to say at the end of the strategy we achieved it or didn't or only partially achieved it.

Who is measuring? It may not be the Cluster but a financial system or HR system or it may be a report from your projects. How often? It's not certain it will be measured once but perhaps on a monthly or yearly basis. This still needs to be clear and we shouldn't go into very many indicators or many sources of measuring as then difficult to keep track.

It is suggested we start from A&D Cluster strategy that is included in the overall SIPRI strategy – see which are the targets in there and it's not more than ten and really identify at least one indicator to measure this. We need to see this fits at research team level, cluster level, or in outreach and operations level. Some issues are crosscutting and then it should be clear who is monitoring the indicator. It is the view of SIPRI operations that one cluster should not go more in-depth than another and that the reporting is standardised and at a high level. Normally a strategy is top down starting with the strategies targets and objectives being set and then find indicators and some do not go to the level of the project but some may go and we need to have processes and tools to measure. This is not just an exercise for the board but also as an exercise for us together.

Feedback and discussion:

This is mentioned as difficult if you look at the way the SIPRI strategy document is written, as this is very much orientated towards future developments. It doesn't account for the work we often do routinely. Even if looking at this top down and bullet points presented in the strategy – it leaves out how this can be achieved? Can it reflect something was achieved using unsustainable work practices? There has to be a component that reflects in what way a goal is achieved. Not just have we fulfilled this. On the understanding this is strategy focussed but also on the understanding that this is a product of our input and feedback feeding up.

Some of the goals are very clear like for example, we want to rebuild CBW capacity but other issue like security in outer space were looked at in the past and view is expressed about not being sure what more SIPRI can bring? The point being made is we should use the annual review to reset goals and priorities?

One of the planned new areas is arms control verification – do we really want to focus more on that? If we don't want it as a main focus this should be highlighted.

Of course we should also have input indicators about sustainability, working hours, and not having budget overruns. In our Cluster we need specific goals of where we want to head?

Outcome:

It is suggested that every team goes through the strategy and take the targets specific or relevant to them and see if one wants to develop the indicators further? Please send to Sibylle, who will compile this feedback and we can have a broader discussion again. It is an important discussion for the team and for team leaders to think about - how they will engage with the Institute strategy? How to implement it? What then to report back a year from now?

Work Environment Discussion:

Prior to the away day the Cluster were given the opportunity for input for this discussion and were asked again at this event.

The issue of working hours was high on the agenda and the topic of travel time and travel policy mentioned. Are there other things to develop there? Linking into earlier in the day - how can we link SIPRI's values with our work environment?

Do we work too much? If we do then what can we do about it?

Looking at input indicators and a sustainable work/life balance allows to set corporate objectives and limits and best practices. The point is made more than once that even though researchers work unregulated hours that 40 hours a week is the general objective. Researcher should not feel a need to work continual overtime to get things done. Working overtime on a systematic basis is not acceptable.

On stress levels - it was mentioned there had been a discussion at GB level about tools to help manage stress levels. These tools exist and are software based where people can report about workload and stress levels. This data can be collected and HR and team leaders made aware to monitor and address the situation.

Question: Is everyone aware under which regulations he or she works? Does everyone know what kind of unregulated working hours we have? Information is available in the staff handbook on the SIPRI intranet. Issues can be brought up with HR, line-manager and DOS.

A point raised on the issue of claiming back travel time for an event attended within a two-week period afterward was too rigid and this will be brought forward for discussion at SMT. It is suggested some more flexibility is needed here.

Of course we need to share problem areas but also good to share solutions and on this note, it would be beneficial to conduct regular surveys. The continual monitoring of staff well-being and feedback is something to bring up again at SMT.

The manager has of course an important roll but the employee also must have self-restraint and not take on too much and be able to say no. It is important to be honest with oneself and prioritise. Try not to cluster your schedule too far ahead.

We need to remember too that people are different and in different situations and beware of different dynamics and perceptions. For example, on travel or extra project work offered to employee, as a manager you might think you are offering an opportunity in a very neutral way and be giving the employee an opportunity to say

no. However, an employee might see the request as a requirement and not feel they can say no.

It is requested the following issues are brought to SMT for discussion. On timesheets – there is common agreement that we should all have timesheets and this should be systematic and a requirement at SIPRI. There is common agreement on having a stress level system in place that is monitored by HR and management.

There is some scepticism about structural overtime as this issue has been around for years and getting worse for some. Therefore, it is important to have systems in place to try and finally do something about this issue.

The issue of values and work environment is important and there could be a dedicated meeting about the topic. A dedicated Cluster meeting or perhaps SIPRI wide discussion is needed?

Why is there not 360-degree feedback mechanism at SIPRI? It would only be right and proper and something staff should keep pushing for.

Collecting views on issues of concern to be brought up at Cluster meetings is possible. One way suggested is to send issues confidentially to the Cluster coordinator to bring forward for discussion at the Cluster level under agenda item -AOB.

Conclusions - priority issues to take forward:

Given that we need to prepare something on indicators - there is a consensus to discuss the issue again at our very next Cluster meeting.

On Cluster meetings and shifting away from the format we have used hitherto to more focus on one particular research area:

- The idea is somebody reports back from a project they are involved in and presents an issue in 10-15 minutes and then discuss. We can still do some rounds for a general catch up or do we start skipping this completely? Using the Cluster meeting to discuss more intra-Cluster issues and cross programme activities and possibilities would be a welcomed development.
- It is suggested that when a team is putting out a report they present the findings to the entire Cluster. Therefore, we can all be ambassadors of the work going forward. In 5-10 minutes here one presents the key findings of your report and of course to communicate this around the time of publication would make sense. Of course it may be a case - if presenting a report - why just for the Cluster and not for the entire Institute? It would be nice to combine perhaps but still it would be good to discuss at Cluster level. It could also be of use to discuss a report before publication like AMEX did with arms transfers. The other stage that might be more useful to have these presentations is at the start of a project where advice and feedback would be much appreciated.

Brown bags lunches are available for teams to initiate and the following have been suggested:

AMEX

- Siemon can host and explain TIVs' and invite interested colleagues.
- One on the future of the arms production database.

Nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation

- Shannon is going to invite interested colleagues to brainstorm about CBW capacity.

Next A&D Cluster meeting will be held on Wednesday April 1 at 1:30PM.

Thanks to all our participants today!