

Note taker: Noel Kelly

**SIPRI Armament and Disarmament Cluster Meeting**

Monday 2 October 2023 - **@14:00PM** in SIPRI seminar room and Zoom.

**Participants:**

Lucie Béraud-Sudreau, Mathew George, Giovanna Maletta, Lauriane Héau, Nan Tian, Diego Lopes, Lorenzo Scarazzato, Xiao Liang, Tytti Erästö, Nivedita Raju, Vladislav Chernavskikh, Pieter Wezeman, Siemon Wezeman, Katarina Djokic, Zain Hussain, Lora Saalman, Vongai Murugani, Joey Fox, John Batho, Sepideh Soltaninia, Nikos Politis, Selma Mustafić, Eero Kristjan Sild, Amal Sadki, Yeoun (Hazel) Choi

Please see the agenda below for the next A&D cluster meeting on Monday 2 October, led by the Arms Transfers Programme. We meet in the seminar room and start **@ 14:00PM**:

For colleagues joining remotely, here is the Zoom link.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87091135095>

Meeting ID: 870 9113 5095

Time	Topic	Notes
14:00	(1) Intro/Disarming	
14:05	(2) Questions on reporting	The MMM document was shared in advance of this meeting – no further questions.
14:10	(3) Cross-programme issue and learning together	Please refer <a href="https://intranet.sipri.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/SIPRI-STRATEGY-2019-2024-1119-1.pdf">https://intranet.sipri.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/SIPRI-STRATEGY-2019-2024-1119-1.pdf</a> and the SIPRI Strategy-Initial Notes documents (attached)
15:00	(5) Reporting from other clusters and teams	CPS and PD Clusters Director's Office Human Resources Operations Editorial Communications/Events EUNPDC

Meeting ends **@ 15:30PM**.

For the Cross-programme issue, we request you to not think about the exact details of the documents, but look at the following,

1. In the multipolar world we find ourselves in, how do we work in an institute that is neutral?
2. What problems do we see ourselves facing as we work towards arms control and disarmament?
3. How neutral can you be?
4. How do we continue to contribute to arms control and disarmament?

In line with the above, please try to reflect on the following,

1. Why are we here?
2. What are we doing?
3. Where do we see ourselves going?

The MMM report was shared, and an opportunity given to ask questions – none were asked.

Cross-programme issue and learning together – questions to think about were shared in advance of this meeting. After intro, the idea of doing a swot analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) was introduced - swot of the cluster and swot of SIPRI and the meeting broke up into teams to discuss.

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Convening power.	Institutional inertia.	Renewed focus on hard security.	Sweden joining NATO/ expansion more generally.
Interdisciplinary.	Lack of practical policy experience among staff.	Opportunity for expanding dialogue work.	Diminished trust in arms control.
Diversity.	Social media use – we're not that visible.	Reevaluate how to deal with sensitive information.	Narrow funding base.
Reputation.	Overgrown – what's SIPRI's focus?	SIPRI is independent and does not represent Sweden.	Misuse of the data!
Continuity.	Western centric.	New Director/New Strategy	Public apathy in arms control.
Providing data!	Lack of enough country specific expertise.	Invest in younger expertise.	Fundraising increasingly difficult or sustainable.
	How we recruit new staff	Cross cluster cooperation.	
		Be public about our closed-door meetings.	

Responses were shown to be quite similar between teams. The discussion was then opened to the whole room to focus on how we make use of the opportunities, reduce our weaknesses and tackle threats.

Both a weakness and strength are the interest in the work that SIPRI does. While there is a lot of interest from media for data launches and the publications, these do not necessarily translate into funding those programmes. In the present climate, the interest into arms control and transparency face even greater challenges. However, the point is made that once the Ukraine war ends – there will be a huge interest in what Europe looks like now. This will include arms control on the European continent and there will be a role for SIPRI in examining the architecture and an opportunity to help shape policy. It also offers an opportunity for the incoming new European Security Director to play a role along with this cluster in examining these issues. And crucially for SIPRI to have ready work that will shape the debate on conventional arms control going forward.

While institutional inertia was pointed out to be a weakness, there was value seen in the studied nature of our responses - better to be slow and accurate than fast and factually wrong. However, not being a part of the conversation and arriving too late may need to be reviewed to be top-of-mind for stakeholders and funders. (Ukraine war – how did we respond as an institute? No hot take - a case in point).

Discussion moved towards trying to understand what makes it hard to respond? SIPRI's identity is the Yearbook and is built around it. We think about and approach commentaries and topical backgrounders through the lenses and identity of the YB. In addition, the intent of SIPRI to have a convening power – how does this effect the responsiveness of what we write or respond to a security crisis?

Responses can be quicker with providing data that is already there and verified. We can work better across clusters and programmes. The opportunity is there.

In summary, while SIPRI and the A&D cluster have solid strengths, the narrow funding base, and fundraising being increasingly difficult are threats to the long-term sustainability of the work of the institute, compounding issues of hiring and growing the expertise available to continue this essential work. However, SIPRI does have the right strengths to emerge after the Ukraine war as a focal point of the armament and disarmament debate. We must explore cross-cluster opportunities even if it means we think we are encroaching on the domain of another team, as this will help shape potential research questions based on the strengths of both teams.

#### **Report from other clusters:**

##### CPS Cluster

- CPS Cluster this week cancelled and moved to following week – now on 10 October @10:30AM.

- Gretchen, Peacekeeping operations is arriving on Wednesday 4 October.

#### **PD Cluster**

- Jannie and Kyungmee are going to be Reykjavik for The Imagine Forum: Nordic Solidarity for Peace, to be held 10 - 11 October 2023.

#### **Directors Office**

- Dan's is in Abidjan for the Africa Resilience Forum (ARF 2023).
- Work is continuing towards arranging an MOU with the African Development Bank.
- Next week (41) Dan is in Stockholm for regular meetings.
- On 23-24 October, Dan is in Münster for the Westphalia Peace Expert forum.
- Prep is underway for the Governing Board meeting happening in Nov (13/14).

#### **Human Resources**

- No report

#### **Finance**

- Reminder now coming to last quarter of the year - Finance are grateful for all continuing cooperation and steps forward this year. The effort now is to come up with a budget for 2024. Secondly the budget is hoped to be more in depth and precise – even at programme level, helping us take very targeted actions in our fundraising. Finance is already in cooperation with PDs', and it is hoped to soon see where we stand going into 2024.
- Project managers remain in charge of the budget for their projects, even if working with PMO – the responsibility is with the project manager. The role of PMO is help projects managers to have some processes and tools to monitor better their projects. The aim is for project managers eventually through Maconomy to have a very good view in terms of budget and time for project work remaining.
- On the fundraising proposal side – please continue close cooperation with SIPRI's Grants Manager, Almenesh. When planning please remember to think outside of your research team needs – the efforts from Events, Operations, and Outreach which is often considerable needs to be considered carefully in budget planning.

## Communications/Events

- Nothing to report.

## Editorial

- Joey continuing from a list of key messages. Last time Joey spoke about having a point to your papers and making it clear. Today the message is about the referee process. Currently Editorial are hosting writing lab sessions every other Wednesday – these are deep dives and you are welcome to attend. Writing for yourself to think, and writing for the reader to understand, are very different things. You need the reader to clearly understand your message. The internal review – colleagues, peers, line managers have looked at and reviewed your draft work, so that once it comes time for in-house review – where Editorial share with other people here at SIPRI it's ready for them to read. By review process your paper should really be ready for publication. Once your paper goes to a referee it's to stress test the content not to edit the writing. Your readers matter – make it legible. Listen to your readers – please don't ask to send papers to referees asking them to cut – they are not collaborators.

## EUNPDC

- The Annual EUNPDC Conference is on 4-5 December in Brussels. More than 65 Network members have already confirmed participation. In addition, there will be a mentorship meeting for young women mentees. Next generation meeting also.
- SIPRI/EUNPDC have issued a call inviting students of engineering disciplines to apply for an intensive introductory course on the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Deadline for application is 23 October and the course will take place in Stockholm on **28–30 November**.
- Recently, the first four episodes of 'The Arms Control Poseur' podcast have been published on the EUNPDC website: Podcast – The EU Non-Proliferation Consortium (nonproliferation.eu). This series is organised by IISS and they are welcoming future experts to speak or suggest a topic. Contact Vladislav to find out more.

## AOB

- Next A&D Cluster meeting is on 6 November 2023.