CPS Cluster meeting, 8 March 2022

Staffing updates

- Ahmed Morsy and Emelie Poignant Khafagi have joined the MENA team as Senior Researcher and Research Assistant respectively.
- Gretchen Baldwin will join the Peace Operations and Conflict Management team as a Researcher in April.
- Jiayi Zhou will be joining the China and Asia Security programme by the end of April.
- Recruitment for MENA and Sahel/West Africa Programme Directors are ongoing.
- The WFH agreements should now be in place. Please indicate to your line manager of you would like to make changes to this agreement in the future.
- A Working Group will be discussing the reorganisation of Finance and Operations and the positions created in this. Programme directors might be asked for feedback.

Visits to SIPRI

- Ann Linde, Foreign Minister of Sweden will visit SIPRI on 5 March.
- Anders Norlén, Speaker of Parliament will be visiting SIPRI on 30 March.
- Matilda Ernkrans, Minister of Development Cooperation will have an online meeting with SIPRI on 21 March.
- The Foreign Affairs Committee will visit SIPRI on 11 May.

Updates from SMT

- SMT will have an away day on 16 March. The agenda includes issues revealed in the &Frankly survey, SIPRI's staffing model, the Strategic Grant application for 2023-25, and potentially Ukraine and the Stockholm Security Conference.

- The Stockholm Security Conference concept is under construction, and might be influenced by the events in Ukraine.

- Helen Clark will be delivering a pre-recorded SIPRI Lecture, followed by a live panel reflecting on the lecture.

Updates from Operations, Outreach and the other clusters

Communications

- The CPS website updates are ongoing but slightly delayed. The MENA webpage has been updated.

- The new chair of the governing board, Stefan Löfven, will be announced on 17 March.
- If there is an angle which colleagues would like to write a commentary about in relation to Ukraine, they are welcome to reach out to Communications.
- An introduction for new staff to SIPRI's Communication and Editorial processes is planned for 10 March. Some CPS colleagues expressed their wish to also join a media training session.

Operations

- Kind reminder that the operations team will be working with decreased capacity in the near future, which might affect processing times for applications and requests to the team.

Team highlights

MENA

- The Bosch Stiftung project was launched this year. Surveys and interviews are ongoing, which will inform topics for dialogue meetings which be initiated after Ramadan. Twenty such meetings will be held this year, and as many the following year.
- The USAID project is moving forward. The project includes a graphic novel and social media campaign.
- Ahmed is working on the project on state-society relations in Yemen, Syria and Libya, which is planned to be published toward the end of the year.

Sahel & West Africa

- Continued work on the perception of security in Mali and Niger with a second round of surveys ongoing.
- The second PSDG Mali survey is completed, as well as a 10th survey for the Central Mali project.
- The situation in Mali has an impact on activities, which has led to postponement of all dissemination activities until the second half of the year. It is unclear whether some planned events can take place.
- Research has started for the Swiss Cooperation project on local protection mechanisms, and for the French MFA project on presence of the state.
- The team is preparing documents for the ReCAP (Research and Action for Peace Network, together with the Danish Refugee Council and the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding).
- Scoping studies were lunched in Mauretania, Senegal, Cameroon, and Tchad.
- The team is discussing fundraising with UNCHR and DRC.
- Discussions are ongoing with Roskilde University on a joint project.

- The graphic novel which has been in the making will soon be printed and translated into several local languages.

China/Asia

- The revision of the Chinese ODA paper is being finalised.
- The revision of the team's Yearbook contribution has been finalized.
- The East Asia Student Association have reached out to discuss security in East and South East Asia. Fei is coordinating with colleagues to meet them on 7 April.
- The Japanese MFA have reached out regarding funding.
- Lora and Fei have drafted a proposal for the German Government.
- The team will be receiving an intern from the Korean Foundation in April who will be working on the China and Afghanistan project.

Peace Operations and Conflict Management

- Work on the Yearbook is being finalised.
- Two publications are soon to be published, one on EUTM Mali by Virginie and and one on pandemics and epidemics.
- Timo is working on getting the EU Civilian Crisis management project extended and expanded. A workshop will be held in the following week with approximately 20 people in the room and 50 participants registered for online participation. A reception will be held at the Dutch Embassy.
- One new project which will be started is on exit strategies for peace operations and another one on civilian personnel in peace operations and their role in improving human rights situations.

European security

- Ian will be hosting a brown bag on the European security order and the impact of the invasion of Ukraine.

Ukraine

- Discussion on the development in Ukraine and how SIPRI can contribute to in the international debate.
- Stephanie explained that SIPRI historically has been laying low in hot situations, taking the cold war era as an example. The topic was considered complex to navigate, and the timing of having arms transfers data out under embargo adds to this complexity.
- Dylan said that it is important that the first post that SIPRI makes on the topic is directly discussing the events in Ukraine, not a side issue.

- Jair posed whether a response similar to what was done for the Afghanistan withdrawal could be organized, where SIPRI released a number of commentaries on short notice.
- Timo suggested that the Swedish political context should be considered. SIPRI is not necessarily seen as neutral in Sweden, and the installation of the new Chair of the Governing Board might additionally trigger reactions from alternative media. Stephanie added that SIPRI's mandate is international and not directly related to Swedish politics.
- Stephanie reminded colleagues that they are free to express their views publicly, as long as these are based on your own individual expertise and research.

Away day

- The Away day that was originally planned for 8 March was postponed and new dates are being explored. Colleages were invited to share any thoughts or ideas they might have for the away day agenda.

CPS Forum sessions

- Jair will build on a session from the 2021 on Security Sector Reform in ongoing armed conflict. It will be based on case studies from Somalia, Mali and Afghanistan. Speakers from these countries will be presenting lessions from their contexts, while two international actors are to reflect on what it means for them and how to pragmatically move forward. The session is organized together with the Strategic Capacity Group and CORDAID.
- Timo is organizing a session in cooperation with CMC Finland. It will be seeking to strentghen the EU Civilian Crisis Management and mainstreaming climate and climate-related security risks into planning, conduct and evaluation of missions. The session is a part of an externally project and is using the Forum and SSC to create deliverables to externally fund the work that goes into preparing. It has so far been relatively successful and might be an interesting set up for other colleagues as well.
- Dylan will be organizing a closed side event. He is working with the CCR team to bring in people from the GULF region to discuss environmental security, focusing on water security. This will potentially serve as a launch of a dialogue process where environmental security will be used as an entry point to discuss other topics.

AOB

- With the recent return to the office, a kind reminder was made to make sure that you formally book any meeting room that you are planning on using.