

Minute taker: Noel Kelly

Time: 14:30-16:00 PM

SIPRI Armament and Disarmament Cluster Meeting

Zoom virtual meeting, Monday 5 September 2022

Participants:

Sibylle Bauer, Mark Bromley, Vincent Boulanin, Lucie Béraud-Sudreau, Wilfred Wan, Laura Bruun, Giovanna Maletta, Tytti Erästö, Vitaly Fedchenko, Lauriane Héau, Nan Tian, Diego Lopes, Siemon Wezeman, Pieter Wezeman, Justine Gadon, Alexandra Kuimova, Laura Bruun, Nivedita Raju, Nikos Politis, John Batho, Daniel Crimella, Anant Saria, Alex Kaplan, and Ming Sun

A&D cluster meeting agenda – Monday 5 September - in Conference room @14:30PM

- Updates from Operations. (TBC)
- Reports or updates from Director's Office, HR, other Clusters
- Updates from Outreach. (TBC – reporting as one)
- SIPRI Yearbook. (Ian Davis) – Briefing on plans with Q&A
- Updates from SMT. (Sibylle)
- Updates from EUNPDC (Giovanna)
- Fundraising tips and lessons learned (Sibylle) - how to pitch government officials/potential funders?
- AOB

Updates from Operations

- The cluster welcomed Kristina Sandberg, the new SIPRI Head of Operations.
- The new Grant Coordinator Alemnesh Belatchew will join next time.

Updates from HR

- The cluster welcomed Hedvig Brage and HR are invited to A&D cluster meetings going forward to give updates or discuss policies.

Directors Office

- Sepideh has requested staff to respond to the e-mail about the staff away day (half day) and inform if you plan to join.
- Sepideh has written to some of us about a potential funding opportunity with the Forethought Foundation. The request is for some brief bullet points of ideas back from teams for a project and Sepideh will collate ideas together and forward to the Forethought Foundation.

Outreach (Communication/Editorial/Events teams)

- Stephanie is on a business trip to Colombia now and nothing further from Editorial, apart from we will hear from Ian Davis in this meeting about SIPRI YB plans.
- Martina reported in her new capacity as SIPRI Major Events Manager. The first step is to try and get a calendar from all the events in-house currently promised in 2022. The hope is to have more of a structured process from next year onwards.
- Martina hopes to get budget templates of the different types of events in place to help with financial planning (Hybrid/in-house/virtual, this is what you should consider etc.).
- On the question of organising internal travel – our travel agency Trånas will have a specific agent assigned for an event to do the specific booking of flights. Someone from within Outreach will be in-charge of liaising with the specific agent.

Conflict, Peace and Security

- Louise Edgren returns from maternity leave (Research Assistant in charge of Budget and Finance with the Sahel/West Africa Programme). A Guest Researcher (name) is arriving to the C,P&S cluster from Taiwan and will work on/with?
- C,P&S colleagues involved in the SSC are in the process of planning session speakers.

Peace and Development

- We welcome Abeer Ahmad who is taking on the role of Peace and Development Cluster Coordinator from Martina.
- The team are at the final stages of finishing the Stockholm Forum report.
- The cluster is reminded of the invitation from the E&P team for the lunchtime seminar on Seeds of Resilience for Peace and Stability with the Stockholm Resilience Center on 14 September (12:15 PM to 1:30 PM).

SIPRI Yearbook. Ian Davis – Briefing on plans with Q&A

- A planned outline has been circulated (e-mail circulated to cluster on 25 August) and Ian went over this and took questions. He will have smaller group meetings with some of the authors from this cluster about the plans while visiting this week.

Report back from A&D teams

- As the Monday morning routine has changed we will return to a report back from teams at future cluster meetings.

SMT report

- Fundraising: For a long time, we had a publications calendar and now we have an events calendar forthcoming but what we still need is a fundraising calendar. We need to plan ahead much better and if there are several deadlines, we need to coordinate the sequencing so that late submissions arrive together.
- On Thurs/Friday (8/9 Sept) Sibylle will be at a conference on European peace research hosted by the Flemish Peace Research Institute. We previously had this discussion in the cluster and Sibylle will report back on this.
- Next week Sibylle will be in Berlin (11-13 Sept). On Monday 12 Sept there will be a ministerial level conference hosted by the GFFO on German feminist foreign policy, and the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs (Anne Linde) will attend. Sibylle will moderate a panel on a gender lens on arms control. On Tuesday 13 Sept Sibylle will stay on for various meetings with officials from the GFFO. Then on 14/15 Sept Sibylle will be back in Brussels for EUNPDC related meetings.

EUNPDC report

- On 14/15 Sept, Fondation pour la recherche stratégique (FRS) are organising the Annual Consultative meeting. Sibylle, Mark and Kolja will be attending. Right after there is a first coordination meeting for the first phase of this project between members of the consortium and our counterparts (European External Action Service (EEAS) and European Commission) in the EU. During the same week the UN Disarmament Fellows visit to Brussels will take place - an activity implemented by the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) and Sibylle will attend.
- On future meetings for your agenda – on 25 October there will be a virtual Network meeting. The Annual Conference will take place in Brussels on 14/15 November, and this is organised by the Italian Institute for International Affairs (IAI). This is planned to be an in-person event following two years of being mainly virtual. On the 14 November there is also the Next Generation workshop in-person.
- On in-house consortium activities – the policy paper series (Nivi is leading) - the first policy paper of this phase of the project has been assigned and will focus on bio-security issues. In addition, Nivi has circulated a message to the Network to gather interest or proposals for future papers. We are looking for more authors and it is noticed on autonomous weapons systems and conventional arms in general we have not really published on these subjects over the last few years. If any names come to mind, then please share.

- Another upcoming activity led by Vitaly is the proliferation awareness course for engineering disciplines. The course was announced last week by SIPRI, so applications are coming, and the theme and logistics of the course is being worked on. The course will take place here in SIPRI from 6-8 December.

Fundraising tips and lessons learned – Sibylle

- In the past we have discussed more about specific procedures and how to do correct budgeting, how to design the project note but this discussion is more about the soft skills.
- How do you pitch? It's about style, how you engage with people, networking skill. After making the contacts how do you build a relationship? Some approaches work with some funders and not with others. In summing up a lot can come down to personality.
- If you are not fully convinced or clear on your own idea, then don't even bother. Why you have real interest in a topic and why you think it is important this enthusiasm carries over.
- Never start on the topic of possible financial support. Seed the idea and get interest in doing the project and convince a potential funder it is in their interest. There are of course differences between government officials and foundations. A government official has an assignment, and their minister asks them to do X, so they work on this topic. Any idea for a project that helps them do their job - they are on your side with financial support if available. It helps a lot to invest in relationships and getting favours returned.
- Showing face at events and networking is important with government officials. Even if an event with no immediate priority (but topic is interesting) – it's looking at the speakers and who is attending – and approaching speakers or other participants to network. It's easier to get an opportunity to meet at events rather than trying to book a meeting at someone's office and less annoying to them. Investing in relationship building rather than cold calling or emailing a desk officer has proven to be more effective in achieving project support.
- Often you need to be ready to move quickly. If you hear money is available or an official has been given onerous task by their minister and need assistance to make it work – then you can present an idea or ready proposal.

How to approach governments?

- You can always have informal discussions about ideas and things of interest. What is your government priorities? What are you interested in? Anybody can have this conversation at an event or conference. If it takes a more serious fundraising shape before formally approaching a government then talk to your line manager first who can brief the DOS. We want to avoid crossing wires and have several people talking to the same desk officer. We should always be internally coordinated.
- If you know some governments are working on issues of interest it is helpful to join events even virtually. Even if listening to an event in Geneva or New York just to listen you can see how is involved or know the desk officer that is speaking. Take note of who is working on what issue in what government, so you have a route to follow up. You can always send a follow up email. Communicating about the meeting being attended is important so colleagues can offer guidance or share information. It's important to have an ally in the ministry to help you navigate what the priorities are and what the budget line or possibilities are.

- For funding from governments, we have different calls. Sometimes we have annual call and know the broad area. If you know the field, then specific things are in their already formulated in a specific way (basically pre-assigned for a certain type of institute). This can be a struggle – how do we have a conversation in a pre-emptive manner before the call comes out.
- In terms of framing your idea, the trick is ensuring it fits within a funders priority without selling out your own idea. You need to find the overlap - this is what one wants to do ideally, and this is what the funder wants and whether you can work within or enlarge your idea to make it work.
- Doing things that one thinks is a real waste of time and money is not good funding. You can frame things in certain ways, if you take the SIPRI data for example once can frame this in terms of geography and regional issues, or frame it thematically, or in terms of methodology.
- Cold calling or writing an email is sometimes necessary to set up a meeting and get the conversation started. Not easy to generalise but one can contact an embassy, but an embassy will always pass on capital. If possible, to contact a capital contact directly then go that way. If one deals with ministries there is often many other in Cc so one needs to be strategic.
- It has been repeated often but building relationships is important and getting known as expert/researcher on a topic. You need to build your profile and people need to know your research profile and interests so that when topics of interest come up you are known as a contact.
- Believing in what you are doing and knowing what your objectives are and that it plugs into government priorities is important but knowing the calendars is important too when designing a project (if plugging into events/conferences etc.). In short, timing can be important. It's not just the international diplomatic calendar around which drives how governments work but who has which presidency and chair. It's important to be on top of this type of information when strategizing for government funding. Sweden for example has an upcoming EU Presidency – we should be talking to desk officers about their priorities and how we can help make this a success. You look at certain countries and see what their obligations are in the calendar, you look at certain institutions and see who the next chair or presidency are from the treaties one follows.
- Try to be conscious when meeting officials you are not just ambassadors for your own ideas but for others in your cluster and potentially throughput SIPRI.

AOB

- Next A&D Cluster meeting will be on 3 October @14:30