

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

13 November 2024

MINUTES

Participants

Stephanie Blenckner, Florian Krampe, Kristina Sandberg, Dan Smith, Luc van de Goor

Absent

Sibylle Bauer, Charlotta Sparre

Note-taker

Sepideh Soltaninia

Format

In-person meeting

1. Minutes

- SMT approved the minutes of the 6 November meeting.

2. Matters arising

- IT does not have computers for more than eight interns at a given time. As such, the allocation of interns noted in the minutes of the 6 November SMT meeting is considered the final list of interns for the first half of 2025.

3. Report back

a. Sweden

- A delegation from the Centre Party in Solna visited SIPRI on 6 November and met with Charlotta, Steph, IngMarie and Pieter.
- On 11 November, Charlotta met with Diana Janse, State Secretary to the Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade. They discussed SIPRI's work more broadly as well as the Strategic Grant application. She also met with Peter Weiderud, SIPRI's focal point at the UN department and Anna Wikner, SIPRI's focal point in the Disarmament and Non-proliferation department to discuss the Strategic and Core grants respectively.
- The second lunch-time seminar on the use of AI tools in research took place on 11 November. A third seminar will be held on 26 November with Anders Reagan, Founder & AI Advisor at Anders AI.
- The women's delegation of the Social Democratic party visited SIPRI on 12 November and met with Steph, Gretchen and IngMarie.

- On 8 November, Luc met with the Taiwanese Deputy Minister of the Mainland Affairs Council.
- On 11 November, Jingdong met with Nicholas Prindiville, Assistant Director of Australia's Office of National Intelligence and Melissa Halldorf, Deputy Head of Mission, Australian embassy to Sweden, Finland, and Latvia.
- On 15 November, Luc, Simone and Caroline will meet with the Nordic Office of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.
- On 16 November, Florian will speak at the Centre Party's Karin Söder-dagarna meeting, an annual event to discuss challenges in the foreign and security area.

b. Relations with other organizations

- SIPRI's planned partnership with the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) at the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore will not be included in the Swedish King's official visit to Singapore due to time constraints. SIPRI still plans to move forward with the partnership.
- Timo, Barbara and Jair will be in Brussels on 14 November for a workshop on the civilian dimension of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy.

c. Operations

- A broken alarm sensor has now been fixed.
- SIPRI's new rent contract with Sagax for 2025-2035 will be further discussed today.
- SIPRI is changing its recycling collection supplier due to issues with the current supplier. The new supplier is also more economical.
- The annual interim audit will begin on 14 November.

4. Delegation visits

- In addition to delegation visits noted in previous minutes, the following visits were discussed:
 - o 14 November, 15.30 – 16.30: Visit of the Crisis Response Department of the Ministry of Unification, Republic of Korea

5. SIPRI finances

- SMT will discuss SIPRI's finances in greater detail, with a focus on the 2025 budget, during an extraordinary meeting on 14 November at 13.00 – 15.00.

6. SIPRI strategy

- As discussed during the 30 October SMT meeting, SMT noted five areas where further work and/or staff development is needed so the institute is in a position to realize its five-year strategy. SMT discussed the remaining three areas:
 - a) T-shaped expertise and 360° view of security: Understanding better what we mean by T-shaped expertise; developing and understanding the relationship between a broad view of security and specific research we are undertaking, emphasizing intersections (e.g., AI and climate), designing research accordingly that is interesting to donors, etc.
 - o SMT noted that T-shaped expertise means that researchers know enough about the work of others at the institute to see connections with their research.

- SMT noted the need for staff to have expertise across different research topics and for researchers to build proactive partnerships with leading experts in their field, which can be utilized in future research projects.
- b) The three research headlines (battlefields, peacefields and geopolitics meets the local): Understanding the possible benefits in grouping themes and problems like this, identifying their role (if any) in designing projects and programmes.
 - The DoSes will discuss and select a research headline they would each like to lead. They will then facilitate internal meetings that bring together programmes across the institute to generate ideas and apply for funding under these headlines.
- c) The technical section: Working out next steps in setting up a section to provide statistical support across the institute
 - Luc will discuss this with Shourjya to get his advice and thoughts and will revert.
- SMT also noted that under fundraising, which is one of the five areas and was discussed during the 30 October meeting, further discussion on how to check and improve the quality of concept notes is needed. SMT also noted the need to look more closely at how forecasting is carried out at the institute.

7. Research Staff Collegium

- SMT discussed the ideas shared at the 12 November RSC. SMT members will share their thoughts on the ideas in writing for discussion at a future SMT meeting.

8. Fundraising with local embassies

- SMT discussed ongoing plans for fundraising with local embassies, including a letter being prepared by the MILAP and AT programmes for fundraising for the databases they manage, planned conversations with the Irish and Dutch ambassadors on the next Stockholm Security Conference and a proposal for ambassadorial roundtables, paid for by interested embassies.
- On the database fundraising letters, SMT agreed that the fundraising proposal should first be shared with capitals where SIPRI has strong contacts to gauge their interest. The MILAP and AT programmes should also share a list of embassies they would like to prioritize for fundraising with the Director's Office, who will schedule meetings with the respective ambassadors instead of sending them letters.
- On the SSC and proposed ambassadorial roundtables, SMT noted the need to continue the discussion, particularly with Charlotta present given her diplomatic experience.

9. HR issues

- N/A

10. Project issues

- N/A

11. Due Diligence

- N/A

12. AOB

- N/A

13. Executive session

- N/A

Action items:

- DoSes to discuss and select a research headline they would each like to lead.
- Luc to discuss a potential technical section with Shourjya.
- All SMT members to comment on the ideas shared at the 12 November RSC meeting.
- MILEX and AT programmes to share with the Director's Office a list of embassies they would like to prioritize for fundraising.
- Steph and Sibylle to discuss bilaterally on how SIIS and CADCA can help disseminate the Chinese translation of the Yearbook (from 6 November meeting).

Follow-up items:

- Traineeship
- Legal expertise
- Intranet
- Improving concept notes
- Forecasting methodology
- Ideas shared at the 12 November RSC meeting
- SSC and proposed ambassadorial roundtables