



SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

19 February 2025

MINUTES

Participants

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Luc van de Goor, Kristina Sandberg, Dan Smith, Charlotta Sparre

Absent

Florian Krampe

Note-taker

Sofie Waller Snygg

Format

Hybrid meeting

AGENDA

1. Minutes

- SMT has yet to approve the minutes of the 12 February meeting.

2. Matters arising

- At the Governing Board meeting in December, the Board asked to receive financial updates every two months in 2025. Given that figures from the first two months of 2025 are only available in the end second half of March, Dan spoke to Stefan about how and when the Board prefer to receive the first update. It was decided that:
 - At the end of February or the very start of March, recognizing that the Board will then have seen and signed off on the audited accounts, the Board should get any information about grants received or agreed, including any information or signals on the strategic grant.
 - As soon as available, the January-February figures for income and expenditure should be sent to the Board.
 - Further figures will be sent to the Board ahead of the May Board meeting.
- SMT will have an away day on 19 March. Sofie and Priscilla to explore dates for another away day in late May/early June.

3. Report back

a) Sweden

- On 17 February, Stefan and Charlotta met with the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Dag Hartelius, and Ann-Sofie Nilsson, Department for Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control at the Swedish MFA (UD-NIS), to informally give an update to the Swedish government about the recruitment of the next SIPRI Director.
- On 20 February, UD-NIS will visit SIPRI for their annual meeting.
- On 18 February, A&D held their monthly cluster meeting, with discussions on the fallout from recent U.S. funding decisions.

b) Relations with other countries

- On 10-12 February, Luc (online), Virginie, Fred, Marie, Cyrielle and Pauline attended the RECAP regional conference in Dakar, which went well. The project is implemented by SIPRI, WANEP and DRC. Virginie and WANEP Executive Director, Levinia Addae-Mensah, will visit Brussels to explore further funding opportunities.

c) Relations with other organizations

- On 18 February, SIPRI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- Dan reminded the SMT to read and, as necessary, act upon his email outlining follow-up points from the bilateral meetings he held during the Munich Security Conference.

d) Operations

- The Annual Report has been approved by SIPRI's external auditors, BDO. The narrative section is currently under review by the MFA auditors and is expected to be finalized this week. Once approved, the report will be circulated to Board members for electronic signature before submission to the MFA.
- Operations are in the final stages of preparing an application for a 90-account, a certification granted by the Swedish Fundraising Control (Svensk Insamlingskontroll), allowing organisations to demonstrate that donations and funds are managed responsibly. The 90-account is a criterion for SIPRI to be able to apply to become a beneficiary of the Postcode Lottery.
- A contract for the incoming Director is being prepared and is expected to be signed soon.
- The salary review is nearly complete. Updated salaries will be reflected in the February payroll (on 25 February). However, the retroactive salary adjustment for the period 1 October – 31 January will be processed with the March payroll.

e) Outreach

- Steph thanked SMT for their swift turnaround in reviewing the arms transfers press release and noted that all colleagues involved in the data launch have done a tremendous job.
- The timely backgrounder on the Ukrainian arms industry ahead of the day marking three years of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, authored by Lorenzo and Kateryna, is soon to be published.

4. Delegation visits

- N/A

5. Finances

a) Review

- A detailed financial update will be given to SMT at the extended SMT meeting on 26 February.

b) Fundraising priorities

- Luc reported that four proposals are currently under consideration for submission to the Integrated Security Fund (ISF) from FCDO. SMT agreed that communication with desk officers will be necessary to determine which proposals have the strongest support. A request for SMT to make the final decision on proposals to move forward with will come to SMT through e-mail.

c) Due diligence

- N/A

6. The transition process between the outgoing and incoming Directors

- SMT discussed the transition process between the outgoing and incoming SIPRI Directors, based on a preliminary draft by Charlotta.
- SMT considered how best to involve different parts of the institute in the process and noted that input from the incoming Director should be incorporated into the transition plan. Charlotta will follow up on this.
- SMT decided to continue the discussion at the extended meeting on 26 February.

7. Follow-up on SMT priorities in 2025

- SMT followed up on the 2025 priorities, which were updated by Sofie and Charlotta ahead of the meeting and organized into a separate document outlining each priority and action item. To ensure continuous review, Sofie will circulate the SMT priorities document weekly.

8. Staffing / HR issues

- The SMT discussed difficulties in recruiting communications interns and concerns were raised regarding insurance coverage for some interns, as some have had to purchase private insurance. SMT will need to follow up on this.
- The MBL with the Unions continues.

9. Next week's SMT agenda

- Besides recurring items, including an extended financial update and presentation, the SMT agenda will include:
 - o Strategic grant 2025: Budgeting and project allocation

- The transition process between the outgoing and incoming Directors
- “The world”

10. AOB

- SMT discussed global security developments that may have practical implications for SIPRI. SMT agreed to schedule a longer discussion on the topic under “the world”, at the 26 February meeting.
 - As part of this discussion, Dan requested input from the SMT on the introductory chapter of the Yearbook. SMT will share ideas with him individually.
 - It was suggested that SIPRI conduct an internal scenario exercise with staff to explore potential implications further.
- The SMT approved a slightly updated version of the Environmental Policy, which included some editorial changes by the Cooperation Group.

11. Executive session

- N/A

Action items:

- SMT to check their calendars for international events that may conflict with a Governing Board meeting in early October.
- Sofie and Priscilla to explore dates for an SMT away day in late May/early June.
- SMT to share ideas on the introductory chapter of the yearbook with Dan.

Follow-up items:

- Insurance for interns
- In-person Board meeting date finalization (preliminarily early October 2025)