

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

5 March 2025

MINUTES

Participants

Sibylle Bauer, Stephanie Blenckner, Florian Krampe, Kristina Sandberg, Dan Smith, Charlotta Sparre

Absent

Luc van de Goor

Note-taker

Sofie Waller Snygg

Format

In-person meeting

AGENDA

1. Minutes

- SMT approved the 19 and 26 February meeting minutes.

2. Matters arising

- An SMT away day is tentatively scheduled for either 3 or 5 June. Sibylle to follow up with SMT regarding her availability.
- SMT decided to create a Teams channel to facilitate easier access to SMT documents. Sofie to create this and share access with SMT members.
- Florian and Luc have started working on a proposal for project allocations under the Strategic Grant. SMT postponed the discussion on the proposal to the meeting on 12 March. Luc and Florian to speak to Sibylle and Fred ahead of the discussion.

3. Report back

a) Sweden

- CCR has submitted two applications to the Swedish Research Council. Thanks to GAD for all their help and work on the budget.
- The Armament and Disarmament cluster will host an in-house lunch discussion on 11 March, open to all staff. The discussion will focus on global security trends, particularly European rearmament and transatlantic relations.

b) Relations with other countries

- On 4 March, multiple meetings took place:
 - o Dan met with the recently appointed Ambassador of Russia, H.E. Sergey Belyaev.
 - o Charlotta, Pieter and Jiayi met with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan, H.E. Rakhamatulla Nurimbetov.
 - o Charlotta met with the Ambassador of Rwanda, H.E. Diane Gashumba.
- On 28 March, SIPRI will participate in the first-ever quantum briefing for the Political and Security Committee (PSC) ambassadors at an event to be hosted by the Austrian Permanent Representation to the EU.

c) Relations with other organizations

- On 27 February, Charlotta met with Peter Lundberg, the Director of the Raoul Wallenberg Institute for Human Rights (RWI) to discuss the RWI's International Humanitarian Law Compliance Monitoring Database (ICMD) initiative and how to navigate in the increasingly competitive and challenging funding environment. The RWI expressed an interest in meeting with SIPRI colleagues working on databases and their experience in managing them. Sofie to follow up with relevant colleagues to gauge interest.
- On 11 March, Dan, Luc, and Mark will meet with H.E. Ahmed Bin Sulayem, Chair of the Kimberley Process (KP), to discuss the illicit arms trade, conflict financing, and the diamond trade.
- On 11 March, SIPRI and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will hold their fifth annual online roundtable. This year, the Swedish Red Cross will also participate.
- On 8 September, the World Emerging Security Forum (WESF) will take place in Seoul. SMT discussed SIPRI participation and Sibylle expressed an interest in attending.

d) Operations

- N/A

e) Outreach

- The announcement of SIPRI's incoming Director, Karim Haggag, will be published later today to SIPRI's global networks.
- The Arms Transfers data launch is progressing well, with substantial media attention. Notably, there will be a double page spread in the *Financial Times*. All in the team have given multiple TV interviews and SIPRI will appear on Nyhetsmorgon on 10 March at 07:00. Katarina is managing extensive German-language media inquiries.
- Outreach has noted an increased demand for customized visualizations from media houses. Amelie is the focal point for working with data teams on these requests.
- Discussions are ongoing for the Multilateral Peace Operations data launch scheduled for May.

4. Delegation visits

- SIPRI will host visits from the MFA Diplomatic Training Programme (31 March, 13.00-16.30) and the Swedish Defence Attaché Programme of the Swedish Armed Forces (28 April, at 13:00-15:00). Both visits should preferably feature a broad programme with presentations from all clusters. DoSs to get back to Charlotta by Tuesday 11 March regarding their cluster's availability and with ideas on what they would like to present.
- On 19-20 March, Marc Lassouaoui, Advocacy and Outreach Senior Manager for Europe at the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA ROE), will be visiting Stockholm and has expressed interest in meeting with SIPRI.
- SIPRI has been invited by the Centre for International Relations (CIR), a Polish think tank specializing in European affairs and foreign policy, to participate in the Think Tanks Forum: "Better Europe", taking place on 8-10 May. Dan to discuss SIPRI's participation with Luc and provide an update to the SMT at next week's meeting.

5. Review of finances and strategic fundraising priorities

a) Review

- At the Governing Board meeting in December, the Board asked to receive financial updates every two months in 2025. The first financial update has now been sent to the Board with the first month of expenditure and the first two months of income. A follow-up to the report will be sent to the Board in March, with full figures for the first two months, and a full forecast will be prepared for the May Governing Board meeting. Dan to give an update at the MMM on 10 March and send the summary review of the 2024 accounts to all staff.
- SMT discussed the restructuring of programme and cluster funds. It was noted that while programme directors had accumulated funds, these had to be redirected to cover financial shortfalls as per auditor instructions. Moving forward, funds will be allocated at the cluster level. Each cluster/department, including the Director's Office, Operations and Outreach, will have a dedicated fund. The responsibility for tracking contributions and expenditures will fall to the DoSs and Programme Director's. An official communication outlining these changes will be sent to all staff.

b) Fundraising

- SMT discussed a temporary shift in GAD's operational focus. Rather than exclusively handling grant applications, GAD has proposed to incorporate tool development and process improvements within their current workstream to increase internal efficiencies, staff knowledge, and quality of applications. GAD will present a development plan and an action plan and discuss the priorities before deciding how to implement them.
- On 3 March, there was a first brainstorming meeting on "Environment of War" with colleagues across clusters. It went well and produced many good ideas on how to move forward.

c) Due diligence

- N/A

6. Budgeting and project allocation for 2025 strategic grant

- SMT decided to postpone this discussion to the SMT meeting on 12 March.

7. The transition process between the outgoing and incoming Directors

- The SMT discussed the transition plan between the outgoing and incoming Directors. SMT was asked to provide feedback on the process to Charlotta by close of business on Thursday, as she will be meeting virtually with Karim Haggag on Friday afternoon. The SMT will revisit this topic ahead of the next RSC meeting (date TBD), where the initial discussion and a request for staff input will take place.

8. SIPRI policies: System for reviewing them

- SMT discussed ways to establish a better system for reviewing SIPRI policies to ensure they stay relevant and up to date. Sofie to work on this and report back to SMT.

9. Zondera action plan

- SMT discussed the staff survey action plan and will revisit the topic at the SMT away day on 19 March.

10. Staffing / HR

- A new communication intern, Benedikt Hohl, will join SIPRI on Monday, 10 March.
- The negotiations with the unions (MBL) are ongoing, with the next meeting taking place on 6 March.

11. AOB

- N/A

12. Next week's SMT agenda

- Besides the weekly recurring agenda items, SMT will also discuss:
 - o Budgeting and project allocation for 2025 strategic grant
 - o The transition process between the outgoing and incoming Directors

13. Executive session

- SMT held an executive session.

Action items:

- Sofie to create and grant access to a dedicated Teams channel for SMT documents.
- Sofie and Priscilla to explore dates for RSCs
- Sibylle to confirm availability for SMT away day in June

- Luc and Florian to speak with Sibylle and Fred regarding project allocations under the Strategic Grant before 12 March
- DO to reach out to relevant colleagues regarding a potential knowledge-sharing meeting with the Raoul Wallenberg Institute
- DO to coordinate UNRWA visit
- Dan to talk with Luc before confirming SIPRI's participation in the Think Tanks Forum.
- Dan to send the summary review of the 2024 accounts to all staff
- Finance to draft and send out an update on programme and cluster funds
- Sofie to follow up on a system to review policies

Follow-up items:

- Insurance for interns
- In-person Board meeting date (preliminarily early October 2025)
- Fire safety protocol