

Minutes

Cooperation group

Dates and time: Thursday 14, November 2024, time 10.00 - 12.00

Place: Seminar Room

Attendance: Charlotta, Kristina, Clarisa, Simon, Emma (ST), Annika (Saco-S), Kheira (Saco-S), Ann-Sophie (Saco-S), Gretchen (RSC), Diego (RSC). Lauriane (work environment representatives).

Absent: Laura Bruun (main work environment representative)

1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Check-in
 - Participants took turns presenting their assessments on the current state of the institute and shared what they had observed or heard from members and colleagues. Concerns were raised about finances, the institute's future, and how uncertainties, including regarding time-limited contracts, might affect staff wellbeing. Additionally, some expressed concern that this could lead to internal tensions among staff.
 - The recent RSC on 12 November was discussed. While the discussion at RSC was welcomed, staff representatives noted limitations for digital participation and suggested for future meetings that also those participating online should be given a chance to present their ideas/reflections. The Employer acknowledged this and will take it into consideration for future meetings.
3. Choice of Minutes Checker: Kheira (Saco-S)
4. Last Meeting's Notes
 - Representatives inquired if there is any new information concerning the ecological security programme announced by SMT and discussed last meeting under item 9. The Employer responded that the programme is still in initial "idea stage" and had no information to share yet.
5. Work Environment
 - HR provided an update on the work conducted by the work environment group, focusing on fire safety and the responsibilities of the Fire Marshal. A proposal was made to replace the Fire Marshal role with a Corridor Evacuation Checker. The need to ensure all staff are properly informed about any new routines prior to implementation was highlighted. Additionally, it was proposed to schedule a fire drill, and Representatives suggested to use fire routines and training as a team-building exercise.

6. Information from Management

6.1. Economic situation

- No major updates since the presentation given at the latest RSC meeting on Tuesday 12 November. The projected deficits remain the same, and the budget for 2025 is currently being drafted.
- After negotiations with the landlord, SIPRI will receive a discount on the rent for 2024 and 2025.
- It is confirmed that the Core Grant will remain at the same level as last year. Due to the change in the budget line, index adjustments are expected as of the budget for 2026. There are yet no news from the Swedish MFA regarding the Strategic Grant.
- An interim audit is currently being conducted. Management has queried the auditors about any legal implications of using SIPRI's reserves.

6.2. Update on salary revision:

- Negotiations between the Employer and the unions are in progress and the unions are in contact with their central organizations. No update from unions since their latest meeting.

6.3. Recruitment:

6.3.1. Director:

- Candidates selected for in-person interviews will be informed around the week of 18 November. Regarding the interaction with staff, there will be a short presentation by each candidate (15-20 min). It will be available to all staff, including for staff who wishes to participate digitally. The presentation will be followed by a Q&A session, available only for staff who participate in person. The presentations will be followed by a one-hour meeting and conversation with staff representatives.
- Nominations for the position of Deputy Staff Observer have been received, and the nominated candidates have been asked if they would accept the role. In a new survey staff would be given a chance to vote.
- Question has been sent out to all clusters and departments to volunteer to be in the group to represent staff during the interaction with the final candidates for the Director position. The selection has been made by RSC representatives. The core group will consist of 7-8 members, and there will be substitutes in case someone happen to be unavailable. The group will also consist of union representatives and will meet separately before the scheduled interaction in order to prepare.
- Reflections and recommendations from staff to the Governing Board will be channeled through the Staff Observer (or Deputy Staff Observer) after the interactions, as input for the Board's decision in January.

6.3..1. Other recruitments

- Senior Researcher – Sahel and West Africa Programme (R)
- Senior Researcher – Climate Change and Risk Programme (R)
- Events Assistants (2x) temporary positions to work with the Forum (A decision is still pending on whether employment will be offered, due to the current financial situation).

6.3..1. Other personnel matters

- HR updated on ongoing temporary contract investigations.
- There was a discussion regarding the notice period and handling of time-limited contracts for researchers. Saco-S noted that there has been limited dialogue with the unions on this matter and suggested reviewing the agreement. It was agreed that HR and union representatives would review the agreement and processes in a separate meeting.

7. Discussion of Issues Raised in Advance

7.1. Time reporting for union/representative work

- Discussion how to handle reporting time for union/representative work was held, and it was proposed to continue with the suggestion from previous meeting: Chairs report 10 hours and other union board members report 5 hours in Maconomy and to individually keep track in the side. Suggestion from Employer was do a follow-up on this in March 2025.
- When and how information is shared within the Coop Group about staff contracts — renewals, non-renewals, new contracts, etc. was discussed under 6.3.1.

7.2. When and how the Governing Board will receive the staff survey results

- The Board will receive information about the staff survey both in writing (a paragraph in the Director/Deputy Director report to the Board) and in the presentation during the Board meeting.

7.3. The role of the SMT as a team in the Director recruitment interviews in December was discussed under 6.3.1.

8. Topic of the Month

8.1. Work environment (was discussed under item 5)

- It was proposed to discuss initial reactions to the staff survey in the Cooperation Group 12 December.
- The routine and planning of the "Topic of the Month" were discussed. It was concluded that the group would revisit this topic in a future meeting

9. Any Other Business

9.1. Holiday Gathering

- Based on feedback from the survey on this topic, showing a preference for a drink rather than dinner, staff and the SIPRI Board will be invited to a pre-Christmas Gathering on December 16th.

10. Next Meeting is scheduled for December 12th, 10:00 to 12:00, in the Seminar Room.

Minutes taker:

Signed by:
Simon Herrman
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Simon Herrman

Minutes checker:

Signed by:
Kheira Tarif
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Kheira Tarif (Saco-S)

Signed by:
Charlotta Sparre
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Charlotta Sparre, Deputy Director