

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

2 April 2025

MINUTES

Participants

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

Note-taker

Sofie Waller Snygg

Format

Hybrid meeting

AGENDA

1. Minutes

- SMT approved the 12 March meeting minutes but has yet to approve the minutes from 26 March.

2. Matters arising

- SMT tentatively scheduled the next away day for 3 June but discussed the possibility of dividing it into two half-days, due to a potential visit to Stockholm by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, on 3 or 4 June. SMT will revisit this once his availability is confirmed.
- Sofie has drafted a policy review schedule, which will be shared with SMT ahead of next week's meeting.

3. Report back

a) Sweden

- The visit by the MFA Diplomatic Training Programme on 31 March was a success – many thanks again to everyone involved.
- The financial situation of the PD cluster is currently looking promising with several new contracts finalized recently across both programmes.

b) Relations with other countries

- SIPRI will convene a North Korea dialogue on 5–6 May, likely at Steninge Slott. The dialogue will include European and Korean experts and SIPRI staff (e.g. Fei, Tytti).

- SMT briefly discussed the need to document SIPRI's dialogue initiatives and to gather institutional knowledge before Dan's departure from SIPRI. It was agreed that SMT should revisit this in a future meeting.
- Charlotta updated SMT on the planning of the Nordic-Baltic Group meeting. While the tentative date of 29 April is still under consideration, it is increasingly likely that the meeting will be postponed until after the summer due to scheduling conflicts and staff movements within the MFA.

c) Relations with other organizations

- On Tuesday, Charlotta attended a meeting of the Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security, which includes several Swedish-based organizations working on climate-security issues to explore future collaboration. A smaller follow-up meeting will be held in late May with involved organizations and key stakeholders. A high-level meeting is envisioned for the autumn, pending further planning.
- On 8 April, Uppsala University's Rotary Peace Fellows will visit SIPRI for briefings on CCR (by Florian and Barbara) and Peace Operations (by Claudia).
- Together with FES, Jair and Gretchen are organizing a meeting in Dakar on the new geopolitics of conflict management, taking place next week.
- Together with Gretchen, Charlotta is exploring the possibility of hosting a Women, Peace and Security (WPS) roundtable during the margins of the SIPRI Forum, involving participants from different regions.
- Dan has joined a high-level panel on social protection in fragile and conflict-affected states, co-chaired by the UK and Somalia. Meetings (hybrid) are planned for April and September.

d) Operations

- SIPRI has formally submitted an application to become a beneficiary of the Postcode Lottery. The necessary documentation for the 90-account has also been submitted and is currently under review.

e) Comms

- Preparations for the upcoming MILEX data launch are progressing well.
- Preparations for the Forum are also moving along nicely. Skatteverket has now confirmed that participants of the FORUM can be charged through the Forum's platform. SMT approved for outreach to move forward with setting this up.

4. Delegation visits

- N/A

5. Review of finances and strategic fundraising priorities

a) Review

- SMT received a presentation from Kristina on SIPRI's liquidity situation. The report was sent out to the Governing Board and Staff last week. The report will also be presented to staff at the 3 April RSC meeting.
- Moreover, SMT discussed when to remove the "unidentified projects" line in the budget and financial forecasts. This will need to be followed up on.

- It was noted that due to the strength of the Swedish krona, SIPRI may incur exchange rate losses on certain grants.

b) Fundraising

- SMT agreed to start planning longer-term fundraising priorities soon, including early efforts for 2026 and beyond. SMT to schedule a strategic fundraising discussion in the coming weeks, potentially with input from Claire and Fred, to ensure shared awareness of major initiatives and responsibilities. Luc to take this forward.
- As part of the preparations for the Forum, Claire is preparing a document for Forum-related bilaterals, including key messages and meeting objectives to streamline fundraising efforts across the institute. SMT to discuss this further after the easter break.

c) Due diligence

- N/A

6. Intern policy

- SMT discussed SIPRI's internship policy and decided that a smaller group of SMT members, together with Clarisa, would review possible options and present them to the full SMT for further discussion after the Easter break.

7. Zondera action plan

- SMT discussed the institute-wide Zondera action plan and, based on staff feedback, identified some key actions to address the issues raised—among them, ways to strengthen the relationship between SMT and the wider institute. SMT members will continue populating the plan.
- SMT also discussed the role of the RSC in ongoing institute-wide dialogue, as raised in the cooperation group. More information about its role going forward will be shared at the RSC meeting on 3 April.

8. Staffing / HR

- The negotiations with the unions (MBL) are ongoing.
- SMT decided that researchers joining SIPRI for a longer period than 2-3 months will hold the title "Visiting Researcher".

9. AOB

- Following a discussion initiated in the A&D cluster, SMT addressed growing concerns around travel to the US. SMT confirmed that no staff member is ever required to travel if they do not feel comfortable doing so. While SIPRI does not have the expertise to provide formal advice, staff are of course welcome to discuss individual cases with SMT members.
- Researchers can request a clean laptop and/or phone from IT if they prefer not to travel with their personal devices.

10. Next week's SMT agenda

- Besides the weekly recurring agenda items, SMT will also discuss:
 - o Cluster finances

- KPIs and risk assessment (as part of preparations for the Governing Board meeting in May)
- Updated fire safety procedures
- Policy review schedule

11. Executive session

- SMT held an executive session.

Action items:

- Sofie to circulate the draft SIPRI policy review schedule ahead of next week's SMT meeting.
- Also, carried over from last week's minutes:
 - Florian and Luc to:
 - Create a calendar for the 2025 strategic grant activities (roundtables and publications).
 - Coordinate strategic grant calendar with Steph, Joey and Marti.
 - Schedule a general planning meeting to introduce strategic grant activities to relevant colleagues.

Follow-up items

- SMT to revisit the date of the June away day (pending Filippo Grandi's visit).
- SMT to return to the topic of documenting SIPRI's dialogue initiatives.
- SMT to discuss bilateral meetings for the Forum.
- Strategic fundraising discussion