

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

23 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 2 and 9 April meeting minutes but has yet to approve the minutes from 16 April.

2. Matters arising

- SMT members were reminded to review and comment on the KPI document by close of business on 25 April.
- Kristina is updating the fire safety procedures based on feedback from SMT. The revised version will be shared with SMT in due course.
- Charlotta has sent a proposal to the Governing Board requesting approval for SIPRI to establish an overdraft facility.
- Luc has sent a budget proposal to the International Tax and Investment Center (ITIC) regarding a proposed event on regional cooperation in Central Asia on 12 June.
- We are waiting for a response from UNHCR regarding Filippo Grandi's visit to Stockholm in June. SMT agreed to take the go-no-go decision at its next meeting.

3. Report back

a) Sweden

- SIPRI and FBA agreed on the infrastructure for peace project under SIPRI's MoU with FBA. The project adds SEK 600,000 in funding on top of the previously confirmed SEK 300,000 for 2025. The project will extend into 2026. FBA indicated that they will also fund this follow-up component.

b) Relations with other countries

- On 22 April, Luc and Barbara attended a King's Day event hosted by the Dutch Embassy, which strongly focused on Ukraine and NATO, and Sweden's role in NATO.
- Jair has been approached by the Danish MFA, which has expressed an interest in work on civilian CSDP. This could lead to new funding opportunities.

c) Relations with other organizations

- On 22 April, Sibylle participated in a commemoration in Ypres marking 110 years since the first large-scale use of chemical weapons. The ceremony was attended by high-level military and diplomatic representatives. The event highlighted a strong, non-politicized commitment to peace and disarmament. Sibylle is exploring ways for SIPRI to re-engage in work on chemical weapons, including through cooperation with the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and with the City of Ypres.
- On 23 April, Florian had a positive meeting with the Bosch Foundation's peace pillar. There was discussion of SIPRI and Bosch Foundation potentially organizing an event similar to the roundtables SIPRI annually organises with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other partner organizations.
- Food, Peace and Security programme colleagues are in Dakar this week for a series of meetings.
- Gretchen and Bárbara are currently in Bishkek for the Global Mountain Dialogue on Sustainable Development and for interviews related to the OSCE project on gender and climate security.
- SIPRI has signed the Long-Term Agreement (LTA) with the World Food Programme for the future provision of research services for three years. This LTA can be used by other UN agencies to procure similar services.
- SIPRI will be a partner in an event on quantum governance in Kenya later this year. The event is an officially designated activity for the International Year of Quantum Science and Technology (IYQ). The event will be co-hosted by the Kenyan government's Tech Envoy and held at the UNESCO compound in Nairobi. There might be some openings for partnerships and funding avenues beyond the A&D cluster.

d) Comms

- On 23 April, the World Military Expenditure data was released under embargo. There has been overwhelming interest and significant media engagement.
- Outreach colleagues are in ongoing conversations with Forum partners, FBA and Sida, regarding branding and visibility.

4. Delegation visits

- The Sweden-based Defence Attaché network has requested a briefing at SIPRI on the institute's databases. Two dates are under consideration, either during the week beginning 5 May (timing and room availability permitting), or on 19 May. Steph will update SMT once a date has been confirmed.

5. Review of finances and strategic fundraising priorities

a) Review

- SIPRI has now secured approximately SEK 50 million in grants for 2025 (compared to SEK 56 million secured during all of 2024).
- Currency fluctuations, particularly the appreciation of the Swedish krona against the US dollar and other currencies, are having a negative impact on SIPRI's finances.
- SIPRI's liquidity situation remains fragile but manageable.

b) Fundraising

- Bilateral meetings at the 2025 Stockholm Forum will be discussed at the fundraising coordination meeting on 24 April.
- On 25 April, Florian, Luc, Nikos, Fred and Sofie will meet to fine-tune the strategic grant budget. SMT agreed that the budget figures should be presented at the next SMT (30 April) for review and provisional sign-off.
- SMT stressed the importance of minimising direct costs within the strategic grant budget to maintain flexibility for covering salary costs, while remaining strategically sound.

c) Due diligence

- N/A

6. Bilateral meetings at the 2025 Stockholm Forum

- SMT held an initial discussion on bilateral meetings to be arranged during the 2025 Stockholm Forum. Claire joined SMT for this agenda item.
- SMT members were asked to review the list of Forum participants and indicate, by Friday 25 April, if there is anyone Stefan, Dan, or other SIPRI colleagues should have bilaterals with.

7. Risk assessment

- SMT reviewed the updated institutional risk assessment, which will be submitted to the Governing Board in May 2025. Kristina to revise the risk assessment based on the discussion before it is circulated to the Governing Board.

8. Review of SIPRI's policies: First batch

- SMT held a discussion on the first set of policies under the 2025 review schedule: the Anti-Corruption Policy and the Policy on Ethical Due Diligence on Financial Sponsorship. Sofie will revise both policies based on feedback from SMT and circulate updated versions for further review.

9. Staffing / HR

- SMT approved Katongo's upcoming travel to Kinshasa for the launch of the SIPRI/FBA paper, organized in collaboration with the Swedish Embassy.

10. Next week's SMT agenda

- Besides the weekly recurring agenda items, SMT will also discuss
 - o Strategic Grant budgeting and allocation
 - o Key performance indicators (KPIs).

11. AOB

- Due to a scheduling conflict with the A&D Saudi training course, SMT agreed to move the RSC meeting to Tuesday, 29 April, from 10.30 to 12.00, to allow participation by key staff.
- SMT was informed that Claire has been elected as the Staff Observer to the Governing Board. Barbara will stay on as deputy Staff Observer; a second election will not be required.

12. Executive session

- SMT held an executive session.

Action items:

- All SMT members to review and comment on the KPI document by 25 April.
- Kristina to revise and circulate the updated fire safety procedures.
- Steph to follow up with UNHCR regarding Filippo Grandi's visit to Stockholm in June and inform SMT if no response is received by early May.
- Steph to confirm date for the Defence Attaché network visit and update SMT.
- SMT members to review the Forum participant list and suggest bilateral meetings by Friday, 25 April; Priscilla to begin scheduling meetings next week.
- Kristina to revise the institutional risk assessment and circulate it to the Governing Board.
- Sofie to revise and circulate updated drafts of the Anti-Corruption Policy and the Policy on Ethical Due Diligence.
- Florian and Luc to finalize strategic grant budget figures.
- Karin to meet with DoSs regarding cluster finances

Follow-up items:

- SMT to revisit the date of the June away day (pending Filippo Grandi's visit)
- Strategic fundraising discussion