

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING

28 May 2025

MINUTES

Participants

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

Absent

Sibylle Bauer

Note-taker

Sofie Waller Snygg

Format

Virtual

AGENDA

1. Minutes

- SMT has yet to approve the minutes from 21 May.

2. Matters arising

- SMT members were reminded to send their summer leave dates to Sofie and Priscilla.
- SMT approved the revised Anti-Corruption and Whistleblower Policies. Charlotta/Kristina will send them to the Cooperation Group for review and final approval.
- In relation to the proposed training course for Qatari diplomats (more information in the minutes from 21 May), SMT noted that a communication will be sent to the Qatari Embassy to facilitate coordination with their Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Charlotta will lead further follow-up.

3. Report back

a) Relations with other countries

- On 22 May, Charlotta participated in a roundtable on 'how to keep the Agenda of Women, Peace and Security in focus, improve implementation and recognize opportunities', hosted by the German Embassy. The event included representatives from the German Foreign Ministry, armed forces and civil society.

- Steph conveyed greetings from the Saudi Ambassador, whom she met at her goodbye reception. The Ambassador expressed appreciation for SIPRI's recent training for Saudi diplomats, noting that it was very well received. She also conveyed an interest in making such training an annual activity. SMT will discuss the strategic direction and logistical considerations for future training courses—including, but not limited to, those offered to Saudi diplomats—at the SMT away day on 3 June.
- Florian reported on a productive meeting with the UAE Development Agency. The agency has expressed interest in future collaboration, including a potential training on water, food and climate security.

b) Comms

- On 26 May, the Multilateral Peace Operations data was successfully launched. Congratulations to all colleagues involved!
- Draft press materials for the SIPRI Yearbook 2025 launch will be shared with Dan, Charlotta and Sibylle on Friday, with a request for feedback by Monday.
- Invitations for the Central Asia event on 12 June have now been issued.

c) Operations

- A fire drill was successfully conducted on 26 May. Since the drill, over 30 colleagues have responded to the feedback survey on how the fire safety routines can be improved. A key takeaway was that the alarm volume was too low, and steps will be taken to address this.
- The issue regarding the Oxford University Press (OUP) book shipment appears resolved after a new contact was identified.

4. Delegation visits

- On 9 June, SIPRI will host a closed-door roundtable with the Qatari Embassy, marking the visit of H.E. Dr Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al-Khulaifi, Minister of State at Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A key figure in Qatar's mediation efforts, Dr Al-Khulaifi leads several high-level diplomatic tracks across the Middle East, Africa and beyond. The roundtable will allow for open exchange with a small group of Swedish and, if possible, other Nordic experts and practitioners.

5. Review of finances and strategic fundraising priorities

a) Review

- SMT discussed the need to begin internal reflection on the financing of the 2026 edition of the SIPRI Yearbook and agreed to include this as an item on the away day agenda.

b) Fundraising

- SMT discussed the importance of initiating early planning for SIPRI's 2026 budget and agreed that key topics—such as cluster-level finances—should be addressed at the 4 June away day and further developed in dialogue with the incoming Director once he arrives in the fall.
- SMT also agreed to include a strategic and logistical discussion on SIPRI's training activities in the away day agenda. There has been a growing demand and interest

from partners in training in the armament and non-proliferation domain, but also beyond.

c) Due diligence

- SMT reviewed a formal request from Google to include SIPRI's open-access databases in its "Data Commons" platform and related tools such as Gemini and Data Gemma. Google proposed to aggregate SIPRI's data under a CC-BY 4.0 license to improve accessibility through natural language search and AI tools. SMT acknowledged the potential for greater visibility but raised several concerns (with feedback from Nan and Mathew):
 - o The proposal includes no financial compensation and would divert traffic away from SIPRI's own platforms.
 - o The databases are considered intangible assets in SIPRI's financial reporting, and licensing decisions can affect how they are valued by auditors.
 - o There is a strategic and reputational consideration in ensuring SIPRI retains control over its data and brand identity.
 - SMT concluded that SIPRI will not engage with Google's proposal at this time. Steph will inform relevant colleagues of the decision.
- SMT discussed a request from SIPRI's bank, SEB, for SIPRI to provide expert advice on the space industry as part of the bank's internal investment assessment. SMT expressed concern about the expectation of SIPRI providing pro bono input and agreed that any such advisory services should be offered on a fee-paying basis. Steph and Kristina will follow up to define an appropriate rate and respond to SEB.

6. UN Misconduct Disclosure Scheme

- SMT held a discussion and approved an endorsement from SIPRI of a [Misconduct Disclosure Scheme](#), which is a requirement for some UN funding. The Scheme is facilitated by the [Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response](#) and hosted by the [CHS Alliance](#), with funding from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office; it is implemented by [the following organizations](#). SMT agreed that this is an important and appropriate step for the institute. Dan will lead the follow-up on this.

7. SMT Away Day agenda

- SMT agreed to include the following items on the agenda for the 3 June away day:
 - o Zondera follow-up
 - o SIPRI's budget model and cluster finances
 - o SIPRI Yearbook 2026
 - o Training courses

8. Staffing / HR

- N/A

9. Next SMT agenda

- SMT agreed not to hold a regular SMT meeting on 4 June due to the away day.

10. AOB

- N/A

11. Executive session

- N/A

Action items:

- SMT to send their summer leave dates to Sofie and Priscilla
- Charlotta and Kristina to send revised policies to the Cooperation Group
- Steph to inform relevant colleagues that SIPRI will not proceed with the Google Data Commons proposal.
- Steph and Kristina to define an appropriate rate for advisory services and respond to SEB regarding their request for input.
- Dan to initiate SIPRI's formal endorsement and registration for the UN Misconduct Disclosure Scheme.
- Charlotta to coordinate next steps with the Qatari Embassy regarding a potential training course for diplomats.

Follow-up items:

- Strategic fundraising discussion