
MINUTES OF THE DIGNITY BOARD MEETING 11 DECEMBER 2025

AT DIGNITY, Bryggervangen 55, Copenhagen

PARTICIPANTS: Emil Kiørboe, Una Marquard-Busk, Anna Mette Nathan, Marie Louise Nørredam, Maja Lærke Kielsholm, Peter Vedel Kessing

ON TEAMS: Lotte Leicht (until 4.30 p.m., incl. items 5 & 6),

ABSENT: Bettina Jæger, Lars Udsholt, Manfred Nowak, Nomfundo Mogapi, Lotte Leicht (from 4.30 p.m.),

FROM MANAGEMENT: Rasmus Grue Christensen

GUESTS: CFO Kåre Månsson at item 6 Budget 2026, Communication Director Tarek Omar and Director of Accountability & Prevention Dept. Therese Rytter at item 5 Advocacy

REFERENT: Mette Grimstrup

1. Approval of agenda of board meeting 11 December 2025

The agenda was approved. As Chairman Lars Udsholt was unable to attend, Anna Mette Nathan (AMN) chaired the meeting. The order of the agenda was adjusted so that the budget was discussed before advocacy, followed by the orientation items. Item 8, Board's 15 min, was dropped.

2. Orientation from the Chairperson

AMN announced that she has decided not to stand for re-election when her term expires in 2026. A new representative to the board will be appointed by the Danish Medical Association. Board members were encouraged to consider standing for election to the Executive Committee, which will be appointed at the annual board seminar in January.

The board seminar on 29-30 January 2026 was briefly presented: a two-day residential seminar focusing on strategy and board work. On Thursday, the Clinic's advisory board will participate, while Friday is set aside for two strategic discussions: human rights in a new geopolitical reality and localisation in our international work. Kenneth Roth, former director of Human Rights Watch, will participate in person on Friday, and the management team is invited to attend. The board was encouraged to complete the board evaluation form prior to the seminar.

3. Orientation from the CEO

Rasmus Grue Christensen (RGC) gave an overall status report on the organisation's situation. Overall, it was emphasised that DIGNITY remains strong organisationally, financially and strategically, even though the global context is characterised by pressure and instability.

Internationally, the organisation is working intensively on the implementation of major programmes, including DED-funded initiatives in Africa, DAPP in the Middle East and North Africa, and programmes in Eastern Europe, including Ukraine and Belarus. The project in Ukraine and Belarus has just been extended for another two years. New projects are prepared in Egypt and Syria. There is also dialogue with donors on a new programme to support traumatized Ukrainian veterans.

Information was provided on continued political pressure in several countries, where we operate, and where we must navigate administrative and political challenges.

National rehabilitation treats a historically high number of patients. The health care reform is a major agenda, both as a risk and as an opportunity. It is a very comprehensive process for the regions, but we are currently moderately optimistic about the clinic's future prospects.

RGC also reported on three recent successful conferences organized by DIGNITY – including a Nordic trauma conference, a conference in Parliament on justice for war crimes, and a meeting attended by all 27 EU countries – where the combination of DIGNITY's expert knowledge and the testimonies of torture survivors had a major impact. He emphasised that the organisation has developed significantly in bringing forth the voices of survivors, which is also considered to be very meaningful for the survivors themselves.

Finally, information was provided on organisational matters: a new HR director has been appointed, the salary round has been completed, and a new working time agreement has been adopted.

The board asked clarifying questions about EU funding, regional treatment models, and cooperation with other actors. There was strong support for the policy of close cooperation with survivors.

4. Disposition in the EC

Projects above DKK 4 million approved by the Executive Committee (EC):

The EC was informed by email of a comprehensive application to continue our projects in Ukraine and Belarus. This is a 'top-up' to a previously approved project. The EC had approved by email.

5. ADVOCACY

Communication Director Tarek Omar (TAO) and Director of Prevention & Accountability Therese Rytter (TR) presented DIGNITY's national and international advocacy work, respectively.

TAO focused on the recent victories – the criminalisation of torture in Danish law and the significant reduction in the use of disciplinary punishments in Denmark – and the dilemmas of navigating challenging political agendas, while TR emphasised the strengths of working with both national and international institutions, anchoring local changes to international regulations and vice versa.

Both underscored the importance of research- and practice-based interventions and long-term strategic commitments.

The board discussed what has made the criminalisation of torture in Danish law possible, including the significance of the war in Ukraine. The board raised questions about the balance between alliances and credibility, especially at a time when human rights are under pressure and organisations may experience expectations to engage broadly in campaigns outside their core competence.

The management explained the criteria used in assessing advocacy engagements, including mandate, own professional knowledge, resource consumption, and expected impact, as well as consideration for the safety of partners. It was emphasized that DIGNITY often says no and that the organisation attaches strong importance to maintaining high professional credibility.

The board widely recognized DIGNITY's work in this area. It was emphasized that the organisation's material is solid, useful, and unique – also in a UN context – and that the approach of maintaining credibility is the right one.

New and future fronts for human rights work were also discussed, including courts as a central arena, asylum and reception centres, AI, cyber harassment, and the need to reach out more to new global players such as the BRICS countries. Questions about the role of research in advocacy and about DIGNITY's position in relation to EU asylum policy were also touched upon.

Overall, the board expressed strong support for the current approach and recognition that DIGNITY is making a real difference – both nationally and internationally.

6. Budget 2026

CFO Kåre Månsson presented the 2026 budget. The budget shows stable revenue of approximately DKK 250 million and an expected result of approximately DKK 0.5 million. Core revenue, excluding DAPP, is approximately DKK 160-170 million. The profit margin of 7-9% is considered to be in line with donor expectations.

Capacity costs have risen from approximately 5 to 7% since 2024 as a result of investments in, among other things, GDPR, data protection, and security, but are now expected to remain stable.

Equity is above the board's target, which was considered appropriate in an unstable global context. Equity is used, among other things, for renovation and investments in strategic areas. The CEO explained the historical development of equity and emphasised the importance of robustness in relation to fluctuations in revenue.

The board inquired why it seems that there will be a decrease in budget from 2025 to 2026 to which it was noted that the apparent decrease in the budget reflects a conservative approach, as the 2026 budget includes only funds that are currently committed and additional funding is expected to be included as the year progresses. Board members also raised questions regarding the strategic approach to grant opportunities that do not meet the contribution level of 7–9%. In response, it was clarified that such grants are currently assessed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

Finally, questions were asked about the difference between the expected results for the Clinic in 2025 and 2026, which was explained by cautious budgeting and changes in the financing of clinical research.

The board approved the 2026 budget.

7. AOB

Nothing at the moment.

8. Board's 15 min

Cancelled.