
MINUTES OF DIGNITY BOARD MEETING JANUARY 18, 2023

AT Hotel Babette Guldsmeden, Bredgade 76, Copenhagen

PARTICIPANTS: Dea Seidenfaden, Lars Udsholt, Anna Mette Nathan, Emil Kiørboe, Nomfundo Mogapi, Louise Holck, Tomas Martin, Marie Louise Nørredam (from 15.40, pt. 5), Lotte Leicht

ABSENT: Sadia Khan, Manfred Nowak

FROM MANAGEMENT: Rasmus Grue Christensen

GUESTS:

REFERENT: Mette Grimstrup

1. Approval of agenda of board meeting January 18, 2024

The agenda was approved.

2. Orientation from the Chairperson

Tomas Martin and RGC reported from the working group on research: The group has had 3 meetings, focusing on localization and decolonization of research, challenges of external fundraising, and internal research culture in the organization, respectively. The group has both come up with concrete advice and usable input to the strategy process. An external guest will attend the next board meeting for a joint session in the board on different research issues.

Louise Holck has asked to step down from the Executive Committee. The board agreed to elect a new Deputy Chairperson under item 8.

The board was informed that Lars Udsholt had agreed to stand for the role as Deputy Chairperson and that Lotte Leicht would still like to continue as member of the EC.

3. Orientation from the CEO

Rasmus Grue Christensen (RGC) reported from the last few weeks.

Most of the time has been spent preparing for the review from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They focus mainly on activities under the DED – the main agreement with the ministry – but are also looking more broadly at DIGNITY's international activities. The review team will focus especially on activities in Uganda, Liberia, and Ukraine.

At the last review 4 years ago, there was a lot of praise for DIGNITY's expertise, but also recommendations to localize the activities more, reach further, and let more people benefit from the expertise. Fortunately, we can conclude that we have followed the recommendations and succeeded in implementation of the

recommendations, also at a higher degree of localization and reaching more people than expected. Last time the review became an engine for internal changes. It will probably function likewise this time, as a strong supplement to the coming strategy process.

Other subjects: We have been very visible on issues related to the Gaza conflict, including accountability for war crimes, the ICJ court case, and prison conditions in Israel.

We have been very active on Danish support to a ceasefire and Danish support to the ICC, which has actually increased. We have also argued strongly for an increase in Danish support to Palestinian and Israeli human rights organizations.

The board gave its full support to DIGNITY's stance in the Gaza war.

4. Disposition in the EC

Projects above 4 mio. DKK approved by the EC: None since the last meeting in December.

5. Workshop and review of the board evaluation

The board then had a short workshop, divided into groups, on the board's own functioning and focus, based on the annual self-evaluation.

Generally, the board found that it still worked well, with good and trustful relations between the board, the EC, and the director, and well-functioning meetings and planning throughout the year, which was also reflected in the self-evaluation. There was focus on letting other voices be heard at the meetings – e.g. by inviting staff, external guests or partners from the global south to the meetings, or possibly by creating a link to the newly established advisory board at the clinic. And attention to the difficulty of onboarding board members to the complexity of DIGNITY's organization.

The board will follow up on the discussions at the next board meeting.

6. Strategic priorities 2024

RGC shortly presented the priorities for 2024. There are not many new endeavors, as 2024 will be a busy year, with the strategy process, MFA review and negotiations, several new major grants, and perhaps moving the premises also. The strategic priorities 2024 is also the last document in this strategy period.

The board praised the format and document, including the careful follow-up and monitoring. There was a short discussion about the focus on creating synergy and collaboration between the different departments in the organization, and on how to keep management accountable for the goals, as some of the focus areas were a bit difficult to measure. RGC confirmed that good collaboration was one of the key issues and a continued focus area – and acknowledged that it was worth contemplating more concrete indications of accomplishment of some of the more "lofty" goals.

The board approved of the document.

7. Election of the Executive Committee

The board elected Lars Udsholt as Deputy Chairperson and approved of the Executive Committee consisting of Dea Seidenfaden, Lars Udsholt and Lotte Leicht.

8. AOB

Nothing to report.

9. Preparing for CEO development interview

Closed item.

On Friday, Jan 19, 2024, the board and management group had a seminar focusing on the coming strategy period 2025-30. Themes and conclusions from the seminar's discussions will be presented at the next board meeting and at the internal strategy process in DIGNITY.