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## MINUTES OF DIGNITY BOARD MEETING JUNE 20, 2024

AT DIGNITY, Bryggervangen 55, Cph

PARTICIPANTS: Dea Seidenfaden, Lars Udsholt, Emil Kiørboe (till 4 pm., on teams), Louise Holck, Tomas Martin, Lotte Leicht (on teams), Anna Mette Nathan, Sadia Khan, Marie Louise Nørredam,

ABSENT: Nomfundo Mogapi, Manfred Nowak, Emil Kiørboe (from 4 pm)

FROM MANAGEMENT: Rasmus Grue Christensen

GUESTS: Morten Olesen, COO and IP director, and Therese Rytter, director of P&A, at pt. 5 – International Strategy

REFERENT: Mette Grimstrup (MG)

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### **1. Approval of agenda of board meeting Jun 20, 2024**

The agenda was approved. Dea Seidenfaden (DS) noted that the agenda has been prioritized, so that the meeting's focus will be on the discussion points 5 and 6 – International Strategy and Board composition, respectively.

### **2. Orientation from the Chairperson**

DS has spent some time going through papers and procedures in order to secure the chairmanship succession in 2025, where both Dea Seidenfaden and Louise Holck will leave the board. At the next board meeting, updating the Rules of procedure will be on the agenda.

Anna Mette Nathan is not in the board of the Danish Medical Association (DMA) anymore, but she might continue in DIGNITY's board anyway. The DMA board will decide on the appointment at their next board meeting.

### **3. Orientation from the CEO**

Orientation by Rasmus Grue Christensen (RGC):

DIGNITY has been quite visible lately, includ. We are very well received, but it is also felt that we are entering into some very heated debates.

Negotiations with the Ministry of foreign Affairs (MFA) are running smoothly, although we are still awaiting the final decisions on the economy. DIGNITY is planning for a growth of DKK 15 mio., but as all development funds are now being relocated to climate change, the outcome of the negotiations is still unpredictable.

With regards to the physical premises, we have decided to stay here at Bryggervangen. An extension of the lease contract is to be signed one of these days. Based on the assumption, among other things, that any organizational growth in the coming years will be outside of DK.

#### **4. Disposition in the EC**

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

- The project on documenting Israeli war crimes in Gaza has finally been approved by the MFA.
- We have applied for a project under “Digital Democracy Initiative”, on online violence against women
- We have also applied for a American grant on documentation of war crimes in Myanmar
- A grant on documentation of war crimes in Liberia is also upcoming

The board thanked for the orientation. Thomas Martin commented that the IP department has been a bit hectic, lately, due to the many calls and project applications.

#### **5. International Strategy**

RGC briefly outlined the process: This is the first draft of the International Strategy, to be further developed in collaboration with employees, partners etc. after the summer holidays. It is also only the first half of the strategy, as the other half, concerning the communication, research and HR strategy will be developed after the overall strategic objectives have been outlined.

Therese Rytter, P&A director, and Morten Olesen, IP director, presented the draft international strategy. Focus is on consolidating DIGNITY’s three core intervention areas: Prevention, accountability and rehabilitation, through international programmes, advocacy and research. Cross cutting elements will be survivor centered interventions, local leadership and cost efficiency.

The board thanked for the exemplary clear presentation. There were a few remarks concerning the format – it was noted that the presentation of the three overall objectives should be structured similarly in the strategy, if possible. Apart from that, the board discussed the recurring question about the balance between DIGNITY’s Danish anchoring and international aspirations, and the focus on DIGNITY’s core mandate and consolidation in the present strategy. It was agreed that whereas the last strategy period reflected the sense that DIGNITY had to change – this strategy more self-confidently declares to continue doing what we already do, just better and more.

The board, however, suggested that the context description is given a bit more consideration, also in order to focus not only on the sinister sides of the present development – shrinking civic space, rise of authoritarianism, climate change and armed conflicts etc. – but also on the more positive development trends that DIGNITY should engage in – shifting balances, a stronger global South m.m. This would also enhance a more decolonial perspective with more focus on global South agents and possible alliances.

Finally, the board also agreed that DIGNITY had a job to do in developing the Danish language on the subject. “Accountability” and “advocacy” are terms that doesn’t translate well into Danish, but it is necessary to be able to describe in a comprehensible language what DIGNITY does, also in Denmark.

Therese Rytter and Morten Olesen thanked the board for a very fruitful discussion. The strategy will be presented to the board again for final approval in December 2024.

## **6. MFA review – board composition**

The EC proposes to accommodate the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)'s recommendation regarding a financial advisor. This can be done in different ways. EC suggests a solution, also recommended by the MFA, that an independent financial advisor is connected ad-hoc, in order to advise the EC at the meetings that deal with DIGNITY's budget and accounts.

The board agreed with the pragmatic solution. It was proposed that this is tested as a pilot for a while, then evaluated and possibly changed, if relevant. It was also suggested that the advisor meet the board at one of the two annual meetings. Both suggestions were approved by the board.

The board's rules of procedure will be adjusted accordingly at the board meeting in September 2024.

## **7. Status on Strategic Priorities 2024**

As a tool for implementing DIGNITY's strategies, the board annually approves a number of specific strategic priorities for the coming year. This is a mid-term review of the strategic priorities for 2024.

The board noted that DIGNITY is well on track with most points, and that the status paper still provides a good overview of DIGNITY's endeavors.

## **8. Budget revision 2024**

The 2024 budget is revised slightly, as there is a small decline in revenue, but we are still expecting to end up with a small surplus. Things might still change during the fall, though.

The board approved the budget revision 2024.

## **9. WPA and action plan**

RGC briefly presented the Work Place Assessment report (WPA) and action plan 2024. Overall, it is fortunately a good WPA, with progress in most areas since the last WPA (2021) and a good overall result compared to benchmarks. However, there are of course also areas that need to be addressed in the follow-up. Among other things, the management team has discussed the figures for stress, feedback culture in the organization, trust in management etc.

The action plan follows up on the areas identified in the report, and also has an overall focus on developing the framework for a good working environment both physically and mentally.

RGC also told that in the coming years, we plan to do more employee surveys on an ongoing basis and introduce employee representatives and staff surveys in country offices also.

The board acknowledged both the result and the proactive public communication about it. Tomas Martin, staff representative in the board, also added that generally the process around the WPA has been very well run, with good communication, involvement of staff etc.

The board will be updated once a year on the implementation of the WPA action plan.

#### **10. Annual Risk Assessment 2024**

RGC presented: In 2023, the board went more in-depth into the area, this year it's more of an orientation point. Focus is still very much on data security. We have hired a full-time GDPR employee and designated GDPR managers in each department. We have also looked at our travel security, and an external consultant has done a review of our setup. Basically it is in good shape, but there were still good suggestions for improvement. We also have more focus on physical security and are considering whether we should do something about the physical access conditions.

Sadia Khan told that the clinic experiences more contacts from mentally vulnerable people, perhaps due to increased visibility. RGC confirmed that there is attention to the increased visibility and related risk factors.

The board thanked for the orientation.

#### **11. Board meetings 2025**

The board approved of the board meeting plan for 2025.

#### **12. AOB**

It was noted that it was a shame that the international board members were absent from the international strategy discussions. MG will contact them to hear if they have comments.

#### **13. Board's 15 min**

Closed item.