

MINUTES

Minutes from Danish SDC board meeting, 21 September 2011, 11.00-12.30

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Page 1/6

The meeting was conducted as a video conference meeting.

Present at AAU: Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen (AU, Chair)

Present at ITU: Jørgen Staunstrup (ITU), Nils O. Andersen (KU), Martin Bendsøe (DTU), Ib Poulsen (RUC)

Present at SDU: Henrik Pedersen (SDU)

Lene Lange (AAU) and Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard (CBS) were absent with notice.

Executive Director Hans Gregersen and Special Advisor Morten Laugesen represented the SDC-secretariat.

Agenda:

1. Approval of agenda
2. Approval of minutes from Danish SDC board meeting, 21 June 2011
3. Brief status of SDC activities since last board meeting
4. SDC accounts for 2nd quarter 2011
5. SDC directors joint budget 2011-12
6. Long term stationing of Danish personnel in China
7. Other issues

1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes from Danish SDC board meeting, 21 June 2011

The minutes were approved.

3. Brief status of SDC activities since last board meeting

Hans Gregersen informed the board about the most important activities taking place since the last board meeting:

a. GUCAS delegation visit in August 2011

A GUCAS delegation led by Executive Vice President Deng Yong visited Denmark in early August to discuss the unresolved issue of SDC paying a “campus fee” to GUCAS for each student. At a meeting between the GUCAS delegation and representatives from the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation on 9 August 2011, the parties agreed to waive tuition fee for Danish and Chinese students studying at SDC and GUCAS renounced their claim of the “campus fee”. The Joint Managerial Committee (JMC) formally approved this at the JMC-meeting conducted in Beijing, 8 September 2011.

Hans Gregersen added that the decision between the partners to waive tuition fee only applies to Danish and Chinese students. Whether international students will have tuition fee waived or not has not been decided by the partners yet. The Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation is currently clarifying the judicial aspects of this issue.

Hans Gregersen informed the board that the consequence of the decision to waive tuition fee is that the overall budget for SDC activities will be reduced (potentially with up to 12 mio. DKK). Hence, funding for running the Master’s programmes must be allocated from other budget items meaning that e.g. research activities and PhD activities must be reduced.

Henrik Pedersen asked if the decision would affect the Danish universities entitlements to receive STÅ. Hans Gregersen replied that since students will be enrolled at GUCAS, Danish universities are not entitled to STÅ anyway.

Jørgen Staunstrup remarked that the course of events related to the question of waiving tuition fee was blurred and problematic seen from the SDC board’s point of view. If both the Danish Rectors’ Conference and the Danish SDC board concurrently make decisions of importance to the SDC, there may be one board too many. Moreover, it is also worth noting that some vice chancellors were informed and agreed with the decision before it was put forward to all vice chancellors at the meeting on 9 August 2011.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen replied that a meeting had indeed been conducted on 9 August 2011 where representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation informed Ralf Hemmingsen, Jens Oddershede (in the presence of chairman of the Danish Rectors’ Conference) and Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen (in the presence of Chairman of the Danish SDC board) of the outcome of the meeting with GUCAS the same morning. The three vice chancellors had accepted the briefing from the Ministry and endorsed the decision as it had solved the long-standing

problem of the 'campus fee' that prevented the SDC project from further developing.

b. SDC Symposium in Copenhagen, 24-26 August 2011

Hans Gregersen informed the board of the 2nd Symposium of the SDC, which was successfully conducted in Copenhagen 24-26 August 2011. The opening ceremony was attended by almost 170 Danish and Chinese researchers, representatives from GUCAS and the Danish universities, Danish industries and the press. The SDC secretariat has received a lot of positive feedback from many of the participants since the symposium.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen congratulated Hans Gregersen and the SDC secretariat for the successful planning of the event but also raised a point of criticisms: The workshops reflected a lack of balance between the Danish universities and their participation in the five research fields, e.g. the energy field was dominated by Risø-DTU; and the nano field was dominated by AU and KU. Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen urged Hans Gregersen to actively work for a more balanced composition within each field.

Hans Gregersen explained that the composition of Danish universities within each research field is the result of an open process coordinated by the Principal Coordinators and the director. However, the main focus should not be on the universities participating but rather on the quality of the projects within each field. There should be a balance between quality and involvement of the universities.

Martin Bendsøe argued that instead of focusing on the balance within each research field it is more important to strive for a balanced portfolio of research fields and projects that provides all Danish universities with an opportunity to contribute actively to the further development of the SDC.

Ib Poulsen added that from RUC's perspective it is important that universities which were not included initially still have good opportunities to define new fields and contribute actively to the development of the SDC.

Hans Gregersen added that he is planning a meeting with all Danish Principal Coordinators in early November and will ask them to pay attention to a balanced development of each research field.

c. JMC meeting conducted in Beijing, 8 September 2011

Hans Gregersen informed the board that the first JMC meeting had been successfully conducted in Beijing on 8 September 2011. Hans Gregersen briefly introduced the documents enacted at the meeting, including the budget for 2011-12 and the directors' forecast for 2011-13. The JMC approved that the directors further explore how to include new research fields such as Food Security and Safety, Information- and Communication Technology, and Learning Research and Innovative Learning.

d. Accreditation of SDC Master's Programmes

Hans Gregersen informed the board that four applications for SDC Master's Programmes had been submitted to the Danish Accreditation Council before the deadline of 1 June 2011. ACE Denmark has announced that the Master's Programme in Innovation Management (AAU) is already accredited under the general cand.merc. accreditation; The Master's Programmes in Water & Environment (KU) and Neuroscience & neuroimaging (AU) are recommended for approval to the Accreditation Council; but unfortunately the Master's Programme in Public Management and Social Development (CBS) is recommended for disapproval to the Accreditation Council.

Hans Gregersen informed that CBS together with the SDC secretariat have drafted a reply to ACE Denmark in which some of ACE Denmark's criticisms are repudiated.

The board expressed its concern for the possible 'loss of face' if the Danish side will have to inform GUCAS that one of the four Master's Programmes is not accredited. Morten Laugesen added that GUCAS had been repeatedly informed of this possible scenario as the Accreditation Council is an independent institution in Denmark.

The board stressed that it would accept the final decision of the Accreditation Council.

e. SDC financed PhD scholarships

Hans Gregersen informed the board that the 50 fully financed PhD scholarships are now either filled or in the process of being filled. Moreover, more than 20 PhD students are affiliated with the SDC as their stays in China bring compensation from the SDC secretariat to their university. The total number of PhD students affiliated with SDC from the Danish side alone sums to approximately 75, which is twice the number stated in the Memorandum of Understanding between GUCAS and the Danish universities. So far, to the best of Hans Gregersen's knowledge, the Chinese side has not allocated funding for a single PhD scholarship. Hence, in order to maintain a more balanced input, the Danish side will finance fewer PhDs the coming years and instead encourage Danish researchers to go on longer stays in China. A full list of PhD scholars associated with SDC will be distributed to the board as soon as possible.

Hans Gregersen explained that all five research fields had initially been offered 10 fully financed PhD scholarships but the Life Science field had regrettably not expressed a desire for more than 4 PhD scholarships.

Finally, Hans Gregersen stressed that an agreement between the financing Danish partners to prolong their engagement in the project and allocate funding beyond 2014 is required before any fully financed PhD

scholarships can be granted in 2012. The board decided to discuss this with Jacob Fuchs from the Ministry after the meeting.

f. Future activities

Hans Gregersen informed the board of a few upcoming activities:

- 1 December 2011, 12.00-17.00, the Danish SDC secretariat together with Universities Denmark and Innovation Center Shanghai organise a seminar on university related IPR in China. The seminar will take place at Technical University of Denmark.
- Together with Danish Agency for International Education, the SDC secretariat launches a marketing campaign, GribKina.dk, to increase Danish students' mobility to China. Moreover, the SDC secretariat is in close contact with the universities' International Offices.
- A meeting to coordinate future activities between the Danish Principal Coordinators and the SDC secretariat is being planned. The meeting will likely take place in early November.

4. SDC accounts for 2nd quarter 2011

The account for the second quarter 2011 reflects that the level of activities has increase compared to the first quarter. The level of activities is expected to increase further in the third and fourth quarter of 2011.

The board took note of the information and asked the SDC secretariat to provide more detailed quarterly accounts in the future, including the annual budget for the present year, annual account of the preceding year, year-to-date accounts and revised forecast for the present year.

5. SDC directors joint budget 2011-12

Hans Gregersen informed the board of the background for the SDC directors' joint budget 2011-12, which was approved by the JMC. The directors' joint budget reflects costs for joint activities related to SDC in China. A budget for 2013 has not been drafted due to the many unknown factors, including the number of students studying at SDC and running costs of the SDC building.

The board took note of the information provided and asked to be informed on the matter regularly. It is important that the directors have financial room for manoeuvre with due consideration that the account is audited according to existing regulations.

6. Long term stationing of Danish personnel in China

Martin Bendsøe explained the reason for adding this item to the agenda. The existing tax legislation makes it more or less impossible for Danish researchers to visit foreign research environments for a period of time ex-

ceeding 6 months as costs are too high. Hence, the board should act responsibly and decide on a set of rules for compensating Danish researchers when going to China that takes this information into account.

Hans Gregersen replied that the tax issue had already been discussed for a long time without a conclusion. It is a problem that not just affects the SDC but in fact all employees at Danish universities to be stationed abroad. At the moment, meetings are conducted between the labour unions and Personalestyrelsen but despite the long-term negotiations, nobody knows when the problem will be solved. Hans Gregersen has raised the issue several times at meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and urged them to find a solution.

The board agreed that the problem should be lifted to the highest possible level within the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and decided to ask Jacob Fuchs to convey this message back to his superiors.

The board asked the SDC secretariat to investigate possible solutions to the problem and present the board with a compensation structure reflecting the high costs for long term stationing abroad.

7. **Other issues**

The board decided that SDC board meetings are for board members only, thus not allowing alternate members to participate.

It was decided that at least two annual meetings should be conducted as face-to-face meetings without video link. One of these meetings should be conducted in Copenhagen, the other at the Chairman's university. Other meetings can be conducted as video meetings if necessary.

The board also decided that once meetings are scheduled they are only rescheduled if all board members agree.

Lauritz B. Holm-Nielsen suggested rescheduling the next board meeting from 7 December to 13 December 16.00-18.00 as the meeting thus can be conducted in Copenhagen in continuation of the meeting in the Danish Rectors' Conference. Rescheduling the SDC board meeting will possibly provide an opportunity for the SDC board to meet with high level representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation as Jacob Fuchs requested.

The present board members all supported rescheduling the meeting to 13 December. Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Lene Lange will be informed by the SDC secretariat.

Minutes by Morten Laugesen