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## MINUTES OF DIGNITY BOARD MEETING FEBRUARY 2, 2023

AT DIGNITY, Bryggervangen 55, Copenhagen

PARTICIPANTS: Dea Seidenfaden, Emil Kiørboe, Tomas Martin, Karin Hansen, Nomfundo Mogapi *on teams*, Lars Udsholt, Louise Holck, Lotte Leicht *on teams*, Marie Louise Nørredam

ABSENT: Camilla Rathcke, Manfred Nowak, Rasmus Grue Christensen at pt. 1-6

FROM MANAGEMENT: Rasmus Grue Christensen (RGC) at pt. 7-12

GUESTS: Tarek Omar at pt. 6 – Communication Plan 2023, Morten Olesen at pt. 10 – Status on Partnership Policy, Code of Conduct and Complaint Mechanism

REFERENT: Mette Grimstrup

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### **1. Approval of agenda of board meeting January 2, 2023**

Item nr 6 is moved to 15.30. The agenda was approved.

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

Dea Seidenfaden announced that two members will be leaving the board:

Karin Hansen will be leaving DIGNITY from May 1, 2023, so this will be her last board meeting. A big thanks to Karin for her years of dedicated work in the board.

Due to time restraints, Camilla Rathcke has also chosen to resign from the board. The Danish Medical Association has appointed Anna Mette Nathan, vice chairman in the Danish Medical Association, in her place. Anne Mette Nathan will start from the next board meeting.

### **3. Review of the board's self-assessment**

Dea Seidenfaden presented an overview of the most important findings from the board's self-evaluation and suggested a plan for how to implement some of the suggestions from the evaluation.

The board i.a. wanted to focus on the work in the clinic, accountability, a more thorough risk assessment, and the research strategy – and all of this will be on the agenda on the coming board meetings. The evaluation also showed that the board still found the relation between the board, EC, and management to be very well-functioning, characterized by trust and a respectful dialogue.

Nomfundo Mogapi pointed out that the evaluation also showed some concern for possible fragmentation of/cohesion in DIGNITY, which wasn't reflected in the presented plan. Dea promised to get back to that.

#### **4. Preparation for the CEO's development interview (closed item)**

- no minutes.

#### **5. Election of Executive Committee**

Dea Seidenfaden could announce that Lotte Leicht and Lars Udsholt had signed up for the election to the Executive Committee.

The board approved the new Executive Committee, now consisting of Dea Seidenfaden (chairperson), Louise Holck (deputy chairperson), Lotte Leicht, and Lars Udsholt.

#### **6. Communication Plan 2023**

Director of Communications Tarek Omar presented the Communication Plan 2023:

In recent years, DIGNITY's communication has become more focused, we have moved away from private fundraising in favor of other forms of communication and fundraising, which means that we can communicate more clearly. And in 2022 we have upscaled our international communication with more English news stories and a new English profile on twitter.

In 2023 we will continue to strengthen our international communication, i.a. with a new English newsletter and a possible webinar series. There are also plans for more focus on the work being done in Africa and a campaign in October focusing on the clinical work in DK.

The board applauded the continued strong visibility in Denmark and the plans for more international communication and asked for concrete guidance on how best to support the efforts on SoMe.

There was also praise for the enthusiasm and development of communications in DIGNITY in general and for the involvement of staff, striking a fine balance between promoting Rasmus as head of the organization but also making room for other voices.

Lars Udsholt urged for an even better use of DIGNITY's programmatic efforts as justification for our communication, making it more explicit why we are experts on these subjects, and Nomfundo Mogapi underlined the relevance of involving our partners in the communication, also internationally.

Tarek Omar thanked for the support and good discussions.

#### **7. Orientation from the CEO**

Rasmus Grue Christensen oriented about an international high-level conference held the same day as the board meeting, hosted by Danish, British and German government for 20 countries, discussing the future of accountability in Belarus: DIGNITY has delivered strongly on, and even beyond and above, what we set out to do, and the importance and extent of the work has become very visible, which was all very satisfying. The UN mechanism for Belarus was also present, praising the invaluable input from the IAPB.

The day before, another significant international conference was hosted by the Danish, British, and Ukrainian government on war crimes and SGBV in Ukraine. DIGNITY was also very present here, and it

became obvious how important it is with a lot of different professional expertise when approaching these subjects.

Two new directors have started in DIGNITY since the last board meeting. Kåre Månsson, new CFO, and Mette Fløjborg, new director of national rehabilitation. Both have landed very well in the organization, and this bodes very promising for the future.

Before Christmas we had the annual consultation with the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also, here a strong recognition of DIGNITY's work and expertise, and of DIGNITY's capability to change to a more modern, localized agenda. There will be a new review of DIGNITY in the first half of 2024, leading up to the negotiations about a new DED starting from 2025.

The board expressed strong praise for the extraordinary job being done with DIGNITY's new role in accountability. Having cases in a court room establishes a much broader responsibility for the war crimes, making it extremely valuable and meaningful for survivors.

Lotte Leicht noted that this should lead to Danish lawmakers getting their act together and criminalize international crimes, including torture, by law, to which RGC could confirm that criminalization of international crimes actually was on the agenda in Denmark and that things seems to be moving in the political sphere on that subject.

Tomas Martin mentioned that it is important to keep an eye on what agendas we're engaging in when embarking on the accountability agenda. And still keeping a critical mind on how legal systems and penalty systems work. RGC agreed that this was an important perspective to hold on to.

## **8. Disposition in the EC**

None since the last meeting. A possible next phase on IAPB and an EU call on Impunity and War Crimes are being considered.

## **9. Strategic priorities 2023**

RGC presented the paper, and highlighted some of the priorities in 2023:

- Continued importance of establishing good frames for the rehabilitation work in DK. In relation to staff and organization as well as financial robustness, inflow of patients etc.
- Establishing ourselves even stronger in the accountability field, also organizationally.
- Looking at our research strategy with a view on the localization agenda.
- Continued strong visibility as an advocate for human rights, nationally and internationally.
- Implementation of DED and DAPP

In general, 2023 is as mentioned at the last board meeting, a year with focus on consolidation and implementation.

The board again praised the very clear presentation of priorities and the capability to present very concrete goals. It was suggested that 2023 should be a year with a heightened focus on learning and reflection, as a

preamble to a new strategy process in 2024. RGC agreed that 2023 should entail an evaluation of the strategies, including a reflection on the strategy form.

Dea Seidenfaden mentioned that it would be worth focusing on advocacy related to the Ukrainian refugees, who have not been integrated into the Danish health system.

And Nomfundo Mogapi asked for more cohesion and synergy between the different areas. How are we integrating the knowledge and experience from the rehabilitation work in the other areas, or integrating the Danish and international rehabilitation work? RGC agreed that this was an important priority, also for our next strategies. We are writing a strategic plan on how to localize/internationalize our Danish research. And we are working with applying a trauma-informed approach to our accountability work. But there is still work to be done on creating even more synergies in the house and between our different areas of expertise.

The board approved of the strategic priorities 2023.

### **10. Status on Partnership Policy, Complaint Mechanism and Code of Conduct**

Morten Olesen shortly presented the status of the Complaint Mechanism. It is working, DIGNITY has received a few complaints throughout the year. All complaints have been handled accordingly.

Short discussion of the complaint mechanism and technical and organizational learnings. And of the importance of personal, trustful contact.

Louise Holck asked whether the Complaint Mechanism is also part of the coming EU-regulated whistleblower function for staff? It is, although some few outstanding technical issues are not solved yet. They will be shortly.

Status on the implementation of the Partnership Policy will be sent to the board in writing, due to time restraints.

### **11. Board Meetings 2023**

It was suggested to move the seminar from Sep. 2023 to Jan/Feb 2024 in order to be able to focus on strategy discussions at the seminar in the beginning of 2024. The board approved. Mette will send out suggestions for the exact date.

### **12. AOB**

Tomas Martin asked for a more thorough discussion of the implementation of the Partnership Policy. It was agreed to put the Partnership Policy on the agenda for the next board meeting if possible.