

## MINUTES OF DIGNITY BOARD MEETING JUNE 22, 2023

AT DIGNITY, Bryggervangen 55, Copenhagen

PARTICIPANTS: Dea Seidenfaden, Tomas Martin, Sadia Khan, Lars Udsholt, Louise Holck, Lotte Leicht *on teams*, Marie Louise Nørredam, Anna Mette Nathan, Emil Kiørboe

ABSENT: Manfred Nowak, Nomfundo Mogapi

FROM MANAGEMENT: Rasmus Grue Christensen

GUESTS: Legal director Therese Rytter and Senior Medical Officer Marie Brasholt at pt. 6 on Kosovo.

REFERENT: Mette Grimstrup

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

Agenda is approved. In future, the board will always have 15 minutes at the end of the meeting for possible board issues.

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

Dea Seidenfaden has become chairperson for the Danish Psychological Association. So far, this will not have any consequences for her position as chairperson in the DIGNITY board.

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

Rasmus Grue Christensen oriented the board:

Things are going well in the clinic. Strong focus on key performance indicators for the clinic – the economy, patient flow, treatment results, research, and staff welfare. Henceforth, the board will be briefed on patient inflow and financial situation at budget discussions. Status on patient evaluation and research in the clinic will be on the board's agenda once every year. First time in Dec. 2023.

We are implementing our expanding programs in Africa, also establishing country presence in Burkina Faso and Uganda.

We are also still implementing important accountability programmes in Belarus and Ukraine, and we are expecting more funding opportunities for Eastern Europe in the coming months, possibly also including work in Georgia and Moldova.

A successful staff day was held a couple of weeks ago, i.a. focusing on the possible plans for moving or rebuilding the HQ premises.

And finally, we have launched two international Live Talks with Rasmus interviewing Dr. Alice Jill Edwards, Special Rapporteur on torture, and Kenneth Roth, former CEO of Human Rights Watch, respectively, which has been well received.

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

Projects above 4 mio. DKK approved by the EC:

None since the last board meeting.

#### **5. Risk management 2023**

In order to use the gathered competences and experiences in the board, the risk management discussion this year took place as a more open discussion, where the board was asked to brainstorm, in small groups, on possible risk issues or points of attention, that DIGNITY should attend to.

At the next board meeting there will be a round-up of the discussion with a review of the extended formal risk matrix that is created every year.

At the joint discussion following the group work, some of the following subjects were mentioned:

Reputational risks, spill-over-effects from the national and/or the international scene. Operating in countries with shrinking civic space – is it still possible to deliver on donor requirements? Expanding the organization and keeping the internal coherence. Accountability, moving into “heavier” issues, with the risk of attracting unwanted attention from more autocratic regimes. How will this affect partners, other work in other contexts? AI – opportunities and threats, the need for guidelines for staff etc.

The board shortly discussed how the risk matrix is used, and whether it would also be relevant to look back on the actions taken in order to handle risks. RGC agreed that it could also be useful to look at lessons learned from handled risks, also those that were not foreseen in the matrix.

Both groups will send their lists from the risk brainstorm to Mette. All board members are also encouraged to send possible further thoughts on risks. At the next board meeting, there will then be a joint round-up on the subject.

#### **6. Kosovo**

At the last board meeting in April, the board decided to take time at the June meeting to learn more about how DIGNITY balances its participation in the NPM and its active advocacy and vocal critique of conditions in the places of detention in Denmark, and the Danish government’s efforts to outsource its human rights obligations, notably the its plans to move prisoners from Denmark to Kosovo.

During this item on the agenda, legal director Therese Rytter and medical officer Marie Brasholt were invited to inform the board’s discussions.

The item was introduced by Rasmus, who gave a short overview of DIGNITY’s broader role in the Danish NPM (National Prevention Mechanism). This was followed by a short presentation by Therese Rytter and

Marie Brasholt on what it practically means to take part in the NPM visits and how the distinction between the NPM work and DIGNITY's advocacy work is managed.

The board discussed the importance of being able, while contributing to the protection of prisoners via the NPM, to continue to raise awareness, nationally and internationally, on the pitfalls and possible human rights violations in the moving of prisoners to Kosovo.

The board thanked for the extensive materials and for the work that DIGNITY is conducting through the NPM.

The board encouraged management to use DIGNITY's extensive critique of the government's Kosovo scheme in Danish media to also raise similar awareness in international media to strengthen DIGNITY's position on the issue outside of Denmark – also in the light of the fact that the Kosovo scheme is seen as part of broader Danish and European endeavors to externalize human rights responsibilities. It was discussed how to possibly establish new and more alliances with other human rights actors on these issues. The board stressed the importance of continuously updating our advocacy plans on Kosovo, notably when we get closer to the actual transfer for prisoners.

## **7. Budget revision 2023**

The board approved the revised budget.

## **8. Strategic priorities 2023 – status**

The board took note of the status. All priorities seem to be on track.

It was pointed out that it would be useful with a list of acronyms – or just a short explanation every time acronyms are used. RGC agreed.

## **9. Board meetings 2024**

The board approved the plan for 2024.

## **10. AOB**

Donors have received – or will receive - the approved annual accounts from the last board meeting.

## **11. Board's 15 min. (Closed item)**

The yearly CEO development interview between the chairperson and the CEO has been completed. The board has approved of a change of the CEO contract. This means that the contract from 1st August 2023 will change from a fixed term contract to a permanent contract based on the agreement on Manager Contracts within the Danish State ("kontraktsansættelse af chefer i staten").