



International Peace Research Institute, Oslo

Institutt for fredsforskning

# **PRIO Strategy 2006–2009**

Adopted by the Board

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## I. PRIO's Mission

PRIO's mission is:

- to conduct high-quality academic research on questions relevant to the promotion of a more peaceful world
- to contribute to theoretical and methodological development both within specific academic disciplines, and through cross-fertilization between disciplines
- to engage in the promotion of peace through conflict resolution, dialogue and reconciliation, public information and policymaking activities
- to disseminate research through academic publications, through reports related to our engagement activities and via the general media

An essential part of PRIO's mission is to maintain impeccable academic standards and to subject institute publications to the regular mechanisms of quality control employed in the appropriate academic disciplines. This approach also forms the basis for our two scholarly journals: *Security Dialogue* and *Journal of Peace Research*.

Relevance is at the core of the peace research tradition. PRIO engages in research on the conditions for peaceful coexistence between nations, between groups and between individuals. This implies that PRIO researchers seek means of nonviolent conflict management and resolution, as well as ways to nurture and build long-term sustainable peace. As a research institute that focuses on the dynamics of war and peace – including the emergence, prevention and resolution of armed conflict – PRIO is actively engaged in training, policy research and information brokerage as means of preventing armed conflict and supporting peace processes.

When PRIO was founded in 1959, it was one of the world's very first peace research centre. Since that time, many other centres and university departments with a peace research agenda have been established, some of which sharing PRIO's dedication to academic quality. PRIO was born out of tensions related to the Cold War, and for many years it served as a centre of research-based criticism of Cold War politics. Since the end of the Cold War, the emphasis of PRIO's research has shifted to reflect the current dominance of civil wars within armed conflict; the relationship between peace and democracy; the

widened scope for multilateral cooperation within the United Nations; and the fact that PRIO's host country, Norway, has taken on a special role as peace broker in many parts of the world. PRIO's research agenda has always been international, and the working language of the institute is English. The institute places considerable emphasis on maintaining its scholarly and institutional independence and its capacity to conduct critical research.

PRIO remains Norway's only peace research institute. As such, it maintains links with all Norwegian universities and is connected with a number of independent research institutes abroad. In addition, PRIO is involved in a strategic partnership on peace-building with the Chr. Michelsen Institute (CMI) in Bergen.

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To an increasing extent, institutions that do not identify themselves with 'peace research' have begun to engage with research topics that are situated at the core of the PRIO agenda. We view this 'mainstreaming' of peace research as a

positive development, one that creates an opportunity for researchers at PRIO to engage more with the wider world of scholars and policymakers, rather than treating peace researchers as a special 'in-group'. PRIO will continue to cultivate a rich and variegated network comprised of research institutes and universities worldwide. Our international network helps inform our research agenda and assists with the dissemination of our research findings. Relations with universities – both internationally and within Norway – are particularly important for the training component of PRIO's work. Students and doctoral candidates either based at PRIO or receiving supervision from PRIO staff take their degrees at universities both in Norway and abroad. PRIO is engaged in international collaboration with various academic associations, and participates in broader associations such as the International Studies Association (ISA), and the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR).

PRIO will continue to fulfil its basic mission, stimulate and provide room for intellectual curiosity, and increase its ability to respond to the strategic challenges in terms of identifying rising trends of relevance to peace research and filling gaps in our expertise and research portfolio. In the four-year period 2006–09, PRIO aims particularly to achieve the following goals:

**1. Academic Publications:** Increase the number of peer-reviewed publications and ensure that every PRIO researcher publishes *the equivalent* of one peer-reviewed article per year (on average over a three-year period);<sup>1</sup> implement measures to ensure that academic publishing becomes a matter of course within PRIO's research culture.

**2. Engagement:** Promote peace by supporting peace processes, contributing to policymaking, assisting local capacity-building, facilitating dialogue and reconciliation, and serving as a credible broker of information; such engagements must be based on PRIO's research competence and should be combined with academic research.

**3. Level of Activity:** Undertake a moderate expansion, with a personnel increase of 5-10% and a corresponding increase in annual turnover.

**4. Organizational Culture and Innovation:** Establish an open organizational culture and a work environment that fosters excellence in research output both for individual researchers and for the institute as a whole. In order to enhance PRIO's ability to be innovative, internal communication must be strengthened both within each programme and department and within the institute as a whole; while the cohesion and profiles of the three PRIO programmes and the Centre for the Study of Civil War should be further strengthened, cross-programme initiatives and the development of new competence areas (such as 'migration' and 'energy') will also be given priority.

**5. Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW):** Ensure the renewal of the Research Council of Norway's Centre of Excellence (CoE) contract for a second five-year period (2008–12); raise the profile of the CSCW both internationally and in Norway; establish concrete proposals for research initiatives building on the CSCW's achievements after the CoE funding expires.

<sup>1</sup> In this context, 'researcher' refers to staff categories Researcher I, Researcher II and Researcher III as they are defined at PRIO. Research assistants are not included, although they will also be encouraged to publish. PhD candidates will most often fulfill the requirements by producing either a dissertation or a collection of articles within the time frame set off for their doctoral work. PRIO will continue the policy of encouraging MA students who hand in their theses on time to write an academic article on the basis of their thesis work.

## 2. Research Priorities

Research at PRIO is currently organized within three programmes and one Centre of Excellence (the CSCW):

### **Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding (CRPB):**

This programme is defined in broad terms, with a focus not only on ending wars but also on efforts to decrease violence. Key themes studied within the programme include political and military mobilization, causes of conflict, small-arms proliferation, peace initiatives, disarmament and reintegration of fighters, and mine action. The CRPB programme has built key competence on the Eastern Mediterranean (the PRIO Cyprus Centre) and the Middle East. A strategic priority for the programme is to develop more holistic approaches to the study of peacebuilding and to include research on long-term legacies of conflict and violence outside war zones. The programme will also promote research on cross-cutting topics such as human security and the nexus between equity and peace.

**Security:** Various concepts of security and threat have long been central preoccupations at PRIO. A key aim for the Security programme in the next four years is to further build up our international network within the field of security studies. PRIO will engage actively in research and conceptual debate on human security, energy security, national and regional security, 'securitization' and liberty versus security – with a main focus on European policies and Europe's place in the world. The programme aims to emphasize in particular the study of 'security' as a concept and various aspects of security applied to case studies.

**Ethics, Norms and Identity (ENI):** Research within this programme has centred on normative and philosophical dimensions of armed conflict, and on the roles of gender, ethnicity and other identities in conflict and peacebuilding. In the next four-year period, the programme aims to establish competence in international law and to develop engaged research in the area of religion (including inter-religious dialogue) and conflict. There will also be an expansion of research on gender, security and peace. The programme will further develop its expertise in migration and be actively engaged in developing fieldwork competence at PRIO.

### **Centre for the Study of Civil War (CSCW):**

The CSCW is a long-term multidisciplinary initiative that aims to increase understanding of why internal wars break out, how they are sustained, and what it takes for a peace settlement to ensure lasting peace. In the coming four years, these questions will continue to be addressed through the interaction and collaboration of researchers with backgrounds in anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology, philosophy and sociology. In addition to the working groups, the CSCW will also initiate

research that takes a new perspective on cross-cutting topics such as gender dimensions of violence and the role of children in armed conflict.

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Two areas in which PRIO will cultivate much greater competence in the coming strategic period are *migration* and *energy*. Here, we see the potential for carrying out research of high international standard, and hence recognize a need to build further competence and to secure appropriate levels of

funding. The PRIO leadership, in collaboration with the programme leaders, will give particular priority to project development and fundraising within these two areas.

For PRIO in general, a broad tendency has been to focus increasingly on post-conflict peacebuilding and conflict prevention. This shift has meant not only to contribute towards preventing the recurrence of war, but also to address the question of continued violence after wars have formally ended. In some countries, the intensity of violence actually increases after the cessation of armed conflict; in many post-conflict environments, guns dissolve into society, resulting in killing, maiming and suffering long after the official end of hostilities. In such contexts, violence is best understood as a continuum that stretches from domestic intimidation all the way to open warfare. Violence is exacerbated by social and economic breakdown, by weak government institutions, by lack of female participation in decision-making and, in many cases, by a rogue security sector. Easy access to weapons facilitates a 'cycle of violence'. All these aspects of peace building have been included in PRIO's research, which therefore has become more and more closely related with development research. PRIO's aim for the four-year period is to further strengthen this focus on the post-conflict violence as part of peacebuilding.

### **3. Research Principles and Scholarly Output**

In terms of theory, PRIO builds on the traditions of a range of scholarly disciplines and seeks to develop its multidisciplinary environment in which theoretical development is encouraged and enhanced through cross-fertilization among researchers with different scholarly backgrounds. We do not see peace re-

search as a discipline of its own, but rather as a field for multidisciplinary theoretical development.

Methodologically, PRIO draws on a variety of approaches: econometric and statistical methods (including new geo-referenced statistics); traditional library and archival work; source criticism and textual interpretation. PRIO also aims to play a leading role in providing accessible conflict-related datasets to a global research audience. With regard to the increasingly important role of fieldwork in conflict zones, PRIO will seek to stimulate debate across its three programmes and the CSCW, focusing on hands-on practicalities, different methodological approaches and related ethical issues.

For PRIO, academic research and engagement in peacebuilding processes go hand in hand, both in the sense that all engagements are rooted in solid research competence and in that all engagements in peacebuilding processes feed into ongoing research, contributing to scholarly publishing. In part, PRIO distinguishes itself from other actors through this fusion of high-quality research and engagement for peace. However, PRIO should not engage in operational projects unless they are rooted in a strong and long-term research interest. PRIO's academic status serves as a guarantor for the quality and relevance of its applied dimension.

The main indicator of scholarly achievement is academic publishing, in the form of articles in leading refereed journals, monographs published by recog-

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nized academic publishers, and chapters in edited volumes when these are refereed and published by recognized academic publishers. In Norway, a new system for core financing has been introduced for the universities, and this will also be introduced in the institute sector with effect from 2007 or 2008.

Academic publishing will be a key indicator within this system, and PRIO will actively nominate high-quality journals to the official list of leading journals. PRIO will also adapt its own routines in preparation for the new system, in areas such as publication reporting and database management, incentive systems and ensuring institutional credit for the output of research financed by PRIO.

Research related to areas of direct political relevance requires specific non-academic publication channels. This is even more the case when the aim is local capacity-building in the area under study. To guarantee relevance in capacity-building and political decisionmaking processes, timing and presentation are

critical and may necessitate the use of specifically targeted means of communication – such as reports or policy briefs. There is thus a need to work creatively on ensuring synergies between academic publishing and other forms of output. Whenever possible, reports and other output required by funders should be supplemented with journal articles or developed into books. In principle, all research areas (and individual projects of a significant scale) will include a plan for both academic publishing and targeted means of communication.

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All research conducted at PRIO carries a potential for informing policy and practice, though the degree of engagement will vary between individual projects and research themes. During the coming strategy period, an important goal is to ensure that PRIO contributes to policymaking and innovation in the

public and private sectors in Norway, Europe and globally, as well as within NGOs and multilateral institutions.

One challenge for PRIO in the coming period will be to seize the opportunity represented by current global developments to position the institute at the forefront in identifying the major contours of the changing world order. In order to identify and secure funding for innovative and cutting-edge projects, we will need to foster discussion and debate within PRIO aimed at identifying and responding to larger trends within world affairs – such as the previously identified shift from international conflict to civil war that lay behind our successful application for funding for the CSCW. In the period 2006–09, we will stimulate such discussion as part of an ongoing process of strategic planning, drawing on the broad pool of knowledge within the institute as a whole.

#### **4. PRIO's Role in a Global Environment**

PRIO has since its establishment in 1959 been an internationally oriented institute, with English as its working language, two English-language journals, a focus on global topics of research, and a vast network of contacts throughout the world. We aim to maintain and further develop our network of collaborating academic institutions, cultivate a diversity of funding sources and address a wide audience for its research

findings and engagements. PRIO has particularly strong links to North America, which we will continue to cultivate. In relation to Europe, we will use newly gained experience to expand considerably our research collaboration, both in research on Europe itself, on global issues, and on other parts of the world. PRIO is actively engaged in establishing research co-operation with universities and research institutes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Our goal is to establish close collaboration with a handful of research institutes in developing countries, with a combination of long- and short-term funding from international donors, the Research Council of Norway, the Norwegian Council for Higher Education (NUFU), the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), individual Norwegian embassies, or other.

To broaden the international research culture at PRIO, we aim to increase the numbers of PRIO staff attending meetings and conferences that involve either researchers from other regions or scholarly approaches developed from different geographical and cultural perspectives. Active participation in international meetings is essential and will be emphasized and systematically incorporated into all projects.

In addition to maintaining and developing its global orientation, PRIO will aim to increase its participation

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in the European research area. One of our strengths within the Norwegian research community is that we occupy a special niche called 'peace research' and have succeeded, through an evolution that spans several decades, in mastering that niche, profiling it and championing the values it represents.

This has allowed us to establish links with several European research institutions, within projects funded under the EU's Sixth Framework Programme. A similar strategy will guide our thinking as we establish ourselves more solidly on the European research arena. We will seek to develop and exploit our present strengths in order to promote peace research, in collaboration with research environments occupying other niches, such as 'security'. Peace research will be understood as representing certain values, as related to 'human security', and as a multidisciplinary scholarly field that constantly affirms the continuity between the human and the social sciences.

Developing and enhancing existing research expertise will require that PRIO prioritizes specific areas of relevance to both its globalist/developing world

outlook and its strategy of cooperation with select partners. In order to ensure the relevance and long-term perspective of PRIO's engagement for peace, it is important to build cooperation not only with other research institutes, but also with non-governmental organizations, multilateral institutions, and govern-

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ment entities. When specific joint projects have been developed, we may also formalize our cooperation in Framework Agreements or Memorandums of Understanding.

The drive for further globalization of PRIO's research does not mean that PRIO needs to begin knocking at the doors of established institutes abroad. Rather, we should aim to position ourselves and develop

research that will lead others to our own front door. In this strategy period, PRIO will make a more concerted effort to approach the larger research funds in other European countries in relation to the funding of research partnerships. There is also significant potential for partnerships with NGOs and think-tanks, whereby PRIO would carry out and provide the research that undergirds their policy recommendations and activities.

In the coming four-year period, when allocating resources internally and recruiting new staff members, PRIO will place considerable emphasis on its goal of expanding cooperation with its international partners and widening its scholarly perspectives through collaboration with researchers in other parts of the world.

## 5. Information and Dissemination

In an increasingly competitive research environment, PRIO needs to constantly demonstrate the relevance of its research both to the general public and our stakeholders. We need to communicate what makes PRIO special by presenting a clear and unique peace research agenda. In the strategy period, therefore, PRIO aims to win recognition as an institute that stands out and makes a difference in the Norwegian, European and international research environments. We must fully utilize and demonstrate the unique possibilities offered by our multidisciplinary approach, both through our research activities and through active participation in peace processes.

PRIO not only is respected as a purely academic institute, but should continue to be seen by politicians and government officials in Norway, other countries and multilateral agencies as a capable and efficient provider of research input, as well as innovative and critical ideas. PRIO will maintain and develop its cooperation with leading NGOs both in Norway and internationally.

PRIO's independence and commitment to academic excellence shall provide the basis for critical policy assessments, discussion of alternative approaches to current practices, and articulation of new perspectives on issues that are central in the public debate. Academic publication and dissemination that target the general public are essential in this regard. PRIO researchers shall also continue to cultivate and maintain ongoing dialogues with policy- and decision-makers in Norway and internationally. This is important to ensure both that the outcome of PRIO research has an impact on policies, and that the Institute develops new relevant research themes.

Communication of the PRIO identity is closely linked with a series of key elements that are of particular importance in both internal and external communication:

- PRIO is academic;
- PRIO is multidisciplinary;
- PRIO is international;
- PRIO informs policy debates;
- PRIO is independent of government and has no political affiliation;
- PRIO is a key institution within peace research.

PRIO's uniqueness is not only defined by *what* we do, but also by *how* we do it. We provide tools and training to assist researchers and other staff members in their creative development. Communicating our uniqueness, therefore, goes hand in hand with building and maintaining our identity. The PRIO identity needs to be strengthened and continuously cultivated. To facilitate the internal exchange of ideas is essential in order to maintain a shared understanding – and also a constructive awareness of disagreements – concerning PRIO's mission.

We will do the following in the strategy period:

- communicate our research to a broad audience;
- be proactive in creating arenas for policy debate (e.g. policy-relevant seminars and workshops);
- find suitable ways of showing that we are engaged in a range of policy dialogues;
- encourage internal communication aimed at facilitating the exchange of ideas;
- develop projects that build on and increase PRIO's public relevance;
- make ourselves even more visible to new funders, politicians, policymakers, NGOs and the general public;

- particularly target the Research Council of Norway and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- see our appearances in the mass media as a means for communicating our research to political decision makers in Norway and abroad.

PRIO seminars are important meeting places for Oslo-based scholars, diplomats, journalists, international visitors and other interested people. Care will be taken both to expose PRIO's own research staff at

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*The PRIO website will be developed into a dynamic output channel for research on peace, conflict and security*

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such seminars and to invite renowned speakers from other organizations.

The PRIO website is an increasingly important communication tool and should reflect both the quality of our research and its relevance. In the four-year strategy period, the website will be developed into a dynamic

output channel for research on peace, conflict and security, with a high score on the hit lists of the world's main search engines. Building strongly on the activities of the CSCW, *Journal of Peace Research* and the Norwegian Initiative for Small Arms Transfers (NISAT), the PRIO website will establish itself as a leading international source of quantitative data on armed conflict and peace.

## 6. Research Funding and Finances

Fundraising is vital for achieving PRIO's strategic goals. In terms of finance, PRIO's primary goal is to make sure that as much as possible of the funding it receives is used for research. This is in the interest of PRIO as a research institute, and is also a requirement set by many of our funders. PRIO's administrative and other support functions are integral parts of the institute and essential to our continued success. It is therefore a goal for the strategy period to further develop the quality of these functions, while ensuring that costs are maintained at a reasonable level. To succeed in this development, we will define clear standards for such services, ensure efficient lines of communication, institute a clear division of labour, and provide the necessary financial resources for realizing these goals.

Another key goal is to diversify our sources of funding with the aim of maintaining our basic independence as a research institute.

PRIO's relationship with its funders depends primarily on the quality of its research output, but also rests on the quality of the institute's applications, communication

and reporting. The three most important funders are at present the Research Council of Norway, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian Ministry of Defence. In the timeframe of this strategy, we expect these funders to remain the most important sources of income for PRIO, even though expanding the proportion of non-Norwegian funding, in particular funding from the EU and European foundations, is a goal for the period. While individual researchers or research groups will have primary responsibility for developing new projects and proposals, the programme leaders will supervise this activity and the Director's office will devote considerable resources to assisting project development by keeping track of funding opportunities (e.g., through a 'funding calendar'), matching ideas and competence with the desires of possible funders, lobbying funders, providing assistance in editing project proposals, and ensuring all proposals are realistically budgeted and of a high scholarly quality.

The Research Council of Norway provides PRIO with a core grant, funding for Strategic Institute Programmes (SIPs), long-term funding to the CSCW, and funding for several other long-term research projects. The Research Council no longer provides funding for free doctoral stipends in the institute sector, so PRIO must seek to establish projects, led

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by its senior researchers, of a sufficient size to include doctoral candidates, and seek institutional arrangements with the universities allowing doctoral candidates with university funding to have their work space at PRIO.

PRIO has advocated the view that an institute with the right combination of academic compe-

tence, relevance and flexibility should have a core grant covering around one-third of the overall budget, long-term projects covering another third, with the last third being covered by short-term projects, consultancies and teaching courses. Such a three-way funding structure provides sufficient security to ensure long-term planning and innovation, while at the same time obliging the institute to emphasize relevance, partnerships and networking.

The core grant is essential for intellectual and policy innovation. It allows PRIO researchers to explore emerging issues that external funders are not yet ready to embrace. It allows PRIO to remain in control of its research agenda and strategy. Support for basic research also allows PRIO to develop the competence of its research staff. A part of the core

grant should be set aside to support the development of new research projects and the work needed to produce academic publications on the basis of applied projects. An important goal is to obtain an increase in

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the core grant allowing PRIO to advertise a doctoral stipend once every three years, funded from the core grant.

The Centre of Excellence funding for the CSCW helps realize the goal of one-third long-term funding, since this is really long-term (5+5 years). During the 2006–09 period, we will develop proposals for building on

the CSCW's achievements in one or more long-term projects. Fundraising for such proposals will start at least by 2009. PRIO has made avid use of the Research Council's SIP funding vehicle to build competence in core areas and launch new research initiatives in all three of its programmes, as well as in the development of the CSCW.

In the strategy period, we will increase the share of funding that is long-term in order to reduce the dependence of each programme and individual researcher on short-term funding. Expansion of the SIP funding to allow fully funded doctoral candidates is part of this goal.

Over the last four years, it has been essential to reduce the institute's financial vulnerability by building up and maintaining an adequate financial reserve. To achieve this, the aim is to generate a 5% surplus each year. By 2007, PRIO will develop and implement an investment policy for its cash reserve in order to maximize financial profits without jeopardizing the institute's financial security. Investments in a variety of funds could represent a relatively low-risk option. For PRIO, ethical aspects should obviously be taken into account in the investment process. When choosing investments, PRIO will avoid companies involved in the production of weapons or other products incompatible with our core values.

Today, PRIO's research depends 100% on external funding. All research projects must in principle secure external funding before any research activity starts. To achieve this, PRIO continuously develops its relations to current funders, while at the same time initiating relationships with new potential funders to secure funding for new projects. Within the necessary budgetary limits, PRIO's capacity for assisting PRIO staff with fundraising and project management (application, implementation and reporting) – will be improved through investment in both manpower and software.

Dependence on a few large funders could challenge PRIO's scholarly independence and autonomy. To increase PRIO's financial independence, it is important to increase the number of funding sources. This can be done by broadening the pool of potential funders, and in addition by building up an independent research fund under PRIO's control. A PRIO research fund could serve the purpose of strengthening PRIO's autonomy by contributing to PRIO's financial independence. In addition, it could be a way of attracting private funds to peace research, by accepting private donations and inviting private organizations to contribute. PRIO will in the strategy period seek to establish a 'Peace Research Fund'.

## **7. The Work Environment**

The main asset of a research institute like PRIO is its staff. PRIO's ability to attract and retain dedicated and competent researchers depends on its ability to provide a superior work environment. Our aim is to build a work environment that is conducive to output

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*PRIO will actively support and encourage employees in their efforts to build professional skills and competence*

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characterized by high levels of academic quality and relevance to peace. This requires an organization that is flexible enough to accommodate shifting conditions in PRIO's internal and external environment.

Quality is the key to PRIO's success and should be fostered through effective re-

search management. To achieve this, PRIO will build and maintain a 'quality culture' within which all staff members – junior and senior, researcher and support staff – are encouraged to contribute towards making each other, and the institute as a whole, excellent in terms of output quality: a culture in which staff members feel comfortable with and committed to the idea of allowing others to engage constructively with their thoughts and writings. We believe that such a quality culture will result in an even more vibrant and thriving research environment, which in itself is essential for building quality. In the strategy period, therefore, PRIO will develop and implement a system for promoting such a 'quality culture'.

In addition, PRIO will actively support and encourage employees in their efforts to build professional skills and competence relevant to PRIO, through course work, seminars, and other available means. More specifically, PRIO will seek to provide training in:

- project development and management,
- academic writing and publishing,
- presentation of academic findings at conferences
- fieldwork and other research methodologies.

A superior work environment may be defined in technical terms, such as salary levels, fringe benefits, air quality, employee rights, etc. However, many other factors – such as trust, care, enthusiasm, solidarity and the management’s responsiveness – are

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equally important. Since it is difficult to set down rules and procedures for such matters, these values need to be communicated regularly throughout the institute.

To achieve our work environment goals, we aim to ensure that all staff members feel that they

work in a predictable and fair organization, while keeping bureaucracy low and flexibility high. Efficient internal communication is essential to achieving this. The following aims are particularly important in fostering a good work environment:

- keep all staff members informed about their rights and duties;
- provide timely and adequate information on major discussions and decisions;
- involve all staff members, where possible and appropriate, in debates leading up to important decisions;
- take good care of foreign visitors;
- keep in mind the importance of informal communication (coffee meetings, lunch discussions, farewell parties, film nights and other informal social occasions);
- celebrate achievements.

In order to better understand how to further develop our work environment, PRIO will introduce routine exit interviews with employees leaving the organization.

It is essential to provide a good and healthy physical environment on PRIO’s new premises, with good working conditions in the offices, minimal noise, optimal security, attractive natural meeting places, and nicely decorated and maintained public space.

Salaries and other benefits, incentive systems, competence-building initiatives, and opportunities for career advancement are important factors that influence PRIO’s competitiveness. In 2006, PRIO will undertake changes in its incentive system to reflect the conclusions from our evaluation of that system.

By ensuring a good work environment, PRIO will enhance its capacity for recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff at all levels. How PRIO is organized and how well we meet the current challenges in the research sector also play an important role in creating a good work environment. Structural and research-policy challenges that limit opportunities for long-term planning by individuals tend to reduce the level of work satisfaction among research staff. With a solid financial basis, PRIO will increase its capacity for ensuring job security. To provide greater capacity for long-term planning and competence-building, PRIO will maintain its policy of offering permanent employment to all staff who have held more than two temporary contracts or have worked on a temporary contract for three years or more. To counterbalance the risk of high ratios of free capacity among researchers on permanent contracts, and to further enhance our capacity for long-term planning and job security, PRIO will strengthen its management of fundraising activities at the institutional level and improve coordination of such activities at the programme level.

While PRIO’s recruitment policy is based primarily on academic merit, skills and experience gained from various forms of international work, from operational positions in conflict zones, as well as advisory or

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leadership posts are also important. Such complementary skills will be fostered through PRIO’s personnel development efforts.

Furthermore, PRIO will encourage strategic diversification of research skills and experience at the individual level. In relation to this, we will examine the need to strike a balance between

the interests of current staff members and the needs of a relevant and authoritative peace research institute. We will ask ourselves on a regular basis: Do we provide sufficient room for each researcher to satisfy her intellectual curiosity? Do we give existing staff interests too much weight in determining our project portfolio? Should we allow current and anticipated trends in world affairs a greater say in recruitment policy and project design? Is there sufficient diversity of view within PRIO’s areas of research or have we become partisan, identifying too closely with one side of a particular debate? Have we divided the various management responsibilities clearly between the Director’s office, administration, programme and project leaders?

PRIO currently has a gender imbalance at the senior researcher level, particularly in relation to the institute's programme leaders and research professors. This must be remedied in light of the fact that gender will be one of the criteria used in evaluating research proposals both in the Research Council of Norway and the EU. In order to address the situa-

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tion, PRIO will develop a gender equity plan, will implement measures to facilitate the career advancement of female staff members and will seek to recruit women on the senior level.<sup>2</sup>

It is a goal for PRIO in the four-year period to build stronger institutional capacity for encouraging and assisting PRIO's researchers to qualify themselves for promotion to the next academic level.

Changes in PRIO's external environment pose a constant challenge to the institute. New priorities among our funders, structural changes in the research community, and the ongoing internationalization of research, and europeanization of research funding, are factors that are to a large degree outside PRIO's control. Nevertheless, these factors may have a major impact on our priorities and chances of success. As an already well-established international research institute PRIO is well positioned to take advantage of new opportunities. PRIO will focus on building a dynamic and flexible organization that reflects our strategic priorities and maintains our ability to change in response to challenges and opportunities as they arise.

<sup>2</sup> A list of available measures (*virkemidler*) may be found at <http://www.kvinneriforskning.no>.



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