

Minutes of Executive Committee meeting on 8 February 2023

Present

From the ExCom:

Agi Csonka, Chair
 Bettina Bach
 Juliane Marie Neiiendam
 Karen Faarbæk de Andrade Lima
 Kim Simonsen
 Mette Fejfer
 Sophie Rytter
 Ulla Næsby Tawiah
 Vagn Berthelsen
 Rahima Abdullah, Observer, Chair of DFUNK

From the Secretariat:

Charlotte Slente, Secretary General
 Vibeke Bach Madsen, Committee Secretary
 Andrew Clarke, interim CFO, attended for agenda item 2
 Yann Faivre, Executive Director West Africa, North Africa and Latin America, attended for agenda item 3
 James Curtis, Executive Director East Africa and Great Lakes, attended for agenda item 3
 Gerry Garvey, Executive Director Europe, attended for agenda item 3

Agenda

	Items		Content
1)	Approval of agenda	Decision	Comments on the agenda
2)	Financial briefing / Andrew Clarke, interim CFO	Briefing	Annex 2.0 Cover note for Financial briefing Annex 2.1 Follow-up on the January-November 2023 budget Annex 2.2 Final 2023 budget Follow-up on January-November 2022 budget and a very preliminary forecast for 2022. The briefing will also include updated information on the 2023 budget following the ExCom meeting on 6 December 2022.
3)	THEME Presentation of DRC's regions / Executive Directors of Regions: - Yann Faivre, West Africa, North Africa and Latin America, - James Curtis, East Africa and Great Lakes - Lilu Thapa, Middle East - Gerry Garvey, Europe	Briefing	As the Executive Directors for Regions are in Copenhagen, we will take this opportunity to brief the ExCom about the activities of our four regions: The current situation, strategic focus, and main activities.
4)	THEME	Decision	Annex 4 DRC governance, current situation and proposed resolutions

	Items		Content
	DRC Governance / Agi Csonka		The ExCom continues discussions that focus on resolutions in the run-up to the Council meeting on 31 May 2023.
5)	Draft agenda for the Council meeting on 31 May 2022 / Agi Csonka	Decision	Annex 5.0 Cover note for Council meeting Annex 5.1 Draft agenda for Council meeting on 31 May 2023 The ExCom is to approve the draft agenda to be sent to the member organisations along with the notice convening the meeting no later than two months before the meeting.
6)	Representation in Berlin, Germany / Charlotte Slente	Decision	Annex 6.0 Cover note Registration in Germany Annex 6.1 Recommendation regarding Registration in Germany The ExCom is to approve the DRC's registration in Germany.
7)	Announcements from the Chair and the Secretary General	Briefing	
8)	Any other business		
	Recap after the meeting		ExCom 'free time' with the possibility to evaluate and recap the meeting.

Re 1) Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved as presented above.

2) Financial briefing

The following annexes had been sent to the participants:

Annex 2.0 *Cover note for Financial briefing*

Annex 2.1 *Follow-up on the January-November 2023 budget*

Annex 2.2 *Final 2023 budget*

Andrew Clarke, interim CFO, briefly went through the budget follow-up on the January-November 2022 budget. Unfortunately, it was not possible to present the result for the year as the bookkeeping for December had not yet been completed.

As regards *revenue*, we are still below budget for **January-November**, and it is not considered realistic to shore up the budget despite acceleration since last month and a continued expectation of acceleration in December.

Operating costs have been reduced correspondingly through savings/reduced consumption.

The positive *financial results* have therefore been maintained.

Liquidity has continued to be at a high level, also compared with 2021. This has been achieved through increased private funding and focus on follow-up on donor payments.

Losses have been lower than budgeted for, which is partly due to the circumstance that it was not necessary to release the provisions made for specific potential losses, and partly to the circumstance that a specific loss has not yet been recognised.

Budget 2023

Based on the ExCom's comments at the meeting in December regarding the approval of the budget, the Secretariat has adapted the 2023 budget to allow for a step-by-step plan for investments and operating costs that will be carried out as income is generated.

⇒ **Recap:** *The ExCom expressed its thanks for the briefing. It looked forward to receiving the final results for 2022.*

As for the 2023 budget, the ExCom recognised that pressure had been put on the Secretariat to prepare a plan with a step-by-step release of funds as income is generated – knowing full well that it meant that important investments and activities are not initiated.

The ExCom continued to find it essential to realise positive results, both to establish the required equity and to secure funds for strategic investments.

Re 3) THEME: Presentation of DRC's regions

DRC's Executive Directors for Regions Yann Faivre (West Africa, North Africa, Latin America), James Curtis (East Africa and Great Lakes) and Gerry Garvey (Europe (and Asia as of May 2023)) briefed the ExCom about activities in the regions: The current situation, strategic focus, and main activities.

Unfortunately, Lulu Thapa (Middle East) had found it necessary to excuse himself because of the earthquake in Türkiye/Syria.

It would be too extensive to give an account of the presentations. Reference is made to DRC's website which provides a presentation of the different regions and countries: [Where we work | DRC Danish Refugee Council](#)

⇒ **Recap:** *The ExCom expressed its thanks for an interesting briefing which provided a good overview of DRC's commitment and important activities around the world.*

Re 4) THEME: DRC Governance

The following annex for the agenda item had been sent to the participants: Annex 4 *DRC governance, current situation and proposed resolutions*.

Kim Simonsen gave an update on the ExCom's discussions and the preliminary conclusions from its most recent meetings.

The ExCom agreed on the challenges which have been identified and regularly discussed by the ExCom over the past year. The ExCom also agreed on an overall skills profile which is to foster the necessary professionalisation to be able to undertake the management of an organisation of the size and complexity of the DRC.

The Chairmanship had been in contact with some of the member organisations regarding the ExCom's considerations and had mustered support for proceeding with this work.

⇒ **Decisions:** *The ExCom agreed to propose amendments to the Statutes so that the skills profile is used actively in connection with the nomination process of the ExCom and agreed to adjust the number of external members of the ExCom.*

The proposal to adjust the number of members elected by the Council and the model for phasing in the

proposed changes were adopted by a majority of the members of the ExCom. One member voted against the proposal.

The ExCom agreed to propose an amendment to the Statutes to change the Danish term for 'Chair' to a gender neutral term and to change the term 'ExCom' to 'Board of Directors'.

Further, the ExCom agreed to convene an online meeting for the members of the Council prior to the Council meeting on 31 May 2023 in order to discuss the proposed amendments.

Re 5) Draft agenda for the Council meeting on 31 May 2023

The following annexes for the agenda item had been sent to the participants:

Annex 5.0 Cover note for Council meeting

Annex 5.1 Draft agenda for Council meeting on 31 May 2023

The draft agenda will be sent to Council members along with the notice convening the meeting no later than two months before the meeting.

Elections

Members up for election: Mette Fejfer, Sophie Rytter, Vagn Berthelsen and Karen Lima (employee representative). A separate recommendation process for the election of an employee representative will be initiated.

All four members are eligible for re-election.

Initial presentations

True to tradition, the annual Council meeting will start off with a theme and one or two speakers will give a presentation on a topic relevant to the DRC.

In recent years, the focus has been on an introduction to the DRC's work.

In 2022, the theme of the meeting, the DRC's Ukraine response, was introduced by Charlotte Slente, Secretary General, and Kenneth Flex, Director of DRC Integration.

The ExCom discussed various topics for the Secretariat to develop.

⇒ **Decisions:** *The ExCom approved the draft agenda.*

As regards the introductory theme, the ExCom considered Afghanistan to be an extremely relevant topic with the focus on the DRC's efforts in the country and recent decisions concerning women's access to the labour market.

Re 6) Representation in Berlin, Germany

The following annexes for the agenda item had been sent to the participants:

Annex 6.0 Cover note Registration in Germany

Annex 6.1 Recommendation regarding Registration in Germany

Opportunities for increasing the share of German funding of DRC's activities have been identified, thereby supporting DRC's strategic ambitions. In the short term, the focus will be on funding from institutional donors and in the long term, the focus will be on funding from private donors and foundations.

In order for the DRC to strengthen and develop new partnerships with donors as well as the civil society and increase the DRC's share of German funding it needs to establish a presence in Berlin and become registered as a legal entity in Berlin, Germany.

It is therefore recommended that the ExCom approves the registration of the DRC as a legal entity in Germany, more specifically as a non-profit limited liability company (gGmbH).

The registration process will be handled by a German attorney.

⇒ **Decisions:** The ExCom agreed on the ambition to increase the share of German funding and approved the proposal for registration in Germany.

Re 7) Announcements from the Chair and the Secretary General

- **Türkiye / Syria – Earthquake**

The night before 6 February, Türkiye and Syria were hit by powerful earthquakes costing countless lives in both countries.

DRC safety staff have monitored the consequences of the earthquake from the very beginning. Our employees – especially those working in Türkiye – are all very affected by the situation, and their immediate priority is to take care of themselves and their families. DRC support/response teams are currently lending support to the Türkiye team, just as psychosocial support is offered to the affected employees and their families.

Due to the displacement situation in southern Syria and Türkiye, the DRC is already present in the areas that are most severely affected by the earthquake.

Together with the HQ, the Middle East Regional Office coordinates staff care and the need for reprogramming in the area.

In Türkiye, the standard programmes have been suspended and all efforts will be focused on staff care and setting up emergency programmes with local partners to assist both the host society and the many Syrian refugees in the area.

Appeals for funds for relief aid in the area have been launched, and the DRC conducts campaigns on all social media platforms.

- **SG mission to the Ukraine 28 January 2023 - 2 February 2023**

Secretary General Charlotte Slente has been on a mission to Mykolaiv, the Ukraine, and to Moldova. During her visit, Charlotte Slente had the opportunity to meet with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and the Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen, Minister for Foreign Affairs Lars Løkke Rasmussen and Minister of Defence Jacob Elleman-Jensen.

The Secretary General gained a first-hand impression of the DRC's operations in the Ukraine: Water supply etc.

The visit has received good media coverage – including international coverage.

Re 8) Any other business

No further business was transacted under this item.

ExCom meetings in 2023

ExCom/2	9 May 2023 3.00-6.30 pm
ExCom/3	31 May 2023 3.30-5.00 pm
ExCom/4	20 June 2023 3.00-6.30 pm
ExCom/5	12 September 2023 3.00-6.30 pm
ExCom/6	Seminar from 16 November 2023 at 6.00 pm to 17 November 2023 at 6.00 pm
ExCom/7	5 December 2023 3.00-6.30 pm