



International
Code of Conduct
Association

ICoCA Q1 2021 Board Meeting
29 April 2021
Virtual

Minutes

Present (Board)

- Jo Anthoine
- Frédéric Chenais (Chair)
- Carmen Rosa De León
- Beatrice Godefroy
- David Hornus
- Clifton Johnson
- Annie McGee
- Michelle Quinn
- Caleb Wanga

Present (ICoCA Secretariat)

- Michael Bila (Intern)
- Dina Chantre (Executive & HR Assistant)
- Christopher Galvin (Head of Communications & Outreach)
- Alexandra Garzotto (Finance Manager and Administrative Officer)
- Anaïs Laigle (Project Officer)
- Gina Menghini (Project Officer)
- Jill Monney (Communication and Fundraising Officer)
- Giuseppe Scirocco (Monitoring Officer)
- Jamie Williamson (Executive Director)

Present (Observing/Supporting)

- Susan Benda (US DoS)
- Joan Fontaine (UK FCDO)
- Leslie Taylor (US DoS)

AGENDA POINTS

1. Opening of Meeting and Approval of the Agenda
2. Review of 2020 Annual General Assembly
3. Budget and Finance
4. 2021 Plan of Action Update
5. Communication and Outreach
6. Review of the International Code of Conduct
7. Operational Hotspots
8. 2021 Board Meetings and Annual General Assembly
9. Wrap Up

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

- 1.1. The Chairperson opened the meeting at 14:05 and asked the Secretariat to draw up the minutes. The Chairperson took note that each of the three stakeholder pillars was represented by at least two Board Directors and that at least eight Directors were present. The Chairperson declared that a quorum was present according to Article 7.6 of the Articles of Association (AoA), that the meeting was duly constituted and that the Board could adopt resolutions in compliance with the Articles of Association.
- 1.2. The Chairman welcomed Joel Bisina and Carmen Rosa De León as new Board Directors representing the civil society.
- 1.3. **The Board reviewed and approved the Meeting Agenda.**

2. REVIEW OF 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 2.1. The Secretariat provided an overview of the 2020 Annual General Assembly (AGA), including the number of participants in each session.
 - 2.1.1. The Board requested the Secretariat to submit detailed numbers of participants in each session via email, including a comparison with the number of participants in previous AGAs.
- 2.2. The Secretariat noted that the feedback received from participants had been positive with regard to the virtual nature of the event and the organisation of the sessions over several days, which favoured a greater diversity of participants across different geographies. Other questions were raised with regard to: monitoring and the possibility to conduct in-country visits during the Covid-19 pandemic; the role of the Observer pillar; and the business offer of ICoCA.
 - 2.2.1. Based on the feedback received, the Secretariat suggested to consider maintaining the virtual format in 2021 in light of likely continued challenges related to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.3. The Board congratulated the Secretariat for the successful organisation of the 2020 AGA notwithstanding the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, and noted favourably the engagement with similar initiatives and the participation of key-note speakers. The Board invited the Secretariat to capitalise on the positive work done.
- 2.4. CSO Board Directors appreciated the productive discussions held during the civil society pillar meeting and invited the Secretariat to promote increased cross-pillar engagement during future AGAs.
 - 2.4.1. The Board agreed on the need to promote increased cross-pillar engagement and suggested that representatives of the three pillars periodically discuss how to achieve this objective.

3. BUDGET AND FINANCE

- 3.1. The Secretariat informed the Board that the ICoCA 2020 accounts were third-party audited and validated.
 - 3.1.1. The Secretariat will later submit to the Board detailed figures via email.
- 3.2. The Secretariat presented the proposed budget for 2021, including forecasted revenues and expenses, and underscored that the Association needs to continue investing in its development over the course of the year.
 - 3.2.1. The Board requested the Secretariat to submit via email a detailed comparison of 2020 and 2021 revenues and expenses as well as a breakout of expenses by line of activities.
 - 3.2.2. The Board agreed to approve the proposed 2021 budget via email following submission of detailed figures by the Secretariat.
- 3.3. The Secretariat invited the Board to continue discussing a multi-year approach to ICoCA's budget.
- 3.4. The Swiss representative confirmed the government contribution to ICoCA for 2021.

4. 2021 PLAN OF ACTION UPDATE

- 4.1. The Secretariat presented the 2021 Plan of Action and indicated that it will guide ICoCA's work over the course of the year and will be used by the Secretariat to measure progress against the established objectives.
- 4.2. The Secretariat provided an update on the forthcoming launch of ICoCA's online training module on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
 - 4.2.1. The module builds on the Guidelines on Preventing and Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse published in 2019 and has been developed thanks to the support received from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.
 - 4.2.2. The content of the module has been developed between January and March 2021 in cooperation with six companies operating across various environments. The module is divided into four sections, respectively covering: 1) an overview of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA); 2) the PSEA obligations of private security personnel; 3) the consequences of SEA on survivors, perpetrators, the company and other stakeholders; and 4) the PSEA responsibilities of private security managers.
 - 4.2.3. The module is currently being tested with the six companies and will be officially launched on 10 May 2021. While it will be made available free of charge to ICoCA Member and Affiliate companies, in the future it might also be offered to other private security companies for a fee.

- 4.2.4. The Secretariat looks forward to receiving feedback from Members and Affiliates on the implementation and usefulness of the training module, and offered to grant access to Board Directors for testing.
- 4.2.5. The Secretariat also indicated that the development of additional training modules on other provisions of the Code might be envisioned, subject to the availability of funding. The Board suggested to consider the development of an introductory training module on the Code addressed not only to private security companies but also to their clients.
- 4.3. The Secretariat briefed the Board on the current work being conducted with civil society organisations and the recent efforts to build the capacity of CSO Members to support the mission of ICoCA.
 - 4.3.1. The Secretariat mentioned the ongoing projects in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo – the latter in cooperation with the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) – and thanked the UK Government for the support provided.
 - 4.3.2. The Secretariat also mentioned the idea to conduct regional studies, led by CSO Members, to strengthen the capacity of the pillar on private security-related matters, and indicated that a number of organisations have already expressed interest in this project.
- 4.4. CSO Board Directors observed that CSO monitoring frameworks need to be strengthened in different regions and countries, and welcomed the idea to develop tailored products to stimulate conversation including at the Board level. However, they also noted that dedicated funding is needed to ensure longer-term sustainability of these efforts.
- 4.5. The Secretariat provided an update on the forthcoming publication of a Guidance on Human Rights Impact Assessments for Private Security Providers (HRIA Guidance).
 - 4.5.1. The Guidance has been developed between January and March 2021 through desk-based research, review of ICoCA Certification applications, and consultation with companies and other stakeholders. The original English version is currently being translated into Arabic, Chinese, French and Spanish.
 - 4.5.2. The Guidance is intended to be a ‘living document’ that might be updated as human rights due diligence processes evolve within the private security industry and beyond.
 - 4.5.3. The Secretariat invited the Board to make suggestions regarding how to operationalise the Guidance following its publication – including through the provision of dedicated support to smaller companies and the organisation of webinars and training sessions – and pointed out that some of these activities might require the allocation of dedicated resources.

5. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

- 5.1. The Secretariat underscored that additional funding for communication and targeted campaigns, in particular towards clients of private security companies, is needed. The Secretariat observed that clients requiring mandatory ICoCA Membership in procurement is the main driver for industry membership growth in the Association. As a good example, it mentioned the work currently being carried out with Philip Morris International and HELP.
 - 5.1.1. The Secretariat informed the Board that a new Intern will be recruited to support outreach towards clients.
 - 5.1.2. The Board invited the Secretariat to present in a conference on the benefits for clients to contract ICoCA Member and Affiliate companies.
- 5.2. The Board and the Secretariat also discussed and agreed on the need to conduct more effective outreach towards governments to increase Membership in ICoCA.
- 5.3. The Secretariat briefed the Board on the recent engagement with the UN Open-ended intergovernmental working group to consider the possibility of elaborating an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies and the invitation it recently received to participate in its consultation sessions.
- 5.4. The Secretariat indicated that it is currently publishing on ICoCA's website all the submissions made to UN mechanisms and other organisations.

6. REVIEW OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

- 6.1. The Secretariat pointed out that, since the adoption of the International Code of Conduct in 2010, there has been a substantial evolution in the private security industry. A revision on the Code might therefore be needed and the Secretariat intends to start this process in Q2 2021, with the objective of submitting a revision proposal at the 2021 AGA. The Code areas to be revised and the new subjects to be included in the document will be identified through dialogue with the Board and subject-matter experts.
 - 6.1.1. The Board agreed that 2021 presents a good opportunity for Code revision and that the process should lead to a more relevant document for present times.
 - 6.1.2. The Board and the Secretariat agreed to establish a Working Group whose members (two per each pillar) shall be identified through follow-up email exchange.

7. OPERATIONAL HOTSPOTS

- 7.1. As an operational hotspot that is currently assuming relevance, the Secretariat provided an overview of the situation in Mozambique and the potential involvement of ICoCA in these kinds of contexts. Another relevant context identified is Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US troops.
- 7.2. The Board suggested to discuss operational hotspots at the Operational Committee level and indicated that increased CSO presence, as well as the potential establishment of strategic partnerships with continental bodies and the Voluntary Principles Initiative, might be needed to better inform ICoCA's action in these contexts.
- 7.3. The Board observed that a replacement for previous Board Member Michael Posner is now needed for the Operational Committee.

8. 2021 BOARD MEETINGS AND ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 8.1. The Secretariat proposed to hold next Board Meetings in June, September and before the 2021 AGA, indicating that additional Board Meetings could be held in case of need.

8.1.1. The Board approved the proposed timeline.

9. WRAP UP

- 9.1. The Chairperson of the Board mentioned the webinar to be held just after the meeting with the participation of ICoCA, the Swiss Government, an extractive company and ICoCA Member Company GardaWorld.
- 9.2. The Board thanked outgoing and former Secretariat members Gina Menghini and Stephane Coute for their contribution to ICoCA, and wished them best of luck in their future career.
- 9.3. The Chairperson provided a summary of the main points discussed and the decisions taken at the Q1 2021 Board Meeting, and expressed his appreciation to the ICoCA Secretariat for planning and organising it.