

# SASNET

Swedish South Asian Studies Network

## **Board Meeting, February 5, 2008, 13.15-17.00**

**Venue:** Conference room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Centre for East- and South-East Asian Studies (ACE), Alfa 1 Building, Scheelevägen 15D, Ideon Research Park, Lund

**Members present:** Prosun Bhattacharya, Gunnel Cederlöf, Per Hilding, Catarina Kinnvall, Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg, Kristina Myrvold, Ferdinando Sardella and Neil Webster. Ordinary member Jan Magnusson did not attend the meeting, but sent his written comments. Root node staff: Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund.

## Agenda:

### **1. Election of chairperson, secretary, and person to verify the minutes**

Gunnel Cederlöf was elected to chair the meeting, and Per Hilding to be the secretary. Lars Eklund was elected to verify the minutes.

### **2. Agenda for the meeting; additional points**

Anna Lindberg proposed an additional point: "Substitution of a deputy board member who has moved away from Sweden." The board decided to add this point as no.12 to the agenda.

### **3. SASNET Work Report for 2007 by Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund**

Minutes from the previous board meeting [www.sasnet.lu.se/board0702.pdf](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/board0702.pdf)

a. Internet Gateway. January 2008: 1 227 web pages, 28 000 external links.

b. Newsletters: <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#newsletters>

c. Other activities in Sweden during Fall 2007 (reports by Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund)

\* Visit to the Indian Embassy, Aug 15, 2007.

<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#indamb>

\* Visit to the International Programme Office for Education and Training (Internationella Programkontoret), Aug 15, 2007.

\* Contact journey to Stockholm Sept 19-21, 2007 ([Enclosure 1](#)).

- \* Seminar on “Naxal Violence in India: Security Threat or Failure of Governance?” Sept 25, 2007, in collaboration with Dept. of Economics, Lund University.
- \* Workshop on Post-Exotic India, Roskilde, Sept 26-27, 2007.  
<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/conferences.html#rosk>
- \* Visit by Anna Lindberg to Uppsala for 1) meeting with group led by Gunnel Cederlöf for planning conference on “Nature, Knowledge, and Power”, and 2) meeting with Mirja Juntunen, Director of Nordic Center in India.
- \* Visit on Oct 2, 2007, by Anand Agricultural University delegation: Dr. A.K. Pathak, Director of Research at AAU, and Dr. J.B. Prajapati, Coordinator of “SASNET Fermented Foods project”.  
<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#varsh>
- \* Seminar, Oct 10, 2007, 19.30–21.15, “Global Terrorism: Myth or Reality?” organised by SASNET in collaboration with the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University.  
<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#globterr>
- \* Visit on Oct 22, 2007, by Swedish Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee. Anna Lindberg introduced SASNET and spoke of “The New India”. <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#parlsess>
- \* Seminar, Oct 23, 2007, “The Ideology of Nation State and Educational Policy”. Sunandan Roy Chowdhury, Editor & Publisher of Sampark Journal of Global Understanding, Kolkata, India.
- \* Seminar, Dec 12, 2007, “Democracy in a Poor Country: Bangladesh at the Crossroads?” Professor Arild Engelsen Ruud, Dept. of Cultural Studies and Oriental Languages (IKOS), University of Oslo, jointly organized by SASNET and the Association of Foreign Affairs at Lund University (UPF).

d. Contact journey to India, November 2007 ([Enclosure 2](#))

e. The Haellquist collection <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sasnet.html#haell>

f. Planning of Uppsala Conference <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/uppsalaconf08/>

g. Financial statement ([Enclosure 3](#))

*Discussion & decision:* AL and LE confirmed that the internet gateway is running very smoothly. Moreover, five newsletters had been issued during the fall. AL then presented SASNET’s activities in Sweden and specifically mentioned the strategic meetings at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SIDA during which the new aid strategy for South Asia and the financial situation of SASNET were discussed. While the former is not likely to affect SASNET’s work the latter remains unresolved. AL has

nevertheless been invited to take part in the meeting of SIDA's India group during spring 2008.

In the following discussion NW suggested that SASNET should consider extending its activities and/or find new sources of financing. See further point 4.

AL then gave a report from hers and LE's contact journey to India the purpose of which was to visit universities and research institutes in geographical areas not covered by SASNET's earlier journeys. Organizations were chosen based on their collaboration with Swedish universities or with future collaboration in mind. In this way they acquainted themselves with research underway and tried to help Swedish researchers in establishing contacts. In the discussion GC proposed that a searchable index for all contact journeys should be worked out and made available at SASNET's web site. LE replied that the present search function to some extent could serve the same purpose.

In his letter to the board JM mentioned that both financing and finding space for parts of the Haellquist book collection at the Asia Library have now been solved. A place for housing the entire book collection has, however, not yet been found

Gunnel Cederlöf informed about the preparations for the Uppsala conference: "Nature, Knowledge, Power". To enable scholars from South Asia to participate in the conference SEK 40 000 has been granted by Formas.

According to the Financial Statement several expenses during the year were not paid for during 2007 and will instead be paid from the 2008 budget. The board therefore decided to revise the budget with the surplus from 2007 added. See point 9. The Board approved the financial statement and decided to put it aside.

#### **4. Planning of SASNET activities in 2008**

- a. Visit to Swedish Universities (Göteborg, Karlstad, Kalmar, Linköping, and Malmö)
- b. Plan workshop "Made in India" for Apr 10, 2008, to be held in Lund in collaboration with Sweden India Business Council (SIBC)
- c. Participate in 20<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (ECMSAS), Manchester, UK, July 8-11, 2008  
<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/conferences.html#manch>
- d. Organize conference on "Nature, Knowledge, Power" in collaboration with Uppsala University, Aug 2008
- e. Meet with strategic institutions and people to secure finances for SASNET
- f. Other activities

*Discussion & Decision:* AL told the meeting about the activities planned for 2008 and GC gave some details on the organization of the Uppsala Conference.

A workshop with the Sweden India Business Council is planned to take place in Lund April 10, 2008. AL is involved in the preparations for the workshop. GC

reminded the Board that SASNET's membership in the Sweden India Business Council will be evaluated in the next board meeting. AL will provide a report about the experiences from SASNET's point of view to that meeting.

The meetings planned to take place with institutions and individual persons to secure the future funding of SASNET are of vital importance. Sida/SAREC and the Ministry of Education will be approached. See also point 5.

## **5. Establishment of a working group**

In February 2006, a strategy group for the long term planning of SASNET was created. The group submitted its report in January 2007. The work with a principal long term agenda will now continue in various ways. As director, AL has created a working group consisting of three members (Gunnel Cederlöf, Camilla Orjuela, and Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg) who will collaborate with the coordinator in order to:

a) Revise existing and create a new policy document (see principles, directions, and platform)

<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/platform.html>

<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/directions.html>

<http://www.sasnet.lu.se/ourplan.html>

b) Discuss appropriate ways for securing funds for SASNET (including preparations for a visit to the Swedish Ministry of Education)

*Discussion & Decision:* In December 2009 the SASNET's Sida/SAREC grant and the Lund University funding expires. To manage this situation a strategy group led by AL was formed in February 2006 aimed at discussing and formulating a policy document. The over all questions for the group's and the board's discussions are to determine the major achievements of SASNET so far from the point of users and stakeholders and, from these experiences, determine what SASNET can be in the future. Prosun Bhattacharya was also asked to join the group.

## **6. The Reference Group meeting in New Delhi. Plans for sub-networks**

Report of meeting with South Asia Reference Group in New Delhi, Nov 2007  
([Enclosure 4](#))

*Suggestion:*

a. Launch sub-networks within SASNET

- b. Organise a sub-network conference on Public Health in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in Jan 2009

*Discussion & Decision:* AL reported from the meeting with the SASNET reference group in New Delhi, Nov 2007. The meeting had been very fruitful and resulted in a number of concrete suggestions and proposals. The reference group was unanimously of the opinion that Swedish students must be better prepared and have proper visas before they visit South Asia. AL reported that the Indian government is well informed about the activities of foreign scholars in India, irrespective of the visa they use. It was also pointed out that scholars must be alerted to the fact that several countries may not be willing to give research visas for certain sensitive topics. SASNET therefore needs to clarify these points to outgoing Swedish students and researchers traveling with SASNET-grants.

Dr. Wijewardena of the reference group had come up with the idea of giving a conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on health and social care of marginalized groups and invite scholars from both Sweden and South Asia. Prof. Gunilla Lindmark at the International Maternal and Child Health (IMCH) in Uppsala had been asked to chair the conference together with Dr. Wijewardena. The board decided to accept the proposition to hold this conference in Colombo in January 2009. It was pointed out though by CSL that we need to be clear about the distinction between 'public health' and 'maternal health.'

Then the issue of launching sub-networks within SASNET, for facilitating academic discussions and the sharing of research results, was discussed. It was suggested that one sub-network should be involved in the Sri Lanka conference. Several suggestions for sub-networks had been proposed by the reference group and were further discussed by the board. One such idea was to gather successful SASNET-students to facilitate discussion and dissemination of their research result. Another idea was to arrange one major thematic conference each year. NW wanted SASNET to further contemplate its involvement in different research areas and whether the aim of networking is to create possibilities for Swedish or for South Asian students.

## **7. Small Workshop Grants**

### *Suggestion:*

Announce five "small grants" for workshops with a maximum of 15.000 SEK that can be applied for throughout the year and processed using a simplified decision making procedure apart from other SASNET grants. Decisions to be made by the root node staff (Director and Deputy Director) plus one member of the board.

*Discussion & Decision:* According to GC the purpose of these grants is to bring people together and strengthen collaboration among Swedish scholars, preferably young researchers who need a footing after having accomplished their PhD:s. The grants are thus intended to initiate things and get things going. It was decided that money should be put aside for this purpose in the budget, but that SASNET should wait with distributing them until AL had prepared the guidelines. This she promised to do before March 25, 2008.

## **8. Creating a SASNET students network, promoting recruitment of new students for Masters programmes in South Asian Studies**

*Suggestion:*

- a. Engage Ph.D. student Malin Gregersen to establish a sub-network for students.
- b. Establish a yearly grant (SEK 10.000) for the best essay on South Asia at Swedish universities (C or D level theses).  
The selection process to be made by the reference group evaluating the SASNET grants, necessitating a 50 % increase in the fee given to the reference group members.

*Discussion & Decision:*

The board favoured the idea of establishing a sub-network for students and after some discussion decided to raise the amount set aside for that purpose from SEK 10 000 to 25 000. The idea of establishing a yearly grant of SEK 10 000 for the best essay on South Asia was, however, not favoured by all board members. It was pointed out that evaluation could be difficult and that there were more efficient ways of stimulating interest in South Asia, as to organize gatherings or to institute a travel grant. AL will elaborate further possible activities along these lines.

## **9. Budget for 2008**

*Suggestion:* See [Enclosure 5](#) for the suggested budget. A revised budget will be presented at the meeting

*Discussion & Decision:* A few revisions of the budget were discussed during the meeting. One was to raise the amount set aside for the students' sub-network from SEK 10 000 to 25 000, another to increase the amount for 'Interdisciplinary workshops' from SEK 150 000 to 225 000.

Due to the fact that several expenses during 2007 had not been paid they were carried over to the 2008 budget. According to the financial results of 2007 these expenses (specified in Enclosure 3) amounted to SEK 242 190. When the surplus caused by the delay of the Library project (SEK 260 000) is transferred to the 2008 budget the real surplus from 2007 is SEK 103 000. From this money 75000 was decided to be allocated to small workshops and the remaining money to planning grants. (A budget including these revisions was sent to the board members two days after the meeting.)

The Board approved the budget with the following revisions: 1) to decrease "Travel and fees, Reference group from 45000 to 30000 kr; 2) to increase "Subnetwork for students from 10000 to 25000 kr.

## 10. Planned activities for 2009

- a. Nordic Association for South Asian Studies (NASA) conference in Finland in the spring
- b. SASNET conference for South Asia researchers and Ph.D. candidates to be held in the summer 2009

## 11. EU activities

- a. European Network on Contemporary Academic Research (Encari), report from roundtable conference 13-14 November by Per Hilding and Ferdinando Sardella <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/encariconf07.pdf>
- b. Report from the Asia-Europe Alumni Networks meeting in Madrid 30 August–1 September, by Staffan Lindberg <http://www.sasnet.lu.se/madrid07.pdf>
- c. Report of Brussels meeting on the Erasmus Mundus External Windows (EMECW) programme, and possible Swedish participation, by Lars Eklund and Anna Lindberg

*Discussion:* PH and FS reported from the ENCARI conference in Brussels 13-14 November that they visited together with Sidsel Hansson as representatives for SASNET. AL gave a short account of the Asia-Europe Alumni Network meeting in Madrid visited by Staffan Lindberg 30 August – 1 September. See the links above for their reports. LE informed about the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Windows (EMECW) programme that promotes the exchange of students and researchers from EU member states and targeted 'Third-countries.' A separate lot (no. 15) is designed to promote collaboration between EU and India and lots nos. 12 and 13 involves

other South Asian countries. AL reported that Lund University is preparing an application for the EMCEW programme although the deadline is as soon as 15 February.

## 12. Substitution of a deputy board member

AL reported that the deputy representative for doctoral candidates in the board has completed his PhD and taken up a post-doc position in the USA. Due to his absence, new place of residence and academic advancement the board decided that a new deputy representative for doctoral students should be elected to the board. Suggestions for new candidates, preferably within the field of natural science and technology, should be submitted by board members to AL before 25 March.

## 13. Date of next Board Meeting

*Decision:* Tuesday, August 26, 2008

Lund, February 15, 2007

*Per Hilding*

-----  
Per Hilding, secretary

*Gunnel Cederlöf*

-----  
Gunnel Cederlöf, chairperson

Verified by:

*Lars Eklund*

-----  
Lars Eklund

Enclosures:

1. Report from contact journey to Stockholm in September 2007
2. Report from contact journey to India in November 2007
3. Financial report 2007
4. Report from Reference Group meeting in New Delhi
5. Budget for 2008