

# SASNET

Swedish South Asian Studies Network

## **Board Meeting, December 09, 2009, 13.15-17.00**

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

**Members present:** Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg, Bengt Kristiansson, Ferdinando Sardella, Pernille Gooch, Jan Magnusson, Staffan Lindberg, Per Hilding, Per Drougge, Elenor Lissel.

Root node staff: Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund.

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

Cecilia Stålsby Lundborg was elected to chair the meeting, Lars Eklund to be the secretary, and Jan Magnusson to verify the minutes.

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

The agenda was approved. One additional point was added under point 10, regarding an extension of the current South Asian Reference group's mandate period.

### **3. Round of presentation, and a request to let Nihat Ulusoy attend the meeting**

Elenor Lissel, the new student representative, especially for PhD candidates, was welcomed to the board.

The board decided to let Nihat Ulusoy, SASNET intern during fall, 2009 attend the meeting as an observer.

### **4. The future of SASNET**

Anna Lindberg reported from the meeting at the Ministry of Education in Stockholm on November 30, 2009, her discussions with the Swedish Research Council regarding possible infrastructural support, and from the meeting with Lund University's Assistant Vice Chancellor Sven Strömquist on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting in Stockholm did not lead to any positive results. The Ministry of Education was unable to fund a particular purpose through a single university, and insisted that SASNET should seek funding from its principal users: the Swedish universities. Anna commented that this strategy has already been explored. During 2009 the Swedish universities were approached regarding the possibility of paying some kind of membership fee to SASNET, but it proved to be difficult. Some universities rejected the proposal, whereas others never replied. To be viable, this model would demand that most universities are members.

Discussions with Lund University, on the other hand, have been more positive. Lund has promised to keep its funding on the same level as before, and may even be willing to provide extra funding for the network in 2010. SASNET will make a formal application regarding extra funding to the Vice Chancellor, Lund University. (*Enclosure No. 4*).

The board was much engaged in discussing options for the future, and several members suggested that SASNET should actively try to find solutions that may get the Swedish funding agencies and authorities interested to support the network and its activities. It was also suggested that SASNET should explore Nordic and European collaboration. It was pointed out that in the current globalizing world, a network like SASNET is more relevant than ever, and that this gives us a great potential for the future if we just can survive through the current crisis.

Board members also stressed the importance of qualified research on Afghanistan and Islam, and that SASNET may play a positive role in this

The chairperson summarized the discussion by concluding that SASNET should keep on working as normal, and wait for additional funding from Lund University. At the same time we should continue with our efforts to seek new national and/or international funding. It may also be necessary for the network to adapt its work to the demands of the funding agencies.

## **5. Appointment of Director for SASNET for the period 2010-2012, and decision about a new board for the period January–September 2009**

In November 2009, Lund University Vice Chancellor decided to reappoint Anna Lindberg as SASNET's Director, for the period January 1, 2010 – December 31, 2012. It also decided to prolong the period for the current SASNET board with 9 months until September 30, 2010

(*Enclosure No. 5*).

*Decision:* The board approved the decisions by Lund University.

## **6. SASNET activities September – November 2009**

Anna Lindberg and Lars Eklund reported about the activities that had been carried out since the previous board meeting in mid-September 2009. A meeting was organized in October for researchers and students at Lund University, with presentations by some prominent South Asia researchers at the university, and a seminar with the Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is scheduled for December 17<sup>th</sup>. Otherwise most work has been devoted to the issue of securing funding for SASNET.

## **7. Financial situation November 2009**

Lars Eklund reported on the financial situation, based on the financial report for January – November 2009. It seems probable that SASNET will have a surplus of approximately SEK 200 000 when the year is over. Part of this is needed to cover the deficit in SASNET's so called *myndighetskapital* from previous year, but there will also be SEK 150 000 to be used for the Falsterbo conference in August 2010 – see point 8.

## **8. Planned SASNET activities for 2010**

- Second Nordic South Asia Conference for Young Scholars. This conference has been planned for during the fall 2009 by our intern Nihat Ulusoy and a group of masters students at Lund University. It will be held 18-20 August in Höllviken, see conference web page, <http://www.sasnetconference.se/>

- Nordic Conference on the Development of Nepal. The conference has been planned by Anna Lindberg and some researchers at the Institute for Security and Development in Stockholm, and in consultation with the Embassy of Nepal to Scandinavia. It will probably be held in May 2010.

## **9. SASNET guest lecture grant redistribution**

Prof. Margareta Petersson, Växjö University, has decided to withdraw her already accepted grant application for a guest lecture programme, whereas Dr. Ann-Kristin Boström, Jönköping University, has called attention to the fact that her application for a guest lecture programme grant was rejected because of a misunderstanding. *Enclosures 1, 2, and 3.*

*Suggestion:* Margareta Petersson's unused guest lecture programme grant is redistributed to Dr. Boström, the only application in this category that was rejected.

*Decision:* The board accepted Margareta Petersson's withdrawal of an unused guest lecture programme grant of SEK 20 000, and redistributed it to Ann-Kristin Boström, Jönköping University.

## **10. Extension of period for South Asian Reference Group**

The board decided to prolong the period for the members of the South Asian Reference Group in accordance with the decision regarding SASNET's board to September 30, 2010.

## **11. Next Board Meeting**

The board decided to hold its next meeting in Uppsala on a Tuesday afternoon in the end of April or beginning of May 2010. The final decision will be taken later.

Lund, February 11, 2010

*Lars Eklund*

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Lars Eklund, secretary

Verified by:

*Jan Magnusson*

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Jan Magnusson

### **Enclosures:**

1. Letter from Margareta Petersson about a granted guest lecture programme
2. Letter from Ann-Kristin Boström about a rejected guest lecture programme application.
3. Ann-Kristin Boström's application for SASNET grant.
4. Communication to Lund University's Vice Chancellor.
5. Decision about the new board.