23rd Meeting of the
Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the conduct of Science

King Hussein bin Talal Convention Centre
Dead Sea, Jordan
6–8 November 2017

Meeting Report

Present
Leiv K. Sydnes (chair), Ranjini Bandyopadhyay, David Black (ex officio), Richard Bourgeois-Doyle, Merry Bullock, Guélando Cissé, Roberta D’Alessandro, Hasan Dweik, Kumie Inose, Gaven Martin, Silke Schicktanz, Valérie Schini-Kerth Alberto J. Núñez Sellés, Mark Thorley

Absent
Lucilla Spini (ex officio),

ICSU Secretariat
Roger Ridley (CFRS Executive Secretary), Miia Ylöstalo-Joubert (Administrative Officer)

1 Welcoming Remarks and Introduction

The chair welcomed the committee members.

The chair reminded committee members about the confidential nature of the meeting documents except that meeting reports are public.

The chair reminded members of ICSU’s policy for conflict of interest. No members reported conflicts of interest.

The chair reminded committee members that travel arrangements should be made as early as possible, if necessary through the ICSU Secretariat, for reasons of cost effectiveness and to facilitate the obtaining of visas. ICSU would reimburse expenses for economy air travel and accommodation for the duration of CFRS meetings.

2 Adoption of agenda

The chair noted three additional items for discussion under item 17.

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<td>Adopted the agenda</td>
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<td>Noted the additional items</td>
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<td>Adjusted the order of some items (this report retains original order)</td>
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23rd CFRS Meeting, November 2017: Meeting Report 1
3 22nd CFRS meeting: report and action list

The Committee noted the minutes and actions from the previous meeting. The minutes had been approved electronically and were posted on the ICSU website on 1 August 2017. The committee considered all matters outstanding from the 22nd meeting under the appropriate agenda item at this meeting.

**Decision**
Noted the report of the 22nd CFRS meeting and the actions taken

4 General Assembly

ICSU’s 32nd General Assembly (GA) was held in Taipei on October 23–24. The chair presented a report to the GA on CFRS activities over the past three years since the previous meeting, which received positive feedback from the members present. In light of the merger with ISSC, a summary of proposed topics for future workshops was included in lieu of a full work plan for the next three years. A future work plan will be required at the General Assembly in July 2018.

**Decision**
Noted the report and the update from the General Assembly
Noted the requirement for a future work plan

5 ICSU and ISSC merger

The CFRS Chair, ICSU General Secretary and CFRS Executive Secretary briefed on the separate and joint meetings and merger discussions of ICSU and the International Social Sciences Council (ISSC) that took place at the General Assembly. Both ICSU and the International Social Science Council (ISSC) member representatives voted in favour of merging in 2018 to become the International Science Council.

The committee noted proposed changes to the structure of the CFRS committee and processes including a smaller number of members (up to 12 members), to be chaired by a member of the governing board with one face-to-face meeting per year.

The committee noted its concern about the ability to meet its full mandate with reduced face-to-face meetings, especially in light of the strong support for CFRS from country members at the GA and desire for the committee to do more on “responsibility” issues.

**Decision**
Noted the update and the discussion
Agreed to advise the ICSU secretariat in Paris about its views on the frequency of face-to-face meetings

6 Conferences and workshops

6.1 WSF Thematic Session Planning: The Future of the Principle of Universality of Science

The committee prepared for the WSF thematic session panel discussion on the Principle of Universality of Science. The committee confirmed that Richard Bourgeois-Doyle would be the moderator and would introduce the topic, the panellists and invite questions from the audience. The panellists would be Leiv Sydnes (CFRS chair), Roberta D’Alessandro (CFRS member), and Yousef Najaireh (invited speaker from Al Quds University).

**Decision**
Noted the documents
Agreed on the format for the panel session
6.2 Workshop on “Shaping the future of researchers in developing countries”

The committee received an update on the workshop proposal “Shaping the future of researchers in developing countries: strategies for better enabling environment and enhancing the value of research”. The committee noted that the ICSU-Regional Office out of Africa had endorsed holding the workshop in Nigeria and that the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS) has confirmed its hosting support. The workshop will be held in Abuja on 7 March (afternoon) and 8 March (full day). The 24th CFRS meeting will take place on 5 March (afternoon) and 6 March (full day) in parallel with the ICSU African Regional Committee meeting.

Committee members raised and discussed concerns about the security situation in Nigeria given the warnings in the travel advice of the countries represented on the committee. NAS noted a number of workshops and conferences held recently in Abuja and assured the committee that it will provide full support and security during the ICSU meetings and workshop in March 2018.

The Executive Secretary noted that it was members’ individual responsibility to ensure they have appropriate travel insurance and the necessary visas and vaccines.

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<td>Noted the documents and the update</td>
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<td>Agreed for the workshop to proceed</td>
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7 Japanese Statement on Research for Military Security

The “Statement on Research for Military Security” published by the Science Council of Japan was presented at the previous meeting. There is some concern about the increasing military research spending in Japan, which could result in loss of transparency of public research investment and loss of academic freedom in research. Kumie Inose updated the committee on developments in Japan in response to the statement. The committee discussed the situation and decided there is no need to take any further actions.

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<td>Provided feedback to K. Inose</td>
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<td>Agreed to remove this item from future agenda</td>
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8 Freedom and responsibility in science: generic issues (updates & new ones)

8.1 Vetting of scientific publications in Russia

Concerns over potential vetting of publications and conference presentations prepared by scientists in Russia were initially reported in Nature in October 2015. The decision to write to the Russian Academy of Science seeking clarification was suspended while elections took place at the academy. Dr Alexander Sergeyev was elected as president in September 2017.

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<td>Noted the documents</td>
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<td>Agreed to write to the new President at the Russian Academy of Science</td>
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8.2 The situation in Turkey

The State of Emergency remains in place in Turkey. There continues to be reports of dismissals, imprisonment and prosecutions of scientists and other academics. Travel restrictions are reported to have been imposed on thousands of higher-education personnel by invalidating the passports of those who have been dismissed.

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<td>Noted the documents</td>
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<td>Agreed to continue to monitor the situation</td>
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8.3 Killing of Giulio Regeni, an Italian PhD student in Egypt

The committee continues to monitor developments in the case of PhD student Giulio Regeni from the University of Cambridge who was killed during his visit to Egypt to conduct fieldwork in 2016. The chair previously wrote to Vice Chancellor Borysiewicz at the University of Cambridge in June 2016 for the University’s views about lessons learnt that could supplement ICSU’s advice for scientists doing fieldwork in risky situations. The new Vice Chancellor, Dr Stephen Toope, commenced his role in October 2017. The committee decided not to write to the new Vice Chancellor at this time, pending publication of further reports of the incident.

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<tr>
<td>Noted the update and the documents</td>
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<td>Agreed to postpone writing to the vice chancellor at this time</td>
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<td>Agreed to continue to monitor the case</td>
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8.4 United States Travel Ban

The committee noted the changes to visa requirements and further difficulties for some researchers and students from several countries travelling to the United States. The latest changes were issued on 24 September 2017. The committee noted that many scientists are choosing not to visit the USA, and international students currently studying in the USA are nervous about attending overseas conferences due to restrictions on re-entering the country. These issues continue to have negative effects on the freedom of scientific exchange and violates the Principle of Universality of Science.

The committee discussed options to follow up ICSU’s previous initiative on the United States visa policy.

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<td>Noted the developments</td>
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<td>Agreed to write to the ICSU Secretariat suggesting; (i) a statement be prepared that could be sent to member academies and scientific unions to draw attention to the US visa issues and (ii) identify where support is available to assist with individual visa cases</td>
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8.5 Venezuela

The situation in Venezuela was raised at the last meeting following an article in Nature highlighting the difficulties for scientists in Venezuela. The chair sent letters to contacts at the Venezuelan Academy of Physical, Mathematical and Natural Sciences (ACFIMAN) requesting further information. Such information was supplied, but it did not furnish evidence that scientists, universities and other research institutions were particularly targeted. The committee noted that the issues scientists face are associated with the broader socio-economic environment in Venezuela.

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<td>Noted the letters and the reply</td>
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<td>Agreed to respond to the letter by expressing support and requesting to be kept informed of future developments</td>
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<td>Agreed to access relevant networks to seek more information</td>
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<td>Agreed to continue to follow the situation</td>
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8.6 Attempt to censor Cambridge University Press (new issue)

The committee is concerned about censorship in science. In August 2017, Cambridge University Press (CUP) issued an announcement saying it would censor content published in China Quarterly. Since then CUP has reversed its decision, however this highlights the issue of censorship in the academic community through political pressures. The committee discussed the general situation of censorship.

Decision
Noted the documents
Agreed to continue to follow any developments

9 Freedom of science: individual cases (updates and new ones)

9.1 Pınar Selek, Turkey

This case was last discussed by the committee in March 2015 where it was noted that Pınar Selek, a Turkish sociologist, was acquitted of the charges against her. In January 2017 the acquittal was overturned, and Selek is once again facing charges. The committee noted developments and decided to continue to follow the case.

Decision
Noted the update
Agreed to continue to follow the case

9.2 Büşra Ersanlı, Turkey

The committee has followed this case since March 2012. The latest court appearance was scheduled for 27 October 2017, but no final decision was reached. The committee decided to continue to follow the case.

Decision
Noted the update
Agreed to continue to follow the case

9.3 Bahá’í community leaders, Iran

Mahvash Sabet has now been released for completing her 10-year sentence. Following Sabet’s release the chair wrote to Iranian authorities acknowledging the release of Sabet and appealing for the release of the other scientists who were among Bahá’í community leaders arrested in 2008.

Decision
Noted the update and the letter
Agreed to continue to follow the case

9.4 Ahmadreza Djalali

An Iranian lecturer in Disaster Medicine, and resident of Sweden, was arrested while visiting his home country in April 2016. The chair wrote to Iranian authorities ahead of Djalali’s trial scheduled for August 2017. The trial was postponed. When the trial recommenced Djalali was given the death sentence. The chair wrote again to Iranian authorities to appeal to drop the charges against Djalali and release him from prison.

Decision
Noted the update and the letters
Agreed to continue to follow the case
9.5 Xiyue Wang, Iran (new case)

This is a new case, initially discussed via email in September. A PhD student from Princeton University was arrested while conducting research in Iran in 2016 and charged with infiltration and espionage. After being sentenced to 10 years in prison an appeal was lodged. The chair wrote to Iranian authorities prior to his appeal. The Iranian Appeals Court have upheld the initial sentence.

**Decision**
Noted the update and the letter
Agreed to continue to follow the case

9.6 Azita Rafizadeh and Payman Kooshakbaghi, Iran (new case)

This is a new case presented to the committee for consideration. Azita Rafizadeh and her husband, Payman Kooshakbaghi, both computer engineers, are currently imprisoned for “acting against national security by participating in a domestic institution” referring to their teaching at the Bahá’í Institute for Higher Education.

**Decision**
Noted the case information
Agreed to write to the Iranian Authorities and to continue to follow the case

9.7 Forensic Scientist, Turkey (new case)

This is a new case presented to the committee for consideration regarding a forensic scientist facing charges associated with carrying out research in Turkey.

**Decision**
Noted the case information

9.8 Social Anthropologist, Turkey (new case)

This is a new case presented to the committee for consideration regarding a social anthropologist facing charges associated with carrying out research in Turkey.

**Decision**
Noted the case information

10 Update on finalising guidelines for scholars doing research in unstable regions

ICSU Executive Board approved the advisory note and the revised version was published on the website in September 2017. The published note has also been distributed through our networks.

**Decision**
Thanked the subgroup for its work to date on the guidelines

11 The ICSU website

ICSU has launched the new website. The CFRS portal has been separated into information about the committee members and meeting reports (https://icsu.org/about-us/governance/committees/committee-on-freedom-and-responsibility-in-the-conduct-of-science-cfrs) and information about CFRS activities (https://icsu.org/what-we-do/freedoms-and-responsibilities-of-scientists) with subpages on academic freedom, freedom of movement and association, research integrity and science and human rights.

CFRS publications are saved with other ICSU publications (https://www.icsu.org/publications) but are not currently linked to the webpage on CFRS activities. The CFRS secretariat and the committee raised concerns that the new website does not reflect the points raised previously with ICSU about the CFRS portal. The ICSU
Communications team has indicated it is unlikely there will be any structural changes to the website prior to the merger and the General Assembly in July 2018.

**European Commission’s document on Research Integrity**
The CFRS webpage was updated to include a new relevant link to the European Commission’s document on Research Integrity that was brought to our attention during the previous CFRS committee meeting. [https://icsu.org/what-we-do/freedoms-and-responsibilities-of-scientists/research-integrity](https://icsu.org/what-we-do/freedoms-and-responsibilities-of-scientists/research-integrity).

**Decision**
Noted the discussion
Agreed to write to the ICSU executive board to provide feedback on the new website
Recommended that all existing advisory notes are carried over in the merger to the new organisation

**ICSU-CFRS promotion opportunity: request to contribute to an IHRN resource guide**
The International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies (IHRN) are preparing a resource guide to outline the human rights activities in which national academies around the world are engaged. In addition to highlighting the work of individual academies, IHRN would like to showcase the human rights work of other international organisations. The committee was approached to write about the work that ICSU does in this area.

**Decision**
Agreed to contribute on the basis provided
Agreed to circulate and sign off text with the committee and ICSU Executive Board

**Freedom and Responsibility in Science and Policy (carried over from previous meeting)**
For decades the trust in since in society and among politicians has, by and large, been solid, but recent developments around the world could indicate that the situation is about to change. If such a shift takes place, the foundation for the Principle of Universality of Science may be altered as well, and the value of science and its contribution to societal development may indeed be questioned. The committee discussed these issues, using the essay "Scientific Values: How Universal" by Pieter JD Drenth, a past ALLEA President, as an inspiration.

**Decision**
Noted the document and the discussion
Noted that these issues may be subject to further investigation after the merger with the International Social Sciences Council

**World Science Forum Panel Discussion: The Future of the Universality of Science**
This was an open session of the CFRS meeting and World Science Forum thematic session panel discussion on The Future of the Universality of Science. The panel was moderated by R Bourgeois-Doyle and the panel members were R D’Alessandro, Y Najajreh and LK Sydnes. The panel noted that under International Science Council that will form next year, the “Principle of Universality of Science” will be renamed as the “Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science”.

The committee noted the excellent attendance at the session and the lively discussion and strong reinforcement for the work of the committee.

**Reflections on the World Science Forum (Panel Discussion and 2017 WSF Declaration)**
The committee reflected on the Thematic Session and participation of ICSU at the World Science Forum. The session was well attended and highlighted a balance between responsibility and freedom is justified; both freedom and responsibility issues were discussed widely. The committee agreed it should put more emphasis on responsibility and post more links to relevant resources on the web in the future.
Furthermore, the committee and individual committee members sent text as input to Declaration of the 8th Biennial World Science Forum 2017 on Science for Peace, which was adopted during the closing of the conference in Jordan.

**Decision**
Noted the relevance of the Principle of Universality of Science and balancing freedom and responsibility
Provided input into the 2017 World Science Forum declaration

### 16 Future CFRS meetings

The 24th CFRS meeting is planned to take place in Nigeria (location to be confirmed) on Monday March 5 (afternoon) and Tuesday 6 March (full day) in parallel with the next Regional Committee meeting for Africa and followed by the CFRS workshop on Wednesday March 7 (half day) and Thursday 8 (full day).

How the meeting schedule will be after the merger is still unclear.

**Decision**
Agreed on the dates for the 24th CFRS meeting to take place in Nigeria in March 2018
Agreed to write to the ICSU secretariat for guidance on holding a second meeting in 2018

### 17 Any other business

**Artificial Intelligence and Big Data**

In light of the growing prevalence of research into artificial intelligence and big data, the committee noted its interest and what role it should take in the responsibility of scientific performance and ethical conduct in these areas of research.

**Freedom of Research Institutions**

The committee discussed the role and influence of Confucius Centres in western universities.

The committee noted the situation in Catalonia and discussed what role if any CFRS has in representing research organisations’ interests and rights more generally.

**Decision**
Noted the issues raised
Agreed to continue to follow any developments associated with freedom of research institutes and to explore the issue further in future
Agreed to consider artificial intelligence as a future workshop idea and seek more topics under responsibility in the conduct of science

**Closing remarks**

The chair thanked the committee members for a productive meeting and support from the ICSU and CFRS secretariat.