

**19th Meeting of the
Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the conduct of Science CFRS**

ICSU Secretariat
1-2 October 2015
Paris

Meeting Report

Present Leiv K. Sydnes (Chair), Ranjini Bandyopadhyay, David Black (*ex officio*), Richard Bourgeois-Doyle, Merry Bullock, Guéladio Cissé, Roberta D'Alessandro, Hasan Dweik, Kumie Inose, Gaven Martin, Alberto J. Núñez Sellés, Eric Odada, Silke Schicktanz, Valérie Schini-Kerth, Lucilla Spini (*ex officio on behalf of ICSU Executive Director*, agenda items 6.4-7.6, 9.1-9.3), Mark Thorley

ICSU Secretariat Heide Hackmann (Executive Director, agenda items 1-4), Johannes Mengel (Communications Officer/Web Editor, agenda items 1-6.1, 6.4-7.6, 9-13), Roger Pfister (CFRS Executive Secretary)

1 Welcoming remarks and introduction

This was the first CFRS meeting for some two-thirds of its membership. The new members had been selected by the Executive Board of the International Council for Science (ICSU), following a call for nominations to the entire ICSU Membership in October 2014.

The Chair welcomed all Committee members to both days of the current meeting and provided information on logistical and administrative issues:

- Travel arrangements to attend meetings: these should be made as early as possible and through the ICSU Secretariat for reasons of cost effectiveness and to facilitate the obtaining of visas, if necessary. ICSU would reimburse expenses for air travel in economy and for accommodation for the duration of CFRS meetings;
- Meeting documents and reports: while meeting reports would be made available publicly, the meeting documents are strictly confidential. Committee members are asked to bring the meeting documents along in whatever suitable way. The ICSU Secretariat would provide them on a USB if requested in advance;
- Conflict of interest: CFRS members are asked to declare if any meeting agenda item was likely to give rise to an actual or potential conflict of interest.

Decision

To welcome all CFRS members
To take note of the information provided

2 Self-presentation of CFRS members

Given the Committee's new composition, all members presented themselves and indicated possible areas of engagement in the context of their CFRS membership.

Decision

To note the self-presentations

3 Adoption of agenda

In addition to adopting the meeting agenda, Committee members were invited to indicate any issues for agenda item 12 “Any other business”. Consideration would be given to issues that were brought to the Secretariat’s attention shortly before the current meeting, i.e. the holding of western textbooks by libraries in China, the call on universities in Japan to abolish scholarly entities in the social sciences and humanities as well as the government ban on the teaching of political science at higher education institutions in Uzbekistan.

As for more broad topical issues raised by CFRS members for consideration under agenda item 12, it was suggested that these could feed into the discussion on future CFRS workshops (agenda item 9.3).

Decision

To adopt the agenda

To note the additional issues for “Any other business”

4 Introduction to ICSU and CFRS

Heide Hackmann, the ICSU Executive Director, and Lucilla Spini, who, in her capacity as the Head of Science Programmes, would usually represent the ICSU Executive Director on this Committee *ex officio*, introduced the setting for the Committee’s work.

As a non-governmental organisation, the International Council of Science represents the global science community with currently 122 National Scientific Members from 144 countries and 31 International Scientific Union Members. Pursuant to its mission to strengthen international science for the benefit of society, the Council’s strategic activities centred around “International Research Collaboration,” “Science for Policy” and “Universality of Science”. The triennial General Assembly as the highest governing authority elects the Executive Board that is responsible for overseeing the Council’s strategic directions. This structure is complemented by Regional Offices in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean to support scientific networks in these regions and to ensure that the Council’s work was responsive to the needs of these regions.

The key challenges for the Council outlined by H Hackmann were the work for the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 and the implementation of measures in response to the external review that was conducted during 2014. The main areas of activity were to bring together relevant stakeholders in a bid to form a single voice that would represent the science community at the international level. As a first step, “Science International,” a new alliance of ICSU, the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP), the International Social Science Council (ISSC) and The World Academy of Sciences (TWAS), would meet in December this year around the topic of “Big and Open Data” with the intention to release an international accord with generic principles. Other challenges were to increase the understanding and promotion of new approaches to the co-design and co-production of knowledge and infuse into society and policy-making, to gain wider recognition as a trusted science policy advisor, mainly at the United Nations, as well as to strengthen outreach and public engagement activities. As was the case with all other bodies of the Council, the Committee on Freedom and Responsibility in the conduct of Science would be involved in drafting the next ICSU Strategic Plan and help shape new programmes or adjust existing ones by infusing its specific expertise. The Secretariat would therefore add a specific agenda item for discussion at the next CFRS meeting. As for CFRS, this was one of two policy committees that assist the Executive Board. It was

serving as the guardian of the Principle of the Universality of Science that is enshrined in ICSU's Statute 5 that embodies aspects of both freedom and responsibility of scientists in the conduct of their work and adherence to which is a condition of ICSU Membership. The establishment of CFRS in 2006 resulted from a merger of two previous policy committees that were primarily dealing with the free circulation of scientists and with issues of ethics and responsibility respectively. Accordingly, the wording of ICSU Statute 5 was amended in 2011 to reflect this change of the Committee's ambit. CFRS activities, guided by a work plan for the period 2014-2017 that the ICSU General Assembly approved in 2014, are ensured by a Secretariat that is currently hosted by the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT) in Bern (agenda item 11) with Roger Pfister as Executive Secretary.

Decision

To note the introduction

To note the ICSU Strategic Plan 2012-2017

To include an agenda item "ICSU Strategic Plan 2018-2023" at the next CFRS meeting

5 18th CFRS meeting: report and implementation

Each CFRS meeting is summarised in a report that is circulated among all Committee members for their endorsement prior to being made available online on the ICSU website. The report of the 26-27 March 2015 meeting had been approved by 24 April and published thereupon. An update on the implementation of the Committee decisions at that meeting that did not require specific additional action was provided in this section. All follow-up matters were considered in individual agenda items during the current meeting.

ICSU and CFRS communication

Committee members considered several communication issues related to CFRS's work. An important communication channel is the "Freedom & Responsibility Portal" on the ICSU website, whose contents are presented under agenda item 9. Two additional issues were discussed. First, to increase the listing of the Portal's pages in Google searches, the Secretariat was asked to review their indexing, but consultation with the ICSU Communications Officer suggested that Google search mechanisms could not effectively be influenced. Second, regarding the codes and guidelines that had been added to the Portal's menu "Research integrity," the Secretariat contacted the ICSU Regional Offices, as requested, to ensure that documents from their regions were included, and this did not result in any additional listings. At the current meeting, the Secretariat was asked to invite organisations whose codes and guidelines are now listed on the Portal to add a reciprocal link from their websites.

Individual cases: Alexander Sodiqov, Tajikistan

The Committee's mandate to promote the free practice of science includes providing assistance for scientists whose freedoms and rights are restricted as a result of their carrying out scholarly work. While this aspect of CFRS's work was covered under agenda item 7 at the current meeting, feedback was provided on the case of A Sodiqov, a doctoral student in political science who was imprisoned in Tajikistan while doing fieldwork during June-July 2014. His supervisor, Ed Schatz from the University of Toronto in Canada, joined the previous meeting through Skype to detail his engagement in bringing about the release of A Sodiqov. The proposal to interview E Schatz for a news item on the ICSU website was not eventually implemented due to the Committee's limited involvement in this case and the case's rather unusual circumstances.

Decision

To note the meeting report and follow-up actions by the Secretariat

To ask the Secretariat to aim at reciprocal links to organisations whose codes and guidelines on research integrity are listed in the Freedom and Responsibility Portal

6 Freedom and responsibility in science: generic issues (updates & new ones)

6.1 Boycott calls against the Israeli science community

The International Council for Science unequivocally favours co-operation among scientists, irrespective of their nationality, political or religious beliefs, or of the country in which they currently work, because the freedom of movement and of association is inherent to the Principle of Universality of Science. Accordingly, the Council opposes calls for boycotts against individual scientists or science communities. Applying this position, the Committee published two statements to that effect and the Chair wrote a Correspondence in *Nature*. Responding to increasing calls in more recent years from different organisations to boycott the Israeli science community, the Committee took renewed action as appropriate. In parallel, and to foster its point-by-point actions, the Committee drafted a position document that was finalised at the previous meeting. It was decided to keep the position document for future use and not to disseminate it to ICSU Membership for distribution at this time.

On 11 August 2015, the CFRS Executive Secretary was copied into a message from the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, an ICSU National Member, to the International Geographical Union (IGU), an ICSU Union Member, regarding a resolution that an organisation by the name of International Critical Geography Group (ICGG) had intended to adopt at its conference in Ramallah, Palestine, on 26-30 July. The draft resolution called on the organisation's members not to engage with the Israeli science community at all levels. Although CFRS was not asked to become involved, the Chair wrote instantly to the IGU and the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), the other ICSU Union in the field, for their assessment of the situation. The Secretariat's consultation of the ICGG website suggested that the draft resolution was not adopted, as was confirmed by the Email response from the IGU President on 21 August, who endorsed the Principle of Universality of Science, while not taking any particular position on the ICGG.

Decision

To note the CFRS position document

To note the letter from the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities

To note the CFRS letters to the IGU and the IUGG and the IGU's response

6.2 Science advice for policy-making

The earthquake in L'Aquila in 2009 killed more than 300 people and injured thousands and devastated this Italian city. Following several eruptions in the area, the authorities had previously established a commission that included six Italian scientists to assess the earthquake risk in the region. In 2010, the public prosecutor charged the scientists with manslaughter. CFRS considered this case prior to the court case and after the scientists were sentenced to six years in prison in 2012. Acknowledging that it was at the interface of the free practice of and the responsibility of communicating science, the International Council for Science issued a press release in support of the six scientists, referring to the CFRS Advisory Note on science communication issued in 2010, based on an international symposium that the Committee had co-organised on the subject in Bogotá, Colombia. At the previous meeting, Committee members were informed that an appeals court had overturned the convictions in November 2014, although the ruling could still be taken to a higher court for final judgement.

This example highlighted the challenges for scientists in providing scientific evidence to inform policy decisions. Beyond the reactions to this particular case, it triggered reflections on the role of scientists in such contexts more generally. As one outcome, the Global Science Forum (GSF) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released a report in April this year on the role and responsibility of expert bodies and individual scientists in providing scientific advice for policy-making. After considering this text at the

current meeting, the Committee decided to review and possibly revise the CFRS Advisory Note on science communication. A group comprising R Bourgeois-Doyle, G Martin, E Odada and R Bandyopadhyay was formed for that purpose.

Decision

To note the OECD GSF report

To ask R Bourgeois-Doyle, G Martin, E Odada and R Bandyopadhyay to review the CFRS Advisory Note “Science Communication” of 2010

6.3 Academic freedom

During 2010-2011, the Committee noted with concern increasing pressures, notably political, religious and commercial, on individual scientists and academic institutions around the globe that were undermining the ability of researchers to work freely and without hindrance. Since this was calling into question the Principle of Universality of Science, CFRS drafted a principle document to address academic freedom at the individual and institutional level that was finalised and approved at the previous meeting.

Related to this, at the previous meeting Committee members were informed about a study on academic freedom and protection in Africa and Europe. Directed by Terence Karran, Chair in Higher Education Policy at the University of Lincoln in the UK, the research group was including two scholars with a scientific background from Ghana and South Africa and on Marie Curie Fellowships: Kwadwo Appiagyei-Atua, senior lecturer in law at the University of Ghana, and Klaus D. Beiter, affiliated research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition in Germany. In email contact, the Secretariat briefed T Karran about the Committee’s activities in this area, and he in turn informed about their survey on the state of academic freedom in different contexts in Africa and Europe. In a bid to raise further awareness, the link to the survey was added under the menu “Academic freedom” on the “Freedom & Responsibility Portal” after consultation with the ICSU Communications section. T Karran presented preliminary results at a workshop organised by the New York-based Scholars at Risk network in Geneva in June, and K Appiagyei-Atua wrote in the *University World News Global Edition* in July. Both documents were made available to the Committee for consideration, together with a report produced by the Scholars at Risk’s academic freedom monitoring project that was released on the occasion of the workshop in Geneva. The main mission of this NGO is to organise sanctuary to professors, lecturers, researchers and other intellectuals under threat in their home country through temporary positions at universities that were members of its network. At the current meeting, Scholars at Risk European Director Sinead O’Gorman provided more details on their report over Skype. Explaining that this was part of the organisation’s freedom to think campaign that would be launched in June next year, she would propose possibilities of working with CFRS in that context for consideration by the Committee at the next meeting.

The Secretariat further introduced to the Committee a project proposal by two Australian researchers on “harassment of scientists and viable responses,” whose aim would be to identify and develop responses to intimidation of scientists who participate in public debate. The project would involve a global study of scientists in ‘high risk’ and ‘low risk’ fields in terms of personal or reputational risk of the scientist, with one ‘high risk’ field of specific interest being climate science. Although several CFRS members saw an interest in the topic of the proposed project and for CFRS to assist the team by making use of ICSU’s network, uncertainty prevailed as to the Committee’s role and contribution as well as regarding becoming associated with a survey that was beyond its influence. The decision therefore was not to become involved and the Secretariat was asked to inform the researchers accordingly.

Decision

To note the CFRS document

To note the documents related to the UK study and the Scholars at Risk report
To agree on not engaging in the proposed project from Australia on harassment of scientists
and to ask the Secretariat to inform the researchers accordingly

6.4 Science organisations and policy implementation

As a particular manifestation of science advice to policy-making (agenda item 6.2), science organisations could be involved in the implementation of government policies, raising concerns regarding the responsibility of science professionals to behave according to ethical norms in their discipline and to recognise the possible harms of their work, as stipulated in ICSU Statute 5. The case of interest here served to illustrate this area of tension, in addition to a lack of organisational leadership.

In the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks against the US, the then Bush administration waged what became known as the Global War on Terrorism. This included using what was called “enhanced interrogation techniques” to torture and abuse detainees to obtain information that could probably not be obtained in interrogations according to internationally accepted norms. In July 2015, a report commissioned by the American Psychological Association (APA) revealed that during 2001-2005 APA had failed to provide ethical guidance for military psychologists in national security settings that would unequivocally exclude participation in enhanced interrogation activities, and that the processes through which this occurred involved collusion between some APA officials and Department of Defense psychologists. The report, suggesting that APA’s policy actions had supported detainee torture and human rights abuses, led to a number of actions on the part of APA, including a new policy statement concerning ethical responsibilities of psychologists, and a series of actions addressing organisational decision-making and transparency.

At the current meeting, M Bullock, who is also the Senior Director at APA’s Office of International Affairs, offered her insights concerning lessons learned from the report and APA’s subsequent actions to possibly inform CFRS’s work. From her perspective, there were a number of lessons learned for science/professional organizations, including the importance of following established decision making procedures, of articulating and supporting organisational accountability as well as attention to viewpoints critical of organisational policy positions.

Decision

To note with appreciation the perspective provided by M Bullock at the current meeting

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

7.1 Introduction

Part of the Committee’s mandate is work at the intersection between science and human rights. This comprised consideration of cases of individual scholars or groups of scholars, whose freedoms were restricted as a result of their carrying out scientific work. CFRS would take action in cases where its intervention could potentially provide relief and/or it would support activities of other actors as appropriate. To have guidance, CFRS adopted a document in 2012 regarding the criteria for cases to be considered, the sources of information, the range of potential actions and collaboration with other bodies. In addition, the Secretariat was updating a list with case summaries to document developments.

Decision

To note both documents

7.2 Omid Kokabee, Iran

O Kokabee was enrolled as a doctoral student in optical physics at the University of Texas at Austin when, during a return trip to his home country, Iran, in January 2011, he was arrested on charges of “communicating with a hostile government” and “illegitimate earnings,” the latter probably referring to the compensation he received as a teaching assistant. In May 2012, he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. The Committee has followed his situation since September 2011 and took action to add pressure to bring about his release, such as letters of appeal from the Chair to the Iranian authorities in Tehran and support for initiatives of other international organisations. During 2014, the then ICSU Executive Director and a former Committee member resident in Paris intended to hand deliver a letter from CFRS to the Iranian Ambassador resident in Paris to the attention of the Iranian authorities. Because several attempts to that effect did not come to fruition, the Iranian Ambassador resident in Oslo was contacted in February 2015 for a meeting with the CFRS Chair.

As these activities took place, O Kokabee’s health was worsening, there was continued denial for medical treatment, and a request for a retrial, accepted by the Supreme Court in October 2014, was refuted by the appeals court in Tehran, upholding the 10-year prison sentence in January 2015. In addition, reflecting the continued international attention paid to his case, O Kokabee was given the AAAS Scientific Freedom and Responsibility Award on 24 February 2015. Within days of that event, the Iranian Ambassador in Oslo agreed to hold a personal meeting with the Chair on 8 April. Reporting from this meeting, the Chair had the opportunity to describe O Kokabee’s condition and explained why CFRS was asking for his early release, handing over a renewed letter of appeal to the Iranian authorities. To document the Committee’s support for scientists whose freedoms and rights were menaced, the letter mentioned that CFRS had added its voice to calls for an independent international investigation into the murder and attempted assassination of four Iranian physicists during 2010-2011. On his part, the Iranian Ambassador made a link to the situation of students from Iran who were prevented from pursuing their studies at universities in Norway.

According to update information from the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies, based at the US National Academy of Sciences, and provided by M Bullock at the current meeting, O Kokabee was no longer allowed to consult scientific literature and his health situation continued to deteriorate in the absence of medical treatment. Since more detailed information on these cases was not available, it was agreed at the current meeting that the Chair would renew contact with the Iranian Embassy in Oslo before taking further action to address O Kokabee’s situation.

Aware of cases that were similar to that of O Kokabee, a group of CFRS members comprising M Bullock, G Cissé, R D’Alessandro, K Inose, G Martin, S Schick Tanz and V Schini-Kerth was asked to look into developing guidance about how such situations could be prevented in future by alerting funding agencies and other relevant bodies, exchange programmes and potential exchange scholars about the risks and challenges involved in exchanges with Iran.

Decision

To note the CFRS letter

To note the updates from the Chair and M Bullock

To ask the Chair to pursue contact with the Iranian Ambassador in Oslo

To form a group with M Bullock, G Cissé, R D’Alessandro, K Inose, G Martin, S Schick Tanz and V Schini-Kerth that would look into measures that could help prevent similar future cases

7.3 Bahá’í community leaders, Iran

Since 2012, the Committee considered the situation of six scientists of the Bahá’í faith in

Iran: Fariba Kamalabadi, Mahvash Sabet, Vahid Tizfahm, Saeid Rezaie, Mahmoud Badavam and Ramin Zibaei. Their imprisonment because of alleged “conspiracy” against national security and the Islamic Republic of Iran appeared to contravene ICSU Statute 5 that was opposing discrimination in science on grounds of religious beliefs. The Chair wrote several letters of appeal for the release of these scientists to the Iranian Minister of Science, Research and Technology, with copy to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, to the UN Special Rapporteur on Iran and, in one instance, to the UNESCO Director-General.

On 29 April this year, M Badavam and R Zibaei could leave prison after having served their four-year sentences. In acknowledging and welcoming this development in writing to the Iranian authorities, the Chair reiterated the Committee’s call for the release of the four scientists who remained in prison, serving 20-year sentences until May 2028. Copies of the letter were again sent to the UN and UNESCO. At this stage, the Secretariat was asked to follow developments and report to the Committee as appropriate.

Decision

To note the letter from the Chair

To ask the Secretariat to report to the Committee on developments as appropriate

7.4 Büşra Ersanlı, Turkey

B Ersanlı, a political scientist, was imprisoned in October 2011 because of alleged links to the violent Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), although she reportedly never advocated or practiced violence. Pending the outcome of her trial, she was released in July 2012. The Committee followed her case from 2012 and provided support in several ways, including a personal meeting in August 2013 between the Chair and B Ersanlı while attending an international conference in Turkey. In November 2014, the Chair attended a court hearing against B Ersanlı and some 200 additional accused persons. To draw attention to her case, in particular, he gave an interview to the Internet daily *bianet* and a news item was placed on the ICSU website on the occasion of the UN Human Rights Day on 10 December. However, no verdict was taken on her or on the other cases, all of them being deferred to the Constitutional Court in Ankara. According to the latest information that the Chair received from B Ersanlı, her case would again be heard on 15 January 2016.

Decision

To note the information provided by the Chair at the current meeting

To ask the Chair to update the Committee as appropriate

7.5 Health professionals, Bahrain

During the 2011 protests in Bahrain, some 48 health professionals were imprisoned because of having provided health care to those in need, irrespective of their political, religious or ethnic orientation. Although on the fringes of its core activity, the Committee took on these cases because these arrests were violating the concept of medical neutrality grounded in international humanitarian and human rights law as well as in the codes and ethics of the medical profession. Since 2011, CFRS engaged in writing letters of appeal to the King of Bahrain, initially in coordination with the World Medical Association (WMA). While two health professionals remained imprisoned at the time of the previous Committee meeting, one of them, Ibrahim al Demistani, was released on 28 April. ‘Ali ‘Esa Mansoor al-‘Ekri continued to remain in prison, and his five-year sentence would end in September 2016.

Triggered by the case of these health professionals, and as suggested by the Committee at the previous meeting, the Secretariat enquired with the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) regarding their involvement in this particular instance and, beyond, the possibility of ICSU and

IAP joining forces in defending the human rights of scientists generally. The CFRS proposal was discussed at an IAP governance meeting at the end of September in New Delhi, India, but the outcome was not available at the current meeting. The Secretariat would follow up on this and update the Committee in time.

Decision

To note the letter from the Chair

To ask the Secretariat to update the Committee at the next meeting on possible ICSU-IAP cooperation to protect human rights of scientists

7.6 Nasser bin Ghaith, United Arab Emirates

This scholar in economics, who had previously been detained in the United Arab Emirates during 2011, was arrested again on 18 August this year in Abu Dhabi, according to reports from Scholars at Risk and Amnesty International, the latter describing him as a “prisoner of conscience.” According to these sources, his current detention may be related to N bin Ghaith criticising the Egyptian government’s alleged inaction to follow the perpetrators of the massacre in Cairo in August 2013 when some 800 protesters were killed.

In considering the available information, and recalling that the Committee would take action in those cases where the freedoms and rights of scientists were restricted as a direct result of them carrying out their scholarly work, CFRS members decided not to take on this case.

Decision

To note the case and close it

8 Interaction with UNESCO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was an important partner for the International Council for Science on several projects and topics and through different channels. The Committee’s recent and interrelated engagement had been the Chair’s participation at meetings of the UNESCO World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) and its contribution to the revision of the UNESCO “Recommendation on the Status of Scientific Researchers” of 1974.

COMEST, a body of experts appointed by the UNESCO Director-General, was mandated to formulate ethical principles related to science and technology. As endorsed by the ICSU Executive Board, the Committee’s Chair ensured the ICSU *ex officio* membership since April 2014 to facilitate the Council’s and the Committee’s interaction with COMEST, for example related to the revision of the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation that COMEST had initiated and to which the UNESCO Executive Board and the General Conference agreed in 2012 and 2013 respectively. The intention was to produce a policy document that would include issues that were not yet of particular concern in the early 1970s, without losing the main thrust of what was a positive document for the rights of scientists. The revision process entailed stakeholder consultation during the second half of 2014. Given its imminent interest in the subject, the Committee proposed a number of amendments for the revised UNESCO Recommendation to become an effective document at the multilateral policy level to strengthen the global science community. In March 2016, the UNESCO Member States would receive the proposals received for negotiation, and in late 2017 the UNESCO General Conference would assess any propositions for modification agreed upon to this stage in view of a possible adoption.

The Chair updated CFRS members about the state of affairs of the 1974 Recommendation, reporting from his participation at a joint meeting of COMEST and UNESCO’s International

Bioethics Committee (IBC) in Paris at the end of September. Seeing that the comments provided by CFRS for the revision had not been retained and that the official stakeholder consultation was concluded, Committee members agreed not to provide further impetus.

Decision

To note the 1974 UNESCO Recommendation and the amendments proposed by CFRS

To note the Chair's update at the current meeting

9 Conferences and workshops

9.1 4th World Conference on Research Integrity (Brazil, May/June 2015)

The promotion of responsibility, and particularly research integrity, in the conduct of science was central to CFRS's mandate to ensure that science continued to be trusted and valued by society and to foster scientific progress, which was relying on accurate and reliable scholarly data. A core engagement was the Committee's co-sponsoring of the World Conference on Research Integrity (WCRI) since 2007. Attended by 250-300 participants on average, this important platform issued statements of global pertinence, above all the Singapore Statement in 2010. While previous editions focused on general principles and responsibilities (2007, 2010) and on research integrity in cross-boundary research collaboration (2013), this year's WCRI from 31 May to 3 June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, was on systemic conditions that could favour or impede research integrity.

In that frame, CFRS organised a symposium on "Research assessment and quality in science: perspectives from international science and policy organisations". Following up its co-sponsored workshop in Beijing in April 2014, the symposium was to further explore the nexus between science assessments and their impact on research integrity, reflecting the Committee's concern that the increasing use of assessments and rankings were potentially distorting research integrity and quality. A further contribution to the WCRI in Rio was the Committee's proposal of a speaker from its Beijing workshop as a keynote speaker.

Information about the WCRI and CFRS's engagement was communicated to the science community in *Chemistry International*, the magazine of the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC), in December 2014, and a news item on the ICSU website in March this year. In addition, as suggested at the previous meeting, a further news item on the pertinence of research integrity was published on the ICSU website 10 days prior to the WCRI.

Bringing together representatives from around the globe from higher education, government and policy, a national context and a young scientists organisation, the CFRS symposium in Rio de Janeiro was as follows:

- Ellen Hazelkorn, Policy Advisor to the Higher Education Authority in Ireland / Higher Education Policy Research Unit at the Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland: "Challenges for science and the problems of assessing research"
- Carthage Smith, OECD Global Science Forum, France: "Research assessment and science policy development"
- Robert H. McLaughlin, Office of Research Integrity at the University of Cape Town, South Africa: "Research integrity in South Africa: the value of procedures and processes to global positioning"
- Tatiana Duque Martins, Global Young Academy & Federal University of Goiás, Brazil: "Rewards, careers and integrity: perspectives of young scientists from around the world"

Appraising rankings as the *de facto* indicators of global scientific competitiveness and a "game changer" of higher education landscapes, E Hazelkorn made a case for combining

quantitative data with qualitative assessments, also to recognise differences between research disciplines. Speaking from a policy perspective, C Smith emphasised that governments required benchmarking data to evaluate the return of investment in higher education and science and to compare the efficiency of science systems as a promoter of economic development. Working in South Africa, R McLaughlin highlighted the challenge for this emerging science system to balance the aspiration to improve its ranking worldwide with addressing local needs and supporting research integrity principles. Arguing that increased pressure on young scientists to build a career posed threats to research integrity, T Martins suggested including research integrity as assessment criterion to improve the reward system.

The presentation slides and recordings were put online on the “Freedom & Responsibility Portal,” together with a news item on the CFRS symposium on the ICSU website on 15 June. Competing with four parallel sessions and one other symposium, some 15 conference participants attended the CFRS symposium that was moderated by M Bullock, who, together with the Chair and the Executive Secretary, represented the Committee at the WCRI and ensured a presence at the CFRS information booth. Based on the Beijing workshop in 2014, CFRS had drafted a discussion paper with its main concerns and proposals. Disseminated at the WCRI symposium and the Committee’s information booth, comments were invited to be sent to the CFRS Secretariat to further develop the paper, and the ICSU Executive Board was invited for its view. The amended document was now before the Committee for it to consider further developing it.

The next WCRI was scheduled for 28-31 May 2017 in Amsterdam. According to Lex Bouter, Chair in Methodology and Integrity at the VU University Amsterdam and lead organiser of the 5th WCRI, attempts would be made to include research institutions and funders as well as the research integrity community, and to cater for different groups, i.e. newcomers and the more experienced. He further briefed the CFRS representatives present in Rio de Janeiro that contributions from ICSU and/or CFRS would be welcome in form of a symposium, personal participation in the conference advisory board and/or sponsorship in general terms and for participants from the global South, in particular.

There was consensus at the current meeting that CFRS should continue its WCRI engagement with a symposium, a topic for which could be sought when considering “Future CFRS workshops” (agenda item 9.3), and with an information booth in Amsterdam. In addition, M Bullock would write to L Bouter to propose R D’Alessandro as a member of the organising committee given her faculty position at Leiden University in the Netherlands. In addition to the WCRI as a platform for the Committee’s work on research integrity, consideration should also be given to use other fora for raising awareness, such as the World Science Forum.

Decision

To note the information on the CFRS symposium at the 4th WCRI in Rio de Janeiro this year
To agree that CFRS would remain engaged at the 5th WCRI in Amsterdam in 2017
To consider a topic for a CFRS symposium at the 5th WCRI under agenda item 9.3
To ask M Bullock to propose R D’Alessandro as a member of the 5th WCRI organising committee

9.2 Workshop “Gender equality in science” (Mexico, April 2016)

In connection with its first meeting in 2016 (agenda item 11), the Committee would co-sponsor a workshop with the Mexican Academy of Sciences with the current working title “Gender equality in global science: identifying injustice, ensuring freedom, increasing responsibility.” The Committee’s interest in this subject originated in 2013 and related to information about cases of exposure of scientists, particularly women, to pressures when doing fieldwork, notably sexual favours being requested by members of local communities in return for rendering assistance. Concerned that this was jeopardising the free conduct of science,

contact was taken with the ICSU Union Members that were potentially affected for their assessment. The International Sociological Association (ISA), through its Research Committee “Women in Society” (RC32), indicated interest and was now part of the proposed CFRS workshop with Josephine Beoku-Betts as speaker.

As asked at the previous meeting, a CFRS working group comprising AJ Núñez Sellés, S Schicktanz and L Spini, with support from the Secretariat, drafted a programme that was put to Committee members for consideration at the current meeting. The following representatives had accepted the CFRS invitation to join and contribute to this working group:

- Lilliam Álvarez Díaz: member of the Regional Committee of the ICSU Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC) and of the Programme “Women for Science” of the Interamerican Network of Academies of Sciences (IANAS)
- Jaime Urrutia Fucugauchi: President of the Mexican Academy of Sciences
- Manuel Limonta: Director of the ICSU ROLAC

In thanking the group for their work and approving the workshop’s thematic direction, the Committee asked for the inclusion of gender issues related to mobility and internationalisation of science. R Bandyopadhyay would join the group to help finalising the workshop programme. The target audience would be some 45-50 people, i.e. the members of CFRS, representatives from ICSU ROLAC and guests invited by the Mexican Academy of Sciences. In line with previous CFRS workshops, the aim would be to produce an advisory or discussion document and the working group was therefore asked to make a draft available to the Committee for consideration in time prior to the workshop.

On logistics, the local organisers would cover the costs for meals and local transport, while CFRS would contribute some EUR 5’000. Additionally, L Spini agreed to look into the possibility of generating sponsorship. The date for the workshop is 27 April 2016.

Decision

- To thank the working group members for developing the workshop programme
- To agree on R Bandyopadhyay joining the working group
- To endorse the thematic direction of the workshop and ask for inclusion of gender issues related to mobility and internationalisation of science
- To ask the working group to draft a CFRS advisory or discussion document for the Committee’s consideration prior to the workshop
- To note the workshop’s financial and logistical framework
- To note 27 April 2016 as date for the workshop

9.3 Future CFRS workshops

Thematic workshops to crystallise and balance freedoms and responsibilities on issues of concern to the science community were a core element of CFRS work plan for 2015-2017, which the ICSU General Assembly approved in 2014. Their organisation would usually be a joint exercise with a partner organisation, above all from the ICSU Membership. While the next workshop, in Mexico in 2016, was in preparation (agenda item 8.2), consideration was already at this stage given to identify topics for additional workshops. The work plan included potential subjects, but it was clarified at the General Assembly that the newly composed Committee would reconsider them with an option for new proposals. For that purpose, three breakout groups were formed at the current meeting to identify relevant themes, bearing in mind the freedom and responsibility aspects entailed. Following brainstorming in each group with subsequent presentation to and discussion among the entire Committee, the following topics emerged for possible workshops:

- Reproducibility of science and science integrity (R Bandyopadhyay, G Martin)

- Open access: challenges and opportunities. Protecting intellectual property, validating research, promoting free access (R Bourgeois-Doyle, H Dweik, M Thorley)
- Exploring the shift from observation to projection: scientific quality control and challenges in engaging policymakers and the public (M Bullock, G Martin, E Odada)
- Shaping the future of researchers in developing countries: enabling environment and resources, halting brain drain and enhancing the value of basic research (G Cissé, R D’Alessandro, K Inose, V Schini-Kerth)

The CFRS members mentioned would develop these topics with support from the Secretariat by drafting a synopsis and programme for consideration at the next CFRS meeting.

Decision

To note the draft topics for future CFRS workshops

To ask the CFRS members in the lead to further develop the topic for consideration at the next CFRS meeting

10 CFRS communication and publicity

To guide its outreach activities, CFRS adopted a communication plan at its previous meeting. As key actors in this regard because of their interaction with their respective science communities, all Committee members were invited and encouraged to use the updated PowerPoint presentation on ICSU and CFRS. The ICSU Secretariat and the Communications section were ensuring that the slides would also be available to the Council’s Executive Board members to inform their presentations at annual congresses of ICSU Union Members and Interdisciplinary Bodies. An additional product for dissemination by Committee members on suitable occasions is the CFRS brochure “Freedom, responsibility and Universality of Science.” Finalised in August 2014, this was an entirely overhauled version of the 2008 edition, whose revision was necessary to reflect the new wording in Statute 5 by incorporating responsibility aspects, such as endorsed at the ICSU General Assembly in 2011.

Documenting the Committee’s work, the online “Freedom & Responsibility Portal” (www.icsu.org/freedom-responsibility) served as the platform through which to raise awareness among and to interact with the science community. A live presentation was given at the current meeting to obtain comments and feedback from Committee members. With respect to possible changes to the structure of the Portal, J Mengel informed at the current meeting that the entire ICSU website would be revamped during 2016.

Decision

To ask all Committee member to disseminate the CFRS brochure

To ask the Secretariat to provide all CFRS members with the PowerPoint presentation

11 CFRS Secretariat

Since October 2010, the Swiss Academy of Sciences (SCNAT), an ICSU National Member, has hosted the CFRS Secretariat with Roger Pfister as the Executive Secretary. As convened in the Memorandum of Understanding between the SCNAT and ICSU, this arrangement would be for five years. In October 2014, the ICSU Secretariat therefore issued a call to the ICSU Membership for nominations to host the CFRS Secretariat beyond October 2015. In addition to seeking a suitable long-term arrangement, the ICSU Secretariat asked the Swiss Academy of Sciences to consider prolongation. In consultation, the SCNAT Secretary General and the ICSU Executive Director agreed that the Swiss Academy of Sciences would extend the hosting for half a year. While R Pfister would therefore prepare the first CFRS meeting in 2016, its reporting and monitoring would be delegated to the follow-up structure.

ICSU Secretary General D Black updated at the current meeting that the search for a host was on-going, and would again include a call to the ICSU Membership.

Decision

To note the information provided at the current meeting

To thank the Swiss Academy of Sciences for their offer to extend hosting the CFRS Secretariat to April 2016

12 Future CFRS meetings

The biannual Committee meetings normally take place in rotation between the ICSU Secretariat and elsewhere, usually linked to a scientific meeting relevant to the Committee's work and involving the ICSU network. Accordingly, the first Committee meeting in 2016 was scheduled for 28-29 April, immediately following the joint workshop with the Mexican Academy of Sciences (agenda item 8.2). At the current meeting, Committee members agreed on 6-7 October as date for the second CFRS meeting in 2016 to take place in Paris.

Decision

To note that the CFRS meetings in 2016 would be held in Mexico City on 28-29 April (preceded by a workshop on 27 April) and in Paris on 6-7 October

13 Any other business

China: western textbooks in university libraries

Information from a member of the ICSU Executive Board and in publicly available sources seemed to suggest that textbooks of Western origin were being removed from libraries at higher education institutions in China. To verify the situation, the Chair was asked to consult with both the Chair of CSPR, who is from China: Beijing, and the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST), which was represented on the previous Committee.

Japan: social sciences and humanities at national universities

In a notice issued this June by the Minister of Higher Education in Japan, the 86 national universities were asked to revise their organisations in a view to draw up restructuring plans so that they could better serve society's needs, and this included a call to abolish or convert social science and humanities entities. In July, the Executive Board of the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), an ICSU National Member, objected to this particular measure in its statement "On the future direction of the university: in relation to the departments/graduate schools of teacher training and humanities and social sciences." This resulted in a dialogue and it was therefore proposed that K Inose, in her capacity as Vice-President of SCJ, would notify CFRS if further developments would warrant support.

Uzbekistan: government bans teaching of political science at higher education institutions

According to several media outlets, the Government of Uzbekistan banned the teaching of political science in the country's universities on 1 September this year. The Secretariat was asked to contact the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences for their assessment and the need for the Committee to take action.

Decision

China: western textbooks in university libraries: to ask the Chair to consult the CSPR Chair and CAST for more information

Japan: social sciences and humanities at national universities: to ask K Inose to revert to CFRS for support as appropriate

Uzbekistan: government bans teaching of political science at higher education institutions: to ask the Secretariat to contact the Uzbekistan Academy of Sciences for more information