

Meeting Minutes

Exploratory meeting towards forming a nordic peace network, the Nordic Peace Alliance

06.11.2022; 16:00-20:00 CET; Zoom

Participants:

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| Tom Vilmer Paamand (Aldrig Mere Krig) | Elsa- Britt Enger (Bestemødre for Fred) |
| Oluf Dragsbo (Esbjerg Fredsbevegelse) | Trygve Jaeger (Hardangeakademiet) |
| Tove Jensen (Fredsiniciativet København/DEMOS) present from 17:00 | Johanne Hartwig (Hardangerakademiet) |
| Hasse Schneidermann (Fredsministerium) | Liss Schanke (WILPF Norway) |
| Helge Ratzer (Fredsministerium) | Ingeborg Breines (WILPF Norway) |
| Ida Harsløf (WILPF Denmark) | Lars Egeland (Nei til Atomvåpen) |
| Solveig Sieg Sørensen (WILPF Denmark) | Tim Liebenhoff (Norges Fredslag) |
| Steen Folke (Nej til oprustning – Ja til bæredygtig sikkerhedspolitik) | Knut Mork Skagen (Norske Leger mot Atomvåpen) left at 17:45 |
| Carsten Andersen (Aarhus mod Krig og Terror) left at 17:30 | Kristine Møllø-Christensen (Stopp NATO) |
| Teemu Mölsä (Aseistakieltäytyjäliitto, The Union of Conscientious Objectors) | Ingalill Bjartén (Artister för fred) |
| Antti Seppänen (Artists for Peace Finland) | Kemal Gurgü (Artister för fred) |
| Laura Lodenius (Finlands Fredsförbund, Finnish Peace Union) | Tord Björk (Artister för fred) |
| Claus Motonen (Tekniikka elämää palvelemaan TEP. Technology for Life) | Tomas Magnusson (Svenska Freds) present from 18:00 |
| Ilka Norros (Tekniikka elämää palvelemaan TEP. Technology for Life) | Yousef Harmasha (Peace2000, Reykjavik Peace Center) present from 18:00 |
| Marianne Laxen (WILPF Finland) | Ariana Durani (WILPF Sweden) |
| Lea Launokari (Kvinnor för Fred, Women for Peace) | Christer Carneby (Nej till NATO) present from 18:00 |
| Nina Fellman (Ålands Fredsinstitut, The Åland Islands Peace Institute) left at 18:30 | Henry Svonni (Vänstern i Svenska Kyrkan) |
| Bjarne Lavik (Antikrigsiniciativet) | Valter Mutt (PeaceQuest International) |
| Gitte Sætre (Antikrigsiniciativet) present from 18:00 | Karin Utas-Carlson (Fredens Huse Göteborg) |
| | Kaisa Kopsa (WILPF Finland) |
| | Reinhard Haverkamp (Hardangerakademiet) |
| | Teemu Matinpuro (Finnish Peace Committee) |
| | Julia Jernwall (Finlands Fredsförbund) |

Agenda:

1. Introduction and Welcome
2. Roll Call
3. Nordic Peace Cooperation: Themes, purposes and challenges. Why and on which issues can Nordic cooperation be useful?
4. Discussion of current issues and initiatives
5. Project Proposal for the establishment of the Nordic Peace Alliance
6. Appointment of an interim planning group
7. Founding meeting of the Nordic Peace Alliance 2023
8. Closing Remarks

1. Introduction and Welcome (Hasse Schneidermann)
 - a. Hasse Schneidermann sets the rules for the Zoom-meeting and introduces the Agenda.
 - b. Helge Ratzer starts the recording of the meeting.
 - c. Hasse Schneidermann welcomes the participants to this exploratory meeting towards forming a Nordic Peace Alliance (NPA).
 - d. Purpose of the meeting:
 - i. A press release, stating that representatives of around 40 organisations met and will work towards establishing a Nordic Peace Alliance in Helsingør 2023. The Press release also states that this meeting will appoint an interim committee to work towards the establishment of the NPA. The current working group is happy to continue if this meeting agrees, but is happy to supplement and exchange. A new coordination group will be voted for at the founding meeting
 - ii. Main focus of this meeting is to find out why Nordic cooperation is important as the agenda is set tight.
 - iii. The working committee is working in a mixture of mother tongue and English, but all communication has been sent out in English due to inclusion of all
 - e. Background:
 - i. The idea for a Nordic Peace Alliance results from a conference in Oslo in November 2021, a planning group has been working since then.
 - ii. The overall purpose is to increase the contact and cooperation between Nordic peace organizations and thereby develop and promote a Nordic non-military sustainable peace and security policy.
 - iii. The alliance strives to enable our member organisations to join forces and increase our joint strength and effectiveness concerning peace issue
2. Roll Call (Hasse Schneidermann)
 - a. Hasse Schneidermann initiates a roll call, every participant replies with their name and the name of the organisation they represent
3. Nordic Peace Cooperation: Themes, purposes and challenges. Why and on which issues can Nordic cooperation be useful? (Liss Schanke)
 - a. The purpose of this is to increase our strength and influence, at the current situation maybe this is more needed than ever. It is important to find out who is working on which topics. One representative from each organisation will get a maximum of 2 minutes to present two specific issues they are working on:
 - i. WILPF Norway: Close relationship between militarism/climate/environment; most organisations are better at describing what we are against than what we are for, there is a lot of potential to present our solutions to current and future issues

- ii. Aldrig mer krig: Restart of the traditional role of the nordic countries as peacekeepers and peacemakers, including nordic cooperation. United Nordic front in NATO against nuclear arms and for peaceful solutions
- iii. Esbjerg Fredsbevegelse: Galtung's method for peace, negotiating should be worked on much more; artificial intelligence with war
- iv. Fredsaktiviten i Aalborg: Lose group of people working together. How can we join the fight for peace together with the climate crisis? Organising different organisations together to work intersectionally.
- v. Fredsministerium: Aiming at a peace ministry at state level in Denmark; important to establish research on peace issues ('white book on alternatives to ongoing armament')
- vi. WILPF Denmark: Nordic governments should stop sending weapons to Ukraine and work seriously for a ceasefire to start negotiations on peace. Denmark to sign nuclear weapon proliferation treaty. All Nordic countries will live up to expectations of the UN security council on UN resolution 1325 concerning women in peace, security in war and conflict zones
- vii. Nei til Opprustning: No to armament yes to sustainable security policy. New organisation in reaction to the Russo-Ukrainian war and reaction of governments to increase military spending. Establishing sustainable security policy, inspired by Olof Palmes' thoughts. Also: Climate crisis and inequality around the world and between countries, north/south, within countries.
- viii. Aarhus mot Krig: Environmental changes, collaboration with environmental NGOs. A formerly unseen will and enthusiasm for war can be seen in society, fear for open (and/or) nuclear war is real. It is our common obligation to work for dialogue and peace.
- ix. Union of conscientious objectors: promotion of anti militarist solutions for conflicts. Equality among all people should be taken into consideration.
- x. Artists for Peace Finland: A lot of cooperation with environmental work, military emissions. Engage discussion in the media and society that ideology of peace should be more discussed.
- xi. Finnish Peace Union: Arms control and disarmament issues. Arms trade, autonomous weapons, nuclear weapons. Need help with general security policy advocacy. Important to get the Nordic council to discuss more with NGOs. Russian cooperation has been tried with 'agenda 2030' as a general framework to work with the Nordic Council. Consultation with NATO-member NGOs needed. Nordic cooperation in NATO.
- xii. Finnish peace committee: Nordic Peace Alliance could work inside NATO, but also EU. A lot of common issues: How can we convince countries to ratify the ban on nuclear weapons even though they are part of NATO? Question of whether Turkey shares the same democratic values of NATO. Work towards the Nordic council.
- xiii. Technology for life: Disarmament (nuclear), All Nordic countries should sign the ban on nuclear weapons. Campaign to stop killer robots (/AI). Connection of environmental and military issues.

- xiv. WILPF Finland: Agrees with WILPF Denmark. Peace and security policy from a feminist point of view. We need to find New ways to discuss. Work against using nuclear weapons.
- xv. Women for peace: Agrees with WILPF Denmark. We want to act now on that we want to have an address connected to a petition of having no nuclear weapons and no NATO bases in Nordic countries. Peace and sustainable development. Environmental issues
- xvi. Aaland Island Peace Institute: Promote a knowledge base: talk about facts rather than emotions. Research concerning minority issues, demilitarisation, autonomous governing. Importance for long term thinking. How can we promote a lasting peace after war? How one can solve a conflict with respect towards minorities and with demilitarisation
- xvii. Antikrigsinitiativet: The current situation in Europe is very dangerous. Peace in Ukraine based on unanimous meeting in the security council 06.05.2023: ceasefire, negotiation must happen now. Work for Finland and Sweden not to join NATO.
- xviii. Grandmothers for Peace: Importance of meeting people face to face, exchange of information engaging them in conversation. Supports the cross-nordic initiative.
- xix. Hardangerakademiet: Ambition is to write knowledge and education with 2 main focuses: Making peace on earth and peace with earth. Recruiting young people to the peace movement, have lost them to the environmental movement. 2023 summer camp will be established with a focus on the intersectionalities between peace and environment. Also to take care of the traditional peace symposium established by Galtung.
- xx. Nei til Atomvåpen: Link between nuclear weapons and climate. The same countries that use resources on developing nuclear weapons are the same as the biggest CO2 emitters. The current situation of nuclear weapons. NTA is not for a ceasefire in Ukraine, not against sending weapons to Ukraine, has no opinion on NATO - full focus on nuclear weapons. Demand for Europe without nuclear weapons.
- xxi. Norges Fredslag: Two main focuses through research groups/campaigns: Stop Killer Robots (AI), the intersectionality between climate change and peace (especially in the long term)
- xxii. Norske Leger mot Atomvåpen: Preventing nuclear war and nuclear weapons use, abolishing nuclear weapons, Sweden and Finland joining NATO makes Nordic cooperation more relevant. Sweden and Finland should adopt the same as Norway: a nuclear free zone, the nordics should become a nuclear weapon free zone
- xxiii. Stopp NATO: Against increasing militarisation in the high north. Increased use of bases by American forces in the Nordics. Implication of Sweden and Finland joining NATO for the Nordic countries.
- xxiv. Peace Initiative CPH/ DEMOS: Publishing house working for peace, disarmament, against militarisation and NATO membership. Equal rights for people in Denmark and over the world. Anti-racist organisation.

- xxv. Artists for Peace Sweden: Primarily a cultural organisation. Working against 'enemy perceptions', working for the UN and against NATO. Working against repression, ie Kurdish situation. Also working with climate. Linking movements is important.
 - xxvi. Peace House Gothenburg: Working preventively against violence with young people. Peace education.
 - xxvii. WILPF Sweden: Finding other peace organisations who have been working with NATO for longer. Swedish weapons export - finding spaces for dialogue in media and civil society as well as with politicians.
 - xxviii. Left church in Sweden: working within the Swedish church, but are against NATO. Sad that no Sami groups have been invited. No Sami organisation is only focused on peace work, but every organisation is in some way working for peace in Sapmi and the rest of the world.
 - xxix. Peacequest International: Introducing ministries for peace in Sweden and internationally. Alternative production - ie switching armaments into renewable energies.
 - xxx. Ingalill Bjarten - Agrees with WILPF Finland. The Swedish election should also be a topic, talking about allowing nuclear weapons in Sweden.
- a. Liss Schanke sums up the issues: NATO; the nuclear question; peace ministries; environmentalism; using the Nordic Council to reach politicians. *Additions: Conflict resolution, peace education and common security.*
 - b. Liss Schanke opens the floor for questions and feedback
 - c. Marianne Laxen: Positive towards Lea Launokari's proposal concerning making an address, Lea should state again what she was proposing
 - a. Lea Launokari: As soon as possible, an address should be drafted, stating that there should not be any nuclear weapons stationed in the Nordic countries, as well as no foreign bases. This should be used in combination with a petition.
 - d. Hasse Schneidermann would like to add conflict resolution to the summary
 - e. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that peace education and common security should be added to the list as well

Break 17:40-18:00

4. Discussion of current issues and initiatives (Karin Utas-Carlsson)
- a. Karin Utas-Carlsson explains the rules and etiquette of the session and introduces the 6 most common themes pointed out by the invited organisations: NATO and cooperation; Nuclear Weapons; Ministries for Peace; Cooperation with Environmental organisations and working with environmental topics; Alternative production; Peace research and education.
 - b. Ida Harsløf adds that the topic of women in peace negotiations should be added to the list.
 - i. Karin Utas-Carlsson replies that all of these topics should be approached with women and youth in mind
 - c. Karin Utas-Carlsson opens the discussion on NATO and cooperation:
 - i. Bjarne Lavik asks whether the group is ready for discussing action across Nordic countries already, whether it would be possible to find agreement on the topic of peace in Ukraine as decided by the United Nations
 1. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that this will be discussed at a later point in the meeting
 - ii. Tim Liebenhoff states that NATO is the perfect example of why peace organisations in the Nordic countries should work across borders - NATO is globalised, and we need to be too
 - iii. Lars Egeland states that a great majority of the Norwegian populace is against nuclear weapons, but for NATO membership. He suggests not to use all resources on discussing a NATO exit, but to rather criticise what NATO does and to demand no first use of nuclear weapons. He additionally states that if the peace movement wants to be relevant to the people, it should focus on nuclear weapons, not NATO.
 - iv. Hasse Schneidermann is in agreement. If/when Swedish and Finnish NATO membership happens, one of the important steps would be for the Nordic countries to state with one strong voice that nuclear weapons will not be stationed in the Nordic countries. Another possibility for Nordic cooperation could be work towards a nuclear weapons free arctic
 - v. Tord Björk states that whilst we are in a situation without a Nordic Peace Alliance at the moment, we can join processes together and see how we can support, for example, a statement against nuclear weapons on nordic soil. Tord Björk asks the participants to come with concrete examples and to avoid doing the work existing networks are already doing
 - vi. Marianne Laxen suggests that Lea Launokari, Hasse Schneidermann and Tord Bjørk draft a text to be used in combination with a petition concerning no nuclear weapons and foreign bases in nordic countries
 1. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that this should not be done in the name of the NPA until the founding meeting
 - vii. Carsten Andersen states that the focus on nuclear weapons is a good proposal for initial cooperation: pressuring governments to work together on nuclear disarmament, in favour of the TPNW instead of the NPC. Carsten further states that Denmark is discussing American

- bases on danish soil, as has happened in Norway, which is a good topic for nordic cooperation as well.
- viii. Teemu Mölsä points out that it is important to not only share the knowledge within the network, but to make it available in the local languages to the members of our organisations and the wider public
 - ix. Hasse Schneidermann is reminded by the discussion of why he and Ida Harsløf initiated the idea of a nordic peace network where these ideas and projects could be coordinated. Hasse Schneidermann supports Lea Launokari in her proposal of an address and petition. Hasse Schneidermann also supports Bjarne Lavik in his statement to write a text highlighting the importance to stop the Russian/Ukrainian war before it escalates to nuclear war. **ACTION POINT: Hasse Schneidermann will contact Bjarne Lavik in order to work together on a statement to stop the war.**
 - x. Karin Utas-Carlsson urges the participants to form a working group to work on the text for the petition as well as the petition itself
- d. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that there will not be enough time to discuss all common topics on the list due to fruitful discussions on the previous topic
 - e. Karin Utas-Carlsson proceeds to open the floor for discussion on cooperation with climate, environmental and peace organisations
 - i. Tim Liebenhoff states that the topic of intersectionality between peace and environmental work is extremely diverse, and that it offers many short- (for example emissions by military and fossil fuel exports) and long-term (security, loss of ecosystems and the effects) cooperation opportunities with environmental organisations.
 - ii. Tord Björk states that this is being worked on a lot in Sweden already, including transitional and environmental organisations. The point of military destroying nature' is something everyone knows and agrees on and won't move anything politically. It is important to also know that NATO has a climate policy which is being prepared by the Atlantic Council and the Swedish government. **ACTION POINT: Tord Björk will send out information**
 - iii. Hasse Schneidermann states that this subject has been worked with since 2012, and this is the reason why sustainable peace and security policy is high on the agenda. He additionally states that the NPA aims to include environmental organisations in the future
 - iv. Steen Folke points out that the climate crisis and the destruction that follows - especially in the global south - is the biggest security threat, also for peace, and that this should be included strongly in our cooperation. Many movements with young people exist already.
 - f. Karin Utas-Carlsson reminds the participants to come up with concrete suggestions of what can be done before the founding meeting next summer. The email addresses of the participants have been sent out and can be used. Karin Utas-Carlsson opens the floor for further suggestions on cooperation
 - i. Lars Egeland suggests creating a press release concerning a demand of no nuclear weapons and foreign bases in nordic countries
 - ii. Claus Montonen suggests adding 2 lines to the press release of this meeting concerning Lars Egeland suggested topic

- iii. Lars Egeland adds that such a statement in the press release would make this meeting relevant
 - 1. **ACTION POINT: Hasse Schneidermann will confer with the working group whether it is possible to add 2 lines on a nuclear weapon and foreign base free Nordic**
 - iv. Marianne Laxen brings up Lea Launokari's idea of the petition on the same topic and gets support from Hasse Schneidermann
 - v. Tim Liebenhoff states that it is not simple to get many signature in a short time, Tord Björk disagrees
 - vi. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that a press release and petition are not mutually exclusive
 - vii. Teemu Mölsä is asking about the recipients and goal of the petition
 - 1. Lea Launokari states that the aim is to get the signatures to the governments and to foster societal discussion on the NATO-topic
 - viii. Marianne Laxen suggests creating a working group for the text and petition.
 - 1. Lea Launokari is looking for especially technical support in setting up the petition
 - a. **ACTION POINT: Lea Launokari will contact Bjarne Lavik, Hasse Schneidermann and Tord Björk to start a working group**
5. Project Proposal for the establishment of the Nordic Peace Alliance (Marianne Laxen)
- a. Marianne Laxen reminds the room of the online meeting etiquette and rules
 - b. Marianne Laxen opens the floor to feedback, comments and suggestions concerning the project proposal
 - i. Claus Montonen is wondering whether the NPA would appear as a unit in front of international meetings
 - 1. Marianne Laxen states that this has not been discussed yet, but that everything should be agreed upon by consensus
 - 2. Liss Schanke states that this should be a key discussion point for the founding meeting in 2023
 - 3. Karin Utas-Carlsson states that it would be difficult to start out with more than a network, as some organisations are working with very specific topics
 - 4. Lars Egeland supports Karin Utas-Carlsson and states that No to Nuclear Weapons Norway is interested in the NPA as a network, not organisation
 - 5. Hasse Schneidermann states that the NPA can form statements to decision makers as outlined by the project proposal and that speaking for many organisations at once is very powerful
 - 6. Ingalill Bjarten asks whether it will be possible for a network to apply for funding

- a. Marianne Laxen states that this would need to be done via the member organisations of the NPA
- ii. Tord Björk is pointing out that the planning group should look at the sentence “alternatives to armament and militarism in our part of the world” and consider not excluding the rest of the world
 - 1. Marianne Laxen states that the planning group was talking about this and will look at it again before the founding meeting

6. Appointment of an interim planning group (Marianne Laxen)

- a. The current planning group has been working together for one year since the conference ‘Neighbours as friends, not enemies’ in Oslo in November 2021
- b. It started with two representatives from Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Norway and was supplemented with one representative from Iceland some months ago. The planning group expanded to three representatives from each country. The current planning group is happy to continue the work until the founding meeting, but can be supplemented or exchanged. The floor is open for organisations to speak up concerning the planning group or to organise within their countries after the meeting
- c. The planning group will be:
 - i. Sweden: Karin Utas-Carlsson, Ingalill Bjarten, Valter Mutt
 - ii. Norway: Bjarne Lavik, Liss Schanke, Tim Liebenhoff
 - iii. Finland: Teemu Mölsä, Marianne Laxen, Claus Motonen
 - iv. Denmark: Ida Harsløf, Hasse Schneidermann, Helge Ratzer, Oluf Dragsbo
- d. Marianne Laxen asks whether Iceland has discussed sending a permanent representative to the planning group, as it is important to get Icelandic representation
 - i. Yousef Harmasha states that the discussion is under way and will inform the planning group once a decision has been reached

7. Seminar and founding meeting of the Nordic Peace Alliance 2023 (Ida Harsløf)

- a. Where: The International College Helsingør, Montebello Alle 1, 3000 Helsingør
- b. Date: 14.07 - 16.07.2023
- c. Price per person per day: 760 DKK/ 1104 NOK/ 1128 SEK/ 100 EUR/ 16 664 ISK
- d. This includes: Accommodation in a double room, 3 meals a day, access to the lecture hall and other smaller lecture rooms.
- e. It is possible to buy coffee and cake – and water, beer, and wine for the meals, at the purchase price.
- f. There might be another conference with 60 people the same week.
- g. The school holds 110 beds, so if anybody wants a single room, the school has good connections to the hotels and hostels in Helsingør.
- h. Officially we have to book 3 months in advance, but it is our impression that Søren Launberg might accept a little later cancellation.

- i. We operate with 30 - 40 participants, which we base on our experience from the last two Nordic seminars we held in Oslo, and the 40 organisations we have invited here
- j. Hasse Schneidermann states that the conference will include seminars as well as discussions on the founding of the NPA. He asks the participating organisations to be proactive and in contact concerning the organising of seminars

8. Closing Remarks (Hasse Schneidermann)

- a. Hasse Schneidermann is thanking the participants for their participation in today's meeting as well as the creation of the NPA. He states that it is wonderful to be around people one agrees with in such harsh times. The ambitions for this meeting have been fulfilled - concerning both long and short term issues which have been brought up and put on the agenda. Hasse Schneidermann states that, in the press release, the working committee should add two lines on that no nuclear weapons or foreign bases should be allowed in the Nordic countries.