



Report of the CIVICUS Board of Directors Meeting 17 – 19 June 2025, London – United Kingdom

The CIVICUS Board of Directors held its first in-person meeting of 2025 in London, from the 17th to the 19th of June 2025. This followed the last meeting held in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2024.

London has in the last few rounds of Board meetings been a preferred location due to its logistical convenience. Several Board members and Senior Leadership Team members either live in or within proximity of London, flight tickets to London seem relatively cheaper, local movement is relatively easy and the visa process for Board members requiring visas has generally been smooth. However, the Board decided that this would be the last meeting to be held in London, with a preference to moving Board meetings to Member organisations in the Global South. The Board sees this as a way of engaging directly with the Members.

The meeting kicked off with opening reflections from Board members on the general state of global affairs, the state of civil society and CIVICUS' role within this context.

The reflections session was followed by the SG's report to the Board, covering the 8 months of co-leadership. The SG highlighted some of his initial activities since taking office, including sharing his vision and key priorities with previous SGs and staff. He specifically highlighted the planning for the International Civil Society Week (ICSW) in November, CIVICUS' response to the increasingly dire civil society funding landscape, the 2025 State of Civil Society Report, the Nelson Mandela Graca Machel Innovation Awards, launch of the Monitor Annual Report and plans to reconfigure the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to ensure that CIVICUS is structured appropriately for the next phase.

The Board formally adopted the Risk Register (RR) with a few comments and approved the 2025 – 26 Annual Budget.

The Board received updates from the Board Committees to end the first day.

The Board started Day 2 with an in-camera session focusing on the SG recruitment process and other sensitive organisational matters. This was followed by a detailed update from Secretariat staff on planning for the ICSW.

The Board received an update on Vuka from Secretariat staff and deliberated on future interaction with key networks including the Youth Action Team (YAT) and the Affinity Group of National Associations (AGNA)

Head of People, Adele, joined the Board meeting to shed some light on the state of human resources (HR), in particular, recent disruptive personnel issues that had been brought to the Board's attention. On the SG recruitment, the Head of People noted a general sense of relief about having a leader who is already

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embedded in the organisation. The Board proceeded to have a wide-ranging discussion about the personnel issues brought to its attention.

The Board ended the day with a meet and greet with partners and allies based in London, where the SG spoke briefly to the state of global affairs and civil society.

The Board started Day 3 with a focus on how it works and ensuring a sound induction of the incoming Board members. It was noted that the following individuals were elected in the 2025 CIVICUS Board elections:

1. Biljana Spasovska, North Macedonia, 1st term Board member
2. Susan Sabano, Uganda, 1st term Board member
3. Luisa Rodriguez, Venezuela, 1st term Board member
4. Vandita Morarka, India, 2nd term Board member
5. Zahra Al Hilaly, Australia, 1st term Board member
6. Mette Müller Kristensen, Netherlands, 1st term Board member
7. Irene Petras, Zimbabwe, 2nd term Board member
8. Stellah Bosire, Kenya, 2nd term Board member

The Board took a moment to acknowledge Board Members who would be stepping down at the end of either their first or second terms. The Board noted that the following members would be stepping down from the Board, effective 1 July 2025:

1. Dylan Mathews – Board Chairperson, having completed his first three-year term
2. Patricia Tatis – Board Treasurer, having completed a full Board term of six years
3. Cristina Palabay – having completed her first three-year term
4. Omaid Sharifi – having completed his first three-year term
5. Sarah Rose Dunn – having completed her first three-year term

The Board voted to retain the current practice of 2 in-person Board meetings a year. It was suggested that an attempt be made to work with CIVICUS members to host Board meetings, giving the Board an opportunity to learn about their work and to understand their lived reality in activism.

The Board asked the SG to draft a document that outlines his vision for the organisation and provides some clarity on the required organisational support structure.

It was noted that the next in-person Board meeting would be held on the sides of the ICSW in Bangkok, Thailand from the 29th to the 30th of October 2025: The Board will attend the opening of the Youth Assembly on the 31st and the ICSW would officially open on the 1st of November to run until the 5th of November.

The Board meeting ended with the Editor in Chief, providing a wide-ranging commentary covering several themes including current challenges facing civil society, civil society resourcing, rebuilding hope, the future of civil society, including giving a sense of what CIVICUS is doing to this end.

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