

3 A usable and accessible defence force – the policy's orientation

A usable, accessible, flexible defence force

The Government's defence policy orientation as set out in the present bill is aimed at enhancing Sweden's defence capability by increasing the usability and accessibility of the country's armed forces. The Swedish Armed Forces must be deployable here and now and contribute to a greater extent than hitherto to Sweden's security and stability in the world. Enhanced operational accessibility and flexibility will enable the armed forces to respond to crises and conflicts more rapidly and effectively, even where these arise at short notice.

Operating alone or with others, the military defence system is responsible for defending Sweden and promoting our security, inside Sweden, in our immediate region and beyond. The whole of Sweden must be defended.

Increasing the number of usable, accessible units will strengthen Sweden's defence capability. We are building an accessible, usable and mobile Swedish operational defence force capable of undertaking missions using the same combat units, whether inside Sweden, in our immediate region or beyond.

Our preparedness must be continually adapted to current threat and risk levels in our region. Air and naval forces, including submarines, watch over sea approaches and airspace, and can rapidly be adapted to defence needs, both in Sweden and our immediate region. The national protection forces being developed in the Home Guard will receive better training and equipment than under the present home defence arrangements and will form an important part of Sweden's defence.

The battalion combat groups that will form the core of the Army's forces will be more mobile and flexible than at present, and will have high operational effectiveness. Like our naval and air defence forces, they can be rapidly deployed for missions in Sweden, the immediate region and beyond.

Safeguarding our security does not stop at our borders. A security threat to a neighbouring country could have significant repercussions for Sweden. Through collaboration with others we can deal with challenges and threats before they reach our territory.

The Government's proposals in this bill set out the overall direction towards achieving a more usable and accessible defence force. The initiative will result in greater freedom of action in defence policy matters. The inherent flexibility of

operational defence advocated by the Government will better equip the defence force to deal with a broad and changeable threat spectrum.

In June 2008, an unanimous Defence Commission submitted its report *Försvar i användning*¹ [Defence in Use]. The report contained specific proposals in a number of areas. These included a new principle with regard to personnel provision, rationalisation of the funding authorities, a transition from heavier to lighter combat units, far-reaching collaboration in the Baltic Sea area, measures to concretise civil-military coordination and better financial management of the Armed Forces.

The Commission further proposed a division between permanent and contract units, and that national service conscripts be barred from serving in any future operational organisation. These recommendations are fully in line with the shift in priorities that must be made if we are to create a usable defence force. The present bill is largely based on the Defence Commission's proposals.

Security in collaboration with others

Challenges and threats to our national security objectives are changeable, borderless and complex. Some of these are difficult to predict and can arise without warning, while others emerge gradually. This applies both to developments in the immediate region and to conflict areas further afield. A concerted, direct military attack on Sweden remains unlikely in the foreseeable future. However, crises or incidents in our region involving the use of military force cannot be ruled out. Nor, in the longer run, can the threat of a military attack. Meeting these challenges requires relevant, up-to-date crisis and contingency planning, particularly with respect to strategically important areas and vital public services.

Sweden's security has been built up in solidarity with other countries with shared democratic values. Sweden's security is strengthened through confidence-building measures, joint crisis management operations and active, credible contributions to Nordic, European and global security.

Under the new EU Treaty, member states are expected to assume shared responsibility for Europe's security. The Riksdag² has ratified the Treaty of Lisbon, including Article 47.2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), and the solidarity clause – Article 222 in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European

¹ Ds 2008:48 (Ministry Publication Series).

² The Swedish Parliament.

Union (TFEU). The Government endorses the Defence Commission's declaration of solidarity, which includes EU member states, Norway and Iceland. A military conflict in our immediate region in which one country alone is affected is virtually inconceivable. Sweden will not take a passive stance should another EU member state or Nordic country suffer a disaster or come under attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is similarly affected. Sweden should thus both extend and receive military support.

Primary responsibility for upholding international peace and security rests with the United Nations through the Security Council. In the Government's view, Sweden's increased commitment to peace-support operations under UN and Nato command should continue. Continued participation in training activities and exercises under EU and Nato command, or as part of other bi- and multilateral operations, are important to the development of our operational capability.

The Government is anxious to intensify cooperation with the Nordic countries. This would strengthen our ability to promote common interests and contribute to security and stability globally and in Europe, but also in our immediate region and within our own territorial boundaries. This aim of this collaboration is to promote rational thinking and approaches, enhance efficiency and respond constructively to any positive synergies that teamwork between the Nordic defence authorities may generate.

The Government will actively seek to strengthen Baltic Sea cooperation. The Baltic Sea is bordered by EU or Nato member countries, with the exception of Russia. Cooperation is the norm in the Baltic Sea region and a comprehensive cooperative partnership has been established in principle within most of the maritime civil areas of responsibility. The Åland Convention and the Öresund Treaty are important security policy conventions. Oil transport in the Baltic Sea has multiplied in the last few years. One of the challenges in this area is to boost security for these flows and enhance the joint capability, under development within HELCOM since the beginning of the 1970s, to deal with accidents and incidents.

The Government wants to continue to see far-reaching coordinated action with regard to airspace and maritime surveillance and marine environmental rescue services, partly through the strengthening of bi- and multilateral agreements in the area, and partly through the creation of further agreements where necessary.

At national level, we need to progress towards greater coordination and a common maritime picture, as well as support services and exercises, etc. jointly organised by the various maritime authorities. More efficient resource utilisation and coordination will boost overall maritime operational effectiveness.

In peacetime, the Swedish Armed Forces are responsible for collecting, processing and passing on information on maritime traffic – suitably adapted to civil needs – to the Swedish Coast Guard. The Swedish Coast Guard is responsible for coordinating civil needs of maritime surveillance and supplying civil maritime information to relevant civil authorities. A number of measures, partly aimed at strengthening civil maritime surveillance, and partly at improving coordination with respect to maritime information, have been implemented, and development in this area continues.

Present and future needs

To achieve a usable defence force, the Government has set out the following proposals in the bill: new objectives and tasks for the defence force, new operational capability requirements, a new operational organisation in which Army combat forces will mainly be used in mission-specific, predefined, battalion combat groups, a new personnel supply system, a set of evolved principles for equipment procurement, a developed view of civil-military coordination, closer international cooperation, and closer collaboration with our neighbours. We will continue to work to ensure efficient resource utilisation within the defence force. Continued efforts must be made to develop financial management methods and systems.

The ability of the defence force to switch between different tasks, environments, conflict levels and cooperation partners must be developed. The focus must be on defence in use. We must improve our ability to integrate civil and military operations.

Combat units must be deployable in Sweden, in our immediate region and beyond. The present distinction between a national operational organisation and a special task force for foreign missions should be ended. An operation is defined as the deployment of military units, whether inside Sweden, in our immediate region or beyond. All units in the operational organisation must be properly equipped and trained and undergo regular field exercises.

Usability is predicated on high operational accessibility. Although many of today's conflicts arise and spread rapidly there has been little demand for larger numbers of more highly trained units. The need for military capability can arise very quickly. Whether responding to a crisis or an accident in our immediate region, speedily reinforcing an operation or helping to create security further afield, a rapid preventive response or operation can make all the difference between security and instability.

Although sustainability must remain a feature of Sweden's defence, accessibility must take priority. Our defence forces need units which are immediately available to safeguard Sweden and our immediate region, as well as for missions outside our region.

A new personnel supply system

Personnel provision must be modernised; manning of the operational organisation must be based on voluntary recruitment rather than on military service conscription.

However, a usable and accessible defence force will only need a limited number of soldiers in continuous service in the Army forces. This will make it possible for most of the soldiers in the Army to be employed on a contract basis. However, the Navy and Air Force will be largely made up of permanent units comprising regularly employed soldiers, sailors, airmen and officers.

Personnel will be rotated on a regular basis, in and out of units, at suitable intervals. Both soldiers and officers should be required to take part in operations. Under the present system, training is obligatory. However, participation in international missions is voluntary in all situations apart from general mobilisation. In tomorrow's system the reverse must apply. Voluntary recruitment and the obligation to take part in operations will contribute to an operational organisation that can be used at a moment's notice.

The Home Guard with the national protection forces and the contract units will give our defence force popular backing and access to civil expertise.

The operational organisation

The Army, Navy and Air Force must have sufficient advanced capability to engage in warfare on any scale, from low- to high-intensive levels of conflict. Mission specific, predefined battalion combat groups will make up the Army's main operational units. The structure of the battalion combat groups, based *inter alia* on experience gained from the Nordic battlegroup, provides the flexible conditions needed to ensure the usability and accessibility of the operational organisation.

A battalion combat group is assembled around a tactical operations battalion equipped with reinforcement resources from usable units such as tank, air defence,

engineer, logistical and intelligence units. Reinforcement resources from other forces should also be made available as and when needed. The tactical manoeuvre battalions and usable units should also have undergone joint exercises at different levels and have a well-developed interface in order to ensure high usability, accessibility and good unit morale.

The present model – characterised by a national operational organisation, a special, regularly employed task force for foreign missions, special units listed for service with international forces, and a battlegroup mustered every three years and kept on standby for EU-led international crisis management missions – will be phased out. It will be replaced by an operational organisation in which the units will be retained, while personnel within the units will be rotated individually. Experience will be preserved within the units, while a large proportion of the units that will take part in joint or combined operations will train and conduct exercises together. The increased flexibility of Army forces will facilitate a transition from today's heavier units to a higher proportion of lighter units backed up by modularly designed reinforcement resources. Tanks belonging to a tank company will be placed in depot storage on Gotland to facilitate early access to heavy equipment.

Sweden must have the ability to lead and coordinate operations at brigade level. International cooperation is a good way of maintaining the capability to operate in large units and retain and develop this capability.

As a first priority, Navy combat forces must develop the capability to operate in our immediate region in order to protect Sweden's interests at sea. They must also be able to take part in appropriate joint naval operations with other countries within and outside our immediate region. Priority has been given to verifying and initiating operational activities using Visby-class corvettes, and to maintaining our submarine capability.

The Air Force must as a first priority develop the capability to operate in Sweden and our immediate region. It must also be able to take part in joint air operations with other countries inside Sweden and in our immediate region, and, where such operations are appropriate for Swedish units, outside our immediate region. The Riksdag approved action plan for the JAS 39 Gripen aircraft applies. The A/B version of the JAS 39 Gripen will be phased out and the fleet aligned. Greater focus must be placed on armament and usability. Sweden, along with other Gripen countries, must continue to develop the aircraft system and its capabilities so that it remains a core air defence component for several decades to come.

The Swedish Armed Forces must be able to continually adapt its combat capability to changing operational requirements and cooperation patterns both in and outside our immediate region. Parts of the Home Guard will be upgraded to national protection forces which will be subject to more rigorous requirements in terms of usability and accessibility. The national protection forces, developed from the Home Guard's operational units, must be available for use even in peacetime. The Home Guard and the national protection forces make up a vital part of Sweden's defence capability, performing national duties such as guarding and protecting harbours, cities and infrastructure, and providing support to the community.

Reserve unit

A reserve unit of four mechanised battalions will be built up outside the operational organisation. This unit must be available to the operational organisation for up to three years following a decision made in response to a serious deterioration in the international situation involving a threat to Sweden.

The basic organisation

No organisational units in the basic organisation will be disbanded during the current parliamentary period.

Increased civil-military collaboration

Security and development presuppose a holistic approach and collaboration between military, peace-building and development-related resources. Military operations cannot of themselves create the necessary conditions for peace and reconstruction in a conflict-torn country. Establishing stronger links between security and development in a conflict area require greater coordination of national efforts. This national coordination will be established through a special collaboration unit in the Government Offices. The unit, supported by relevant agencies, will act in the run-up to, during and after major operations. The solutions we develop must be compatible with the UN and EU rapid reaction concept.

Supply of materials and equipment

The equipment supply process proposed by the Government in the bill will enhance Sweden's defence capability. A well-functioning equipment supply system meets the stated requirements for operational capability. The operational

organisation must be kept supplied with appropriate, tested and reliable equipment of sufficiently good quality and in sufficient quantities to meet stated requirements and arising needs. It is important that Sweden have equipment comparable to that of countries we cooperate with and that it be technically mature, reliable and accessible.

Continued efforts must be made to increase transparency and freedom of action in all phases of the equipment supply process.

Equipment must be properly maintained and existing equipment upgraded when economically viable and operational requirements can be met. This is a primary concern. Secondly, where new acquisitions are deemed necessary, they should be made from fully developed, tested equipment available in the marketplace. Development should take place when none of these alternatives are possible. The option to make acquisitions, regardless of type, within the framework of international cooperation should be given high priority. Procedures for independent quality control and audits of decision-support data for important equipment procurement projects should be developed as a complement to the agencies' own follow-ups.

Increased acquisition of tested equipment can reduce the need for certification, verification and validation. Equipment supply systems and logistical processes in the Swedish Armed Forces and their supporting agencies will be rationalised and made more efficient. Over time, this is expected to free up funds for operational activities.

Restructuring and modernisation

The Swedish Armed Forces' new operational organisation should be in place in 2014, although not all units are expected to be fully operational by then, mainly owing to a predicted shortage of personnel. The Government wishes to emphasise that the pace of the proposed development towards a more accessible defence force will be determined by the economic situation. The need to free up resources will be met by reforming and rationalising personnel, equipment and logistics supply systems and other support activities. As resources are freed up the new, more usable defence force will emerge, in which higher costs and raised ambitions in connection with operational activities are offset by rationalisation and lowered ambitions in other areas. The orientation set out by the Government is thus subject to adjustment both as regards the pace of transition and capability, equipment, organisational and operational requirements. If necessary, the Government will submit any such adjustments to the Riksdag either in conjunction with the annual budget bill or in another bill.

The Government further intends to report back to the Riksdag on the measures and efficiency enhancements being planned and implemented as part of the continued reform in order to achieve the objectives proposed by the Government in the present bill. The Government also intends to present a description of the new personnel supply system, with *inter alia* longer fixed-term employment contracts, in an upcoming bill.

The Swedish Defence Forces will prioritise the development of usable and accessible army units incorporating flexible battalion combat groups capable of operating in Sweden, our immediate region and beyond; a new personnel supply system based primarily on contract soldiers; the ability to protect our national sovereignty; and the arming of existing weapons platforms. The focus will be on the operational benefits, now and in the future.