



Government Offices of Sweden

# Address by the Prime Minister at the Crimea Platform Summit 220823

(The spoken word applies)

President Zelenskyy, Excellencies, colleagues and friends,

In August last year, we came together in Kyiv to show our unwavering support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty in light of Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in 2014.

Since then, Russia has launched an unprovoked, illegal and ruthless full-scale war of aggression. This has made an already dire situation in Crimea even more alarming. For instance, Russia uses the peninsula as a launching pad for attacking other parts of Ukraine.

Sweden is deeply concerned by the countless violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed by the Russian authorities in the Crimean Peninsula and elsewhere on temporarily occupied Ukrainian territory. I was shaken by what I saw and heard during my field visits to Bucha and Borodyanka in July.

Russia's aggression is primarily about Ukraine. It also has alarming consequences elsewhere, in Europe and globally, including as regards energy and food supplies. For this, Russia bears full responsibility.

Sweden DOES not and WILL not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, or any other future attempts to unlawfully annex Ukrainian territory. We must continue to stand united in our support for Ukraine, now and in the long term. We must ensure that the international community continues a coordinated and principled response to stop Russia's aggression and hold those responsible accountable.

We owe it to Ukraine and its people, and we need it to prevent similar

aggression from being repeated elsewhere. Might does not make right.

Sweden will continue its steadfast support to Ukraine. My government will shortly present additional comprehensive support packages that will strengthen Ukraine's resilience. The stronger Ukraine is, the safer the rest of us are.

Thank you. Slava Ukraini.

Published 24 August 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson following meeting with NATO Secretary General in Brussels

On Monday June 27, Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson met with NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. In conjunction with a joint press conference, Ms Andersson delivered a speech.

Thank you, Mr. Stoltenberg,

And thank you for receiving me here, at the NATO headquarters on the eve of the Summit in Madrid.

It's been four months since Russia launched an unprovoked, illegal and unjustifiable war against its neighbour – the peaceful and democratic state of Ukraine.

Russia has not beaten Ukraine, but they hope we will lose our focus. They want a war of attrition. I told president Zelensky last Friday, that our support for the Ukrainian people should not and will not be weakened over time.

This war is not just a threat against Ukraine. Russia's war has created a far more dangerous reality for Europe, including Sweden. This existential threat to the European security order will be there for a long time to come. And we must act accordingly.

We are just in the middle of the biggest build-up of Swedish defence capabilities since the 1950's. Sweden will reach two percent of GDP as soon as practicably possible and by 2028 at the latest. We are re-establishing regiments, reinforcing Gotland, reactivating national military service. We are

speeding up defence equipment procurements and strengthening our cyber defence and intelligence capabilities.

But we know that that's not enough. Building security requires cooperation with others. We conducted a two-month deliberation involving all the parties of our Parliament. In a broad majority we came to the conclusion that the best way to protect Sweden and Swedish citizens is not only to be a friend and a partner – but also as an ally in NATO. On 18 May Sweden applied for membership, hand in hand with our closest partner, Finland.

With Sweden and Finland as NATO members, the security of all NATO countries would be strengthened. Sweden would commit to the Washington Treaty in its entirety, as well as to all NATO doctrines.

Our applications have received very broad support from NATO Allies. Sweden fulfills all criteria. But consensus within NATO is required to take Sweden and Finland's applications forward.

Our vulnerability to external threats is increased until we formally become a member. In response to this uncertainty, several Allies – including the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Norway and Denmark have extended Sweden clear assurances of support during the application period. For this we are very grateful.

Türkiye has raised some questions regarding Sweden and Finland's applications. Our ambition is to come to an understanding on the raised issues, together with Finland and NATO. I spoke with President Erdogan this Saturday. I would say it was a good and constructive talk.

Earlier today, senior officials from Sweden, Finland and Türkiye met here in Brussels for a new round of talks. My strong hope is that this dialogue can be successfully concluded in the very near future, ideally at the Summit. Crucially, this would make it possible to immediately launch Sweden's and Finland's accession processes. Such an outcome would be good news for Sweden and Finland, and for NATO and the security of Europe.

Let me make some things clear.

- As a member, Sweden will contribute to the security of NATO as a whole, including Türkiye, in a spirit of solidarity. We would embrace NATO's 360 degrees approach to security.
- As was presented in my government's extra foreign policy statement on

10 June, Sweden condemns terrorism in the strongest possible terms. We are unequivocally committed to the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. As Allies, we will be fully committed to NATO counter terrorism policy and take active part in these efforts.

- Our stance regarding the PKK is crystal clear. It is listed as a terror organisation in the EU and is regarded as such by Sweden.
- During the last years we have strengthened the laws against funding terrorism. And Sweden's terrorist legislation is undergoing its biggest overhaul in 30 years. A new and tougher Terrorist Offences Act enters into force on 1 July, with broadened scope and higher scales of penalties.
- Moreover, constitutional amendments are being prepared which would pave the way for criminalisation of participation in terrorist organisations. There should be no doubt that Sweden will continue to stand firm alongside other like-minded countries in the fight against terrorism.
- Our NATO membership will have implications with respect to export control of defence materiel to all NATO Allies. Alliance solidarity will be reflected within our national regulatory framework.
- One of the issues raised by Türkiye concerns Sweden's response to Türkiye's requests for extraditions. These matters are handled swiftly and carefully by our legal system in accordance with European Convention on Extradition.
- Sweden is not and will not be a safe haven for terrorism. The relevant authorities work intensively in order to expel persons who could be a security threat. And there are a substantial number of cases which are currently processed.

So, I am very much looking forward to continuing from here to Madrid and the discussions there with all Allied leaders. I am hopeful that these discussions can pave the way for launching our accession process – and put Sweden on the path to NATO membership. This would benefit all of us.

Thank you.

Published 28 June 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Stockholm +50 opening address by Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson

Stockholm, 2 June 2022. Check against delivery.

Your Majesty,

Your Royal Highness, Secretary General,

Fellow heads of State and Government, Excellencies,

Distinguished representatives of the youth, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Sweden and to Stockholm+50.

I am proud that Sweden and Kenya are the co-hosts of this meeting convened by the United Nations.

We are here to deliver on the promises made to the world's population and future generations.

We are at a crucial crossroad.

Heat waves, water scarcity, droughts, storms, floods, wildfires,

melting glaciers, rising sea levels, warming oceans

– soon containing more plastic than fish.

We are hurting our planet.

The crisis for our environment and climate affects people all around the world.

The developed countries are the ones who pollute and have polluted the most. But the poorest are hit the hardest.

We must ensure that no country is left behind. And we must ensure that no person is left behind. The climate transition can only be done if it's made in a social and inclusive way.

This is not just an option. This is our moral obligation.

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So, what needs to be done?

First of all, we must all live up to our commitments.

We must start delivering on the declarations we have signed, and the pledges we have made.

We have already talked the talk,

Now it's time to walk the walk.

And as Greta Thunberg said;

“The moment we decide to fulfil something, we can do anything.”

\* \* \*

We shall not ignore the current geopolitical state of the world,  
including Russia's brutal war against Ukraine.

But as leaders, we must never let one crisis overshadow another. We just  
have to work harder.

The war in Ukraine has also made it very clear: fossil fuel dependency is not  
only a climate risk, it's a security risk.

It has to end now.

\* \* \*

Our countries have put in place global, regional, and national frameworks to  
stop the climate and environmental crisis. The Paris Agreement and the  
Sustainable Development Goals are two examples.

We have made commitments to reduce emissions, halt biodiversity loss and  
stop ocean pollution.

But we are nowhere near achieving these goals. We are lagging behind. As  
UN Secretary-General António Guterres put it:

“...we need to do much more. And much faster.”

And the world demands it from us leaders.

Industry demands it, because if it is to get new technology and new solutions  
in place quickly enough it needs political leadership that sets out the  
direction, and provides the right conditions.

People demand it, because they see a risk of slipping behind or losing their  
jobs as demand for sustainable solutions, green energy, and new technologies

increases.

The young demand it of us, and rightfully so. Civil society and not least the youth movement are a decisive force in the climate transition. We need you. But we – the political leaders of this generation – are the ones who must do what it takes.

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In Sweden, we have chosen a long-term and determined approach to accelerate the green transition.

We have made policy changes to enable companies to make the transition. And we have also made investments to enable people to keep up: investments in education and training, and security in the midst of change.

Climate action is one of my government's priorities in the years ahead.

We will speed up this process.

And hear me when I say: we won't speed up the green transition to be kind – but to be smart.

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Right now, we are witnessing the start of a green industrial revolution in Sweden. It creates thousands of jobs through investments in battery factories, green mining, and fossil-free steel production.

And what we are seeing in Sweden right now is that previously neglected areas are no longer struggling with unemployment or depopulation, but how to build housing, infrastructure, and schools quick enough to meet up with

the expansion.

And yesterday, right outside these doors, the very first vehicle built using fossil-free steel was presented. This project is the result of a public- private partnership supported by the Swedish Government.

We see that it's possible to combine reduced emissions with economic development.

Sweden's message is plain and clear:

Going green is not only possible, it is the path to create growth, jobs and prosperity for all.

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Excellencies,

Fifty years have passed since the very first UN Conference on the Human Environment was held here in Stockholm. It went down in history. Climate and environment entered world politics.

The 1972 UN Stockholm Conference led to the birth of a global responsibility for the climate, the environment and sustainability.

It is my hope and expectation that Stockholm+50 will accelerate our actions.

No nation can tackle the climate and environmental crisis alone. But every nation must do its part.

Let's make this meeting a success by going home, doing more - much faster.

I'm counting on you.

On your commitment, your leadership, and your support.

Let our work be guided by the words spoken at the 1972 Conference by the Prime Minister, Olof Palme,

“There is no individual future, neither for human beings, nor for nations.

Our future is common. We must share it together.

We must shape it together.”

It is my great pleasure to declare the meeting officially open. Thank you.

Published 02 June 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by the Prime Minister following meeting with US President Joe Biden

Rose Garden, White House, 19 May 2022. Check  
against delivery.

Mr President, thank you for welcoming President Niinistö and me to the White House.

The bonds between Sweden and the United States are strong and long-standing. As you know, Swedes first set foot in your home state of Delaware in 1638. We were one of the first countries to recognise the United States as an independent nation in 1783.

Since then, our countries have developed a deep and long-standing friendship through family ties, trade, and mutual interests. And I personally am very much a part of this.

But most of all, we share values and beliefs in democracy and freedom – values and beliefs that are now being put to the test.

Today, the situation in Ukraine reminds us of the darkest days of European history. And I must say that during dark times, it is great to be among close friends.

Over these past months, we have shown transatlantic unity and strength at its best. Together, we have responded forcefully to Russia's aggression and provided unprecedented support to Ukraine. We have not flinched.

Mr President, I want to thank you for the massive US support to Ukraine, and for your sustained engagement in European security.

President Niinistö and I have come here at a historic moment for our countries. And for Sweden, after more than 200 years of military non-

alignment, Sweden has chosen a new path. Yesterday, Sweden and Finland submitted our formal requests to join NATO.

Russia's full-scale aggression against a sovereign and democratic neighbour was a watershed moment for Sweden. My Government has come to the conclusion that the security of the Swedish people will be best protected within the NATO alliance. And this is backed by very support in the Swedish Parliament

And with Sweden and Finland as members, NATO will also be stronger. We are security providers, with sophisticated defence capabilities. We are champions of freedom, democracy, and human rights. We have a long tradition of extensive military cooperation with NATO, including in all missions. We are right now ramping up our defence spending, and we will reach 2 percent of GDP as soon as practically possible.

Mr President, your support for our countries' NATO aspirations, and for our security, are of fundamental importance.

We now look forward to a swift ratification process by NATO members. The United States and the Senate are crucial in this regard. We are right now having a dialogue with all NATO member states, including Turkey, on different levels to sort out any issues at hand.

In the United States, the Senate is crucial in this regard. Last Sunday, I hosted a delegation headed by Senate Republican Leader McConnell in Stockholm. Later today, President Niinistö and I will meet Senate Majority Leader Schumer and other leading members of Congress. We greatly appreciate the broad and strong support expressed by both parties in Congress.

Mr President, our countries also work closely together when tackling global challenges.

Sweden – like the other Nordic countries – has shown that emissions reductions can go hand in hand with economic growth. In Sweden right now, the green transition creates thousands of jobs through investments in battery factories, green mining, and fossil-free steel production. I actually brought the President a unique example of this: a candle holder made of the world's first fossil-free steel.

And what we are seeing in Sweden right now is that previously neglected

areas are no longer struggling with unemployment or depopulation, but how to build housing, infrastructure, and schools quick enough to meet up with the expansion. Here I see fantastic opportunities for cooperation between the Nordic countries and the United States.

I am also proud that Sweden contributes to the U.S. economy and the prosperity of the American people. Swedish companies are active in every single state, creating more than 350 000 jobs in the United States. We are the 15th largest investor.

Mr President, I want to thank you for your leadership in our joint efforts to promote democracy throughout the world. Because democracy requires constant work and safeguarding - we have to win every new generation.

Allow me to conclude where I started:

Peace and stability in our part of the world is a common security interest – for us, for you and for the rest of Europe. We stand here today more united than ever, and we are committed to strengthening our bonds even further. Sweden is prepared to shoulder its responsibility as an ally in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Thank you.

Published 27 May 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson received President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen

Stockholm, 7 April 2022 Check against delivery.

It is a pleasure to welcome President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to Stockholm and to Stockholm Exergi.

At this facility, 99 per cent of the district heating generated comes from renewable or recycled fuels. Stockholm Exergi is one of many companies putting Sweden at the forefront of the green transition and supported by the Swedish Recovery Plan.

All over Sweden, especially in the north, a new green industrial revolution is taking place, including the world's greenest batteries, fossil-free steel and a new green standard for mining.

Many other companies are joining in – often innovative and fast-growing start-ups – creating thousands of new jobs, today and for the future.

With these advances, we are leading the way in the EU and in the world, proving that the green transition goes hand in hand with strong growth and more jobs.

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I appreciate our close cooperation with the Commission in the green and digital transitions, and in responding to Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

We are witnessing increased Russian brutality in Ukraine, including attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. Horrific images from Bucha, the bombing of children's hospitals and reports of executions of civilians in

Mariupol mark a new dark chapter in European history.

There is clearly a time before and after 24 February. Russia's invasion of Ukraine is unprovoked, illegal, and unjustifiable. The responsibility for this war rests solely with President Putin and the Russian leadership.

Our European response has been firm and united. In record time we have imposed sanctions against Russia that are more far-reaching and more advanced than almost any observer would have deemed possible. Together with partners we are working to further isolate the Russian leadership.

We also remain committed to supporting Ukraine with humanitarian, financial and military aid. Sweden has already provided [EP1] a total of 10 000 anti-tank weapons to Ukraine and increased humanitarian aid to Ukraine by EUR 72 million. We are also prepared for further use of the European Peace Facility.

We are acting in solidarity with Ukraine, but also in solidarity with our common values: international law, human rights, democracy and the European security order.

The President and I agree: intentional attacks on the civilian population or civilian objects constitute a war crime. Russian violations of international law will be investigated and those responsible will be brought to justice. Sweden will support the International Criminal Court (ICC) financially and by providing national experts.

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The Russian invasion of Ukraine has made it more urgent and necessary to become independent of Russian oil and gas. We must speed up our climate efforts in order to cut our dependence.

It is clear that breaking our dependency on fossil fuels is important to fight climate change; it is also essential to strengthen our security.

To do this we have to secure our supply of renewable energy. We need to expand wind power and, in particular, recognise the importance of new green solutions based on bioenergy and forestry. In doing this, we will create sustainable societies with high growth and more jobs – today and for the future.

Published 08 April 2022





Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson concerning Russia's military attack on Ukraine

Stockholm, 1 March 2022 Check against delivery

Sweden.

There is a war going on in Europe.

At the moment, cities such as Kyiv, Kharkiv and Mariupol are being attacked by Russian forces.

With anger, we all learn of the attacks on the people of Ukraine.

We are also filled with admiration for all Ukrainians who are committed to the furious defence of their democracy and freedom.

Russia's armed attack on Ukraine is unprovoked, illegal and unjustifiable.

The Kremlin claims that Ukraine belongs to a special Russian sphere of influence.

But in today's Europe there is no room for spheres of interest.

If Russia succeeds in placing Ukraine under its supremacy, it opens up similar demands on other countries.

Russia's armed attack is more than an attack on Ukraine, it is an attack on every country's right to decide its own future.

It constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

This is why Sweden, the EU and many other countries are standing behind Ukraine.

The Swedish Government's actions cover three areas: sanctions against Russia, support to Ukraine and strengthening Sweden.

We in the EU and our partners have responded quickly and decisively with very comprehensive sanctions against Russia and the Russian central government.

These efforts will continue.

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Europe is supporting Ukraine in words and action.

With economic and humanitarian aid. With a place of refuge for Ukrainians fleeing the war.

But also: with support to Ukraine's legal right to defend its territory.

On Monday, the Swedish Riksdag decided in broad agreement to send support to the Ukrainian armed forces, including defensive weapons.

Sweden has not done anything like this since the Soviet Union attacked Finland in 1939.

Many Swedes see it as self-evident to extend a helping hand to those who are under attack. But I know that there are also those of us who ask what consequences this will have for Sweden. Will it make us a target for Russian retaliation?

I have carefully considered both perspectives. As Prime Minister, my first and foremost question before taking any decision is: what is best for Sweden's security?

My conclusion is that Swedish security is best served by helping Ukraine to defend itself.

Their defence of their borders is a defence of the borders of all countries and of the protection provided by international law to all the countries of the world.

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The security situation in Sweden's neighbourhood has been deteriorating for

several years. It has now gotten even worse.

We are not under an immediate threat of an armed attack against Sweden. However, the level of threat has increased.

The Swedish people are a target for Russian influence campaigns and disinformation. The aim is to intimidate us, silence us and increase polarisation – within the EU, within Sweden and between people. Swedish interests are also exposed to cyber espionage and cyber attacks.

The Government is working with all the actors involved to maintain and strengthen our ability to resist such attacks.

Over several years, we have also significantly strengthened our country's total defence in broad political agreement.

It is clear that the pace must now increase. That is why I am announcing that the Government will take the initiative for additional resources to total defence.

Sweden's defence capabilities need to be strengthened. Rearmament is being brought forward.

Sweden must have a strong defence. A total defence of the Swedish people and for the Swedish people.

We must also prepare ourselves for the consequences of Russia's war on our daily lives.

The prices of fuel and electricity are already rising. Other goods can also become more expensive, such as food. Small savers are seeing their pension funds being put under pressure. There is a risk that Swedish jobs and companies will be affected.

The Government and the Swedish public authorities are following developments very closely.

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My Government is pursuing a clear line in this situation: sanctions against Russia, support to Ukraine and strengthening Sweden. But each of us must

also do our part.

First and foremost: stay informed. Seek information from credible sources. Use your own judgement.

Any person who spreads disinformation risks undermining our common security.

Do not spread information about Sweden's defence either. Every single piece of information about exercises and movements is a piece in the jigsaw puzzle for foreign actors.

And above all: support each other.

Pay special attention to children and young people. More information reaches them than we adults would like. Then adults must be on hand who listen and explain things.

As so many Swedes have already done, you can also support the people of Ukraine. Donate money or participate in a peaceful manifestation. None of us can do everything, but every single contribution makes a difference.

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And finally.

In recent years, we have been going through a very difficult crisis, the global pandemic.

It has been a painful and testing time. But it has taught us important lessons. One lesson is that when we are faced with tough demands, we are able to come together as a country and as fellow human beings.

Current events have presented us with a new task, and demands that we Swedes come together.

In solidarity with the people of Ukraine.

In defence of democracy and freedom.

For the security of Europe as a whole.

Sweden and the Swedish people will succeed with this.

Thank you for listening.

Published 02 March 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Speech by Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson on the occasion of International Holocaust Remembrance Day

Great Synagogue of Stockholm, 27 January 2022.  
Check against delivery.

Holocaust survivors,

Honourable guests,

Thank you for the invitation and opportunity to speak here today.

Earlier today, Emerich Roth was laid to rest. There are many of us mourning the void his death has left in our lives.

It is difficult to encapsulate the significance of his accomplishments. Lecturer and writer. Organiser and debater. One of the most prominent public educators of our time, whose message reached so many people, not least young people.

For Emerich Roth, reaching young people was crucial. He emphasised the importance of future generations not only learning about the Holocaust, but also from the Holocaust.

And what is remembrance if not learning? The Talmud says, “What you teach your son, you teach your son’s son”. We teach our sons – and our daughters – about the Holocaust, but also about the lessons of the Holocaust. And in so doing, we also teach their sons and daughters.

We teach them to tell the stories of those who were murdered. But we also teach them about those who murdered, those who watched it happen, and those who looked away. And we teach about and learn from those who

survived. What they experienced during the war and in the camps. And about their lives afterwards. About the weight of the legacy they had to bear.

The latter is the theme of Gabriel Francke Rodau's book, *Leons bok*. The main character, Leon, a second-generation Holocaust survivor and widower with no children, begins to write letters to the children he never had. He writes about universal things: family, belonging, friends and love. But he also writes about the heavy legacy, and I quote:

“Speak about your grandmother and grandfather and their families who were murdered. And speak about how and why they came to Sweden. We have to tell, or people will forget. And the day they forget...”

“The day they forget...” These words have stuck in my mind. Not “if they forget” but “the day they forget.” This is an important perspective.

Particularly at a time when we see more and more attempts at Holocaust denial and distortion. It is a reminder that remembrance is not just about history, but also about imagining an inconceivable future.

Remembrance means that we have to promise ourselves and each other, over and over again, that it will never happen again. And that we have to constantly ask ourselves what actions we are taking today to ensure that “the day they forget” never becomes a reality.

That's what we must do as human beings, but we must also do so as a nation. And as Prime Minister, I am well aware of my responsibility for the latter. I am humbled by the task but I do not lack role models.

When I was working for Göran Persson, he took the initiative to establish the Living History Forum and for the book ‘Tell ye your children’. My predecessor, Stefan Löfven, convened the Malmö International Forum for Holocaust Remembrance and Combating Antisemitism, and the pledges that Sweden made at the Forum will obviously be implemented by my Government with pride and determination.

Last year, when I was elected Prime Minister, Sweden was commemorating one hundred years of universal and equal suffrage. But history has also taught us that although the right to vote is fundamental to every democratic society, it in itself is not enough. Democracy requires free and independent media, judicial independence, not forgetting the effective protection of minorities.

As democrats, we must therefore combat all forms of antisemitism, vigilantly and consistently. The fact that Jews in Sweden hesitate to wear a kippa or Star of David for fear of threats and violence can never be regarded as a problem only for the individual who is affected. It is a problem for our entire country, our democracy and our way of life.

That is why we teach our sons and daughters to join the fight against antisemitism and its manifestations. We have been fighting against many of its manifestations for a long time.

Holocaust denial and distortion. Antisemitic slogans disguised as criticism of the State of Israel. Hatred of Jews that is excused and glossed over. And more recently, conspiracy theories about George Soros and the shameful comparisons between anti-vaccine protesters and the victims of Nazism.

This is why Sweden will teach all its sons and daughters that although being subjected to antisemitism is a uniquely Jewish experience, our entire nation will take part in the fight against antisemitism. Because the fight is for all of us. As human beings. As democrats. As Swedes.

That is why – as Prime Minister and as a Swede – I will never falter: Sweden is a country in which Jewish life is just as integral to our society as it is indispensable.

That is what we teach our sons and daughters, and thus also their sons and daughters.

Published 01 February 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

# Statement of Government Policy

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

One person, one vote – everyone’s equal right to participate and steer the society we live in. It is society’s most fundamental expression of the equal value of all people.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the recognition of this right.

In 1921, for the first time in Sweden women and men alike were able to exercise universal and equal suffrage in elections to the Riksdag.

This right cannot be taken for granted. It must be reinforced again and again by each successive generation.

Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

In ten months, we will once again celebrate democracy as the Swedish people go to the polls.

Let us together impress upon yet another generation of voters the importance of using their democratic voice.

“All public power in Sweden proceeds from the people. Swedish democracy is founded on the free formation of opinion and on universal and equal suffrage. [...] Public power shall be exercised with respect for the equal worth of all and the liberty and dignity of the individual.”

It is written thus in our country’s constitution.

Sweden must continue to stand on this same bedrock of democracy for the next 100 years.

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Mr Speaker,

Government policy in the coming years will be distinguished by vigorous action to counter three serious societal problems.

Firstly: leaving no stone unturned to reduce segregation and combat the ruthless criminality that currently threatens all of society.

Secondly: driving the green industrial revolution through investments throughout the country. In this way, emissions will be reduced and the jobs of the future will be created in Sweden.

Thirdly: taking back control of the welfare system so that everyone who works in it has the decent and fair conditions needed to do their job. In this way, we can ensure high quality in schools, health care and social care throughout the country. Out of respect for everyone who works and who has built up our country, we must have secure social insurance and pensions.

Sweden will move forward, step by step, reform by reform.

Because Sweden can do better.

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Mr Speaker,

As of November this year, 290 shootings have taken place in this country. They have cost 42 people their lives. Many of them were young boys, children.

Shootings in gang conflicts are not isolated cases. They are organised, and are rooted in a society where the gaps and differences between living conditions are too wide. Economic, linguistic and normative gaps. This serious violence threatens to poison all of society. It undermines trust between people and it weakens confidence in the future. It turns people in our country into crime victims, casualties and mourners.

There are residential areas in Sweden that are characterised by overcrowding and a housing black market, where organised crime operates as landlord, bank and employer. Where the law enforcement system is closed out and the gangs create their own rules. Where children are recruited directly into criminal lifestyles in which bombings and shootings are everyday occurrences.

This cannot continue. Swedish society must be stronger than that.

To stop the violence, perpetrators must be prosecuted. Criminal policy will be overhauled.

More severe penalties have been imposed for more than 70 offences. Some 30 acts that previously were not punishable have been criminalised. A historic expansion of the entire Swedish judicial system is under way. We are well on our way to meeting our target of 10 000 more police employees. A comprehensive expansion of the Swedish Prison and Probation Service is under way and the capacity of the courts is being significantly reinforced.

Essentially every law enforcement agency has been given new tools, more employees and greater authority.

Now we are going even further.

Even more severe penalties will be imposed for gang-related offences. The possibility of using secret coercive measures to prevent serious crime is being investigated.

There will be tougher penalties for perjury, obstructing the course of justice and protecting a criminal. It should not be possible to threaten witnesses into silence; instead they should receive the support they need to safely fulfil their duty.

It will be easier to detain people who are suspected of serious offences. At present, the presumption of detention applies to those suspected of offences with a minimum penalty of two years' imprisonment – this will be reduced to one year and six months' imprisonment.

Anyone who commits multiple offences should be punished more severely. Reduced sentences for young people aged 18–20 who commit serious offences will be abolished. Penalties should better reflect the severity of offences, even when the perpetrators are young. The Care of Young Persons (Special Provisions) Act is under review.

Society must act more resolutely towards young people at risk and more measures should be possible even without parental consent.

More gang members and young people at risk must be taken into care and benefit from social measures. A national youth crime board system like that in Denmark will be investigated.

Violent crime and the power exercised by criminal elements are a threat to

the public support and democratic legitimacy on which our legal order is based. They must be fought with everything our democratic society has.

Mr Speaker,

Every year, around 15 women are murdered by their former or current intimate partner. The Government has ensured permanent funds and grants to prevent men's violence against women and to protect the victims. Possibilities to also strengthen the protection against psychological violence provided under criminal law are being investigated. There will be more severe penalties for violence and other forms of abuse in intimate relationships.

Twenty years ago, a year before she was murdered, Fadime Sahindal stood here in the Riksdag and said:

“Regardless of your cultural background, it should be a given that you can have both your family and the life you want for yourself.”

She concluded by urging us all to see all of the girls who are denied that right in the name of honour. “I hope that you won't turn your backs on them.”

Support in the Riksdag is broad, and the Government's direction is clear: honour-based oppression has no place in our country. All forms of equality apply equally to all. Honour-based oppression must stop.

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Mr Speaker,

More severe penalties have had an effect. More hardened criminals are now serving sentences. But much broader efforts are needed to break the segregation that leads to poverty and hopelessness and fuels gang crime.

Every minister in the Government that takes office today will be tasked, within their area of responsibility and with the support of the relevant government agencies, with leaving no stone unturned in bringing an end to gang crime and segregation.

The Government will gather representatives from the municipalities where the violence is worst and segregation the most pronounced to work together to combat criminality.

Many parents, teachers, social workers, local police, sports associations and volunteers today stand in opposition to these criminals, spreading hope in the darkness. But many more need to get involved.

We must all pull together. For this reason, I also want to turn to everyone in Sweden. No one individual can break segregation or stop the shootings or the gangs on their own. But everyone can do something. Where volunteer patrols or similar activities are organised, get involved if you can. Help out in local sports associations so that there are recreational activities for our children and young people. Stay and talk for a few minutes with someone who needs to improve their Swedish to enter into Swedish society.

I would like to urge Sweden's employers: before bringing in low-skilled workers from other countries, remember that there are many long-term unemployed people in Sweden who want nothing more than to find a job.

When all of society mobilises – that is when we can build back Sweden's security together.

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Mr Speaker,

There is nothing more fundamental than having a job to go to; nothing is so essential to becoming part of society. Those who are out of work must meet clear expectations, but also many and good opportunities to find work.

Young people coming to Sweden must complete an upper secondary education and move on to working life or higher education.

If you already have professional skills that are in demand, you must learn Swedish as quickly as possible and take one of the available jobs.

If you are a little older and lack the right skills, you can start with subsidised employment, helping out in our society with work that otherwise does not get done.

With this labour policy strategy, the Government has contributed to creating a quarter of a million new jobs and halved the integration time for new arrivals. And despite the pandemic and the worst economic downturn since the Second World War, a larger proportion of people born abroad are working today than in 2014.

Sweden makes clear demands but also offers opportunities. This works, and we will continue with this approach.

Everyone who can work should work. Having a job and your own income gives you the freedom to decide for yourself how you want to live and with whom. This applies equally to all, regardless of your gender or where you come from.

Integration must be improved based on sound knowledge. Inquiries will be appointed on clearer activity requirements of a certain number of hours per week for those receiving social assistance. On placing demands on those receiving a permanent residence permit with regard to language skills and knowledge of Sweden. On the possibility of establishing State-run reception centres where asylum seekers will live and take part in an introduction to Swedish society during their initial period in Sweden.

The quality of Swedish for Immigrants education will be improved. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate will inspect programme providers. More adults will be able to combine vocational education and training with Swedish language courses so as to find a job more quickly.

New start job opportunities will be expanded and labour market entry agreements introduced.

Labour law will be reformed in accordance with the agreement concluded by the social partners.

Sweden's entrepreneurs create jobs and contribute to our country's prosperity. It should be easy to start and run a business in Sweden, and it should also be easy to get into an education or training programme.

The Adult Education Initiative is creating thousands of paths that lead to work throughout the country.

Higher vocational education, regional vocational adult education and folk high schools are now being expanded to provide additional education and training places. Health care training programmes provided both at higher education institutions and remotely is being expanded, and health care will have better conditions to create the practice-based places that these programmes require.

Sweden has one of the most comprehensive student finance systems in the world. A rapidly changing labour market requires the acquisition of new

skills. Now Sweden will have one of the world's best career transition assistance schemes. With the implementation of the social partners' agreement, our competitiveness will be strengthened and workers will be given security in this transition.

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Mr Speaker,

“We have kept 1.5 alive. But the pulse of 1.5 is weak.” This was how Alok Sharma, President of COP26, summarised the results from Glasgow.

The clock is ticking.

If the world cannot tackle the climate crisis, the consequences will be colossal. Ambitions must be raised, the pulse must quicken, the world must succeed.

With its green welfare state, Sweden chose to take the lead. International confidence in us increases as Swedish innovations and solutions are exported around the world. A global climate race is under way, and Sweden is in the leading pack.

The Green Industry Leap and the Climate Leap set the course and will be developed. More than 300 000 new homes have been built since 2014, and sustainable construction is being promoted. And as Sweden now invests its way out of recession following the pandemic, it is through a robust green restart of the Swedish economy.

Throughout the country, a green industrial revolution is under way. Fossil-free steel production. Battery factories. Electric heavy goods vehicles. This is reducing emissions and creating tens of thousands of new jobs – throughout the country.

The pace will be stepped up further. But there is a risk that necessary investments will not happen because the market considers them too risky. Swedish industry must be able to phase out fossil fuels. Green state credit guarantees will be expanded to SEK 50 billion next year.

Sweden today has an innovative and competitive business sector and skilled workers who are ready to adapt to the new jobs that are emerging. The Government therefore proposes a new government-financed skills initiative for the climate transition.

A new national electrification strategy will identify how the capacity of our electricity networks can be rapidly expanded and electricity production from clean, renewable and cheap energy sources can increase. Efforts to expand offshore wind power are an important part of this.

There must be good conditions for living and working throughout the country. The level of ambition in regional policy will be raised. Major investments in competitive and environmentally sustainable agriculture will be made within the framework of the Rural Development Programme. Investments in broadband are increasing substantially. Clear coverage demands are being made of operators. The special operational subsidies for grocery shops will be made permanent.

Shore protection measures will be more differentiated. It will be easier to build in rural areas, and shore protection will be strengthened in highly exploited areas. Areas of special significance for animal and plant life will be preserved. Forest ownership rights will be strengthened. This will lay the foundations for harnessing the forests' economic, climate and environmental potential to a greater extent.

A new national plan for infrastructure will be presented in the new year. New steps are being taken towards a modern, fossil-free transport infrastructure to enable people to transport both themselves and the goods that are produced.

Next year, Sweden will host Stockholm+50, a UN conference to help accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. The UN's first ever conference on the human environment was held in Stockholm 50 years ago. When Olof Palme welcomed world leaders to that conference, he observed with words that are as relevant today as they were then:

“Our future is common. We must share it together. We must shape it together.”

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Mr Speaker,

The welfare system as a whole will be strengthened. It is the greatest redistributive power that exists. That is why it must not fall short. But if there is one thing that the pandemic laid bare, it is that the welfare system

has its shortcomings.

The Swedish welfare system is borne up by its workers. They need more colleagues, the right training and better working environments.

This is a major undertaking, but it is not impossible.

Important steps have been taken. The Government has successively provided more money to municipalities and regions in recent years. Today, 100 000 more people work in the welfare system than in 2014. The children of the large generation of people born in the 1990s are now entering education. The many people born in the 1940s are entering their eighties and should receive the secure care they deserve.

For this reason, the general central government funding will be increased further. Cancer care, psychiatric care, maternity care and emergency service care will be prioritised as health care is expanded. Waiting lists will be shortened, health centres strengthened and continuity of care in general practice will be ensured for more people.

The work on new legislation on care for older people to boost quality and equality in care will continue. The right of all home-help service users to a dedicated contact person will be established in law. Those working in care for older people will have the opportunity to study on paid work time to become an assistant nurse, and a recovery bonus has been introduced to allow for better working conditions.

The work for secure pensions is about respect for those who have helped to build our country. Pensions have been increased for those who have had a long working life with low pay. The housing supplement will be further increased. A structural reform to strengthen the incomes of the most disadvantaged pensioners in the long term will be presented. This will mean up to SEK 1 000 more each month. A security pension will be introduced so that people over the age of 60 who are physically worn out will not have to take out their old-age pension prematurely. Pensions need to be raised further. For this reason, payments into the pension system must increase. The issue will be laid before the Working Group on Pensions.

When you need society most, a strong society should be there for you. The Government has already eliminated the permanent gap between pensioners and wage earners. Taxes are now also being lowered substantially for people receiving sickness and activity compensation. The direction is clear. The tax

gap between those with disabilities and wage earners is unjust. The guarantee benefit in sickness and activity compensation will increase. The Government will continue to strengthen the right to personal assistance.

Those who become ill should have support to quickly return to work. A comprehensive investment is being made to increase financial security in case of illness. The sickness benefit ceiling is being raised. Proposals from the sickness insurance inquiry will be implemented to allow more time for rehabilitation and increased flexibility for older people, on-demand employees and those on part-time sick leave.

Municipal schools assume greater overall responsibility than independent schools, and they should also have adequate resources for this. Tax revenue intended for schools should go to schools. School admissions must be fair, providing equal opportunities and equal possibilities.

Reform by reform, step by step, the welfare system can be made stronger and more equitable, now and in the future. Likewise, it can be dismantled, step by step, reform by reform.

It is political will that decides.

It is possible to take back democratic control over the welfare system. Let us do so.

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Mr Speaker,

When the pandemic hit our country, we came together across party lines to protect our people and Swedish jobs. I would like to thank the Riksdag parties that have engaged in constructive and solution-oriented cooperation with the Government during this electoral period, not least the Centre Party and the Liberal Party for their cooperation on economic policy.

The pandemic is not over. Global and equitable access to vaccines must be secured. New mutations of the virus are a worrying development. The trend is negative in a number of countries in Europe and around the world. Infection rates are beginning to increase in Sweden, too. The Government is preparing for the situation to worsen.

The single most important thing now is that vaccinations continue apace. Everyone over the age of 18 will be offered a third dose. Now we must reach

the groups with low vaccination rates. There are major variations between regions. The methods that work best to reach as many people as possible must be spread. I want to urge the regions to learn from each other – and I want to urge everyone in Sweden to get vaccinated. We do it for our own sake – but also for each other.

Sweden must be well prepared. The Pandemic Act has been extended. The Government is prepared to take the necessary measures in the fight against the virus and will present a new action plan shortly. Further measures to maintain safe distances in public places will be necessary. As of 1 December, vaccination certificates will be required for certain indoor public gatherings and events with more than 100 participants, and a consultation on a proposal to require vaccination certificates at restaurants and gyms will take place shortly.

The communicable diseases legislation will be reviewed so that new legislation is in place ahead of future pandemics. New crisis legislation will be investigated.

I will also make organisational changes in the Government Offices.

The Crisis Management Coordination Secretariat, which was previously at the Ministry of Justice, will move to the Prime Minister's Office.

Thanks to responsible fiscal policy, Sweden went into the pandemic with its lowest national debt since 1977. The unemployment rate is now back to the same level as before the pandemic. And although Sweden has invested hundreds of billions of kronor in crisis measures to save jobs and businesses during the pandemic, our public finances are still strong. So strong, in fact, that shifting from a surplus target to a balance target is justified.

Culture will play a key role in society's restart. Culture takes us outside of ourselves and brings us closer together. A free and independent cultural sector is fundamental to any successful democratic society. Support to theatres, museums, visual arts and design, film, libraries, orchestras, concert halls and dance groups throughout the country will be reinforced.

We will also have diverse independent media and strong public service broadcasting throughout the country. Rapid technological and media developments are revolutionising access to information, but also risk increasing disparities and polarisation in society.

The budgetary appropriations for sport will substantially increase so as to boost participation, primarily among children and young people, and people with disabilities.

Our national minorities' cultures and language rights will be reinforced and the legal protection against discrimination will be enhanced. Early next year, the human rights institute in Lund will be established to promote and defend human rights at national level. Racism, hate crime and intolerance have no place in Sweden. Activities that counteract or prevent racism will receive increased support.

In March, Sweden will assume the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Sweden's Holocaust museum will open next summer.

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Mr Speaker,

Swedish foreign policy will safeguard Sweden's self-determination, Sweden's democracy and the security of the Swedish people. Promoting peace and development is in Sweden's immediate interests, and benefits the rest of the world. It is therefore in Sweden's interests to encourage collaboration and dialogue between countries and stand up for an international legal order. Four areas will be particularly emphasised:

Firstly: cooperation must be strengthened in our immediate neighbourhood – in the Nordic region and the EU.

Various kinds of border barriers keeping the peoples of the Nordic region apart is an alien phenomenon. Free movement between the Nordic countries needs to be reinstated as soon as possible. Nordic cooperation is being deepened and broadened, with particular emphasis on joint crisis response. The Nordic and Baltic countries should lead the way in Europe and, together, be one of the world's most integrated, sustainable and digitalised regions.

European cooperation is crucial for Sweden. It's about jobs, since the EU is our most important market. It's about peace and security, both in our neighbourhood and further afield. But that's not all. The climate, migration, vaccines and fighting cross-border and organised crime – all of these can be better tackled in cooperation with others.

The EU is built on common values. EU Member States that do not respect human rights and democratic principles such as independent courts, academic freedom and media freedom should not receive EU funds unconditionally.

Sweden wants an open and more equal Europe, with better working conditions and greater gender equality. But the Swedish labour market model and our forestry must not be subject to exhaustive rules from Brussels.

Secondly: Sweden's security policy remains firmly in place.

Our non-participation in military alliances serves our country well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe. Sweden will not apply for membership of NATO. Sweden will not take a passive stance if another Nordic country or EU Member State suffers a disaster or an attack, and we expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is affected. The EU is Sweden's most important foreign and security policy arena. Our ongoing term as Chair of the OSCE gives Sweden an opportunity to safeguard the European security order.

Sweden and the EU condemn Russia's military aggression towards Ukraine and its illegal annexation of Crimea. The situation of the people who are stuck at the border between Poland and Belarus is unacceptable. Belarus's actions will be met with increased sanctions.

Thirdly: Sweden's security and development are best secured together with others.

The greatest challenges of our time – the climate, the pandemic, safeguarding democracy – are best tackled through multilateral cooperation, based on international law and the United Nations Charter.

In a welcome development, the United States is once again a constructive partner on these issues. The transatlantic relationship is essential to the security and prosperity of Sweden and Europe.

The conflicts of today demand the engagement of the rest of the world. Lasting peace between Israel and Palestine requires a two-state solution. Intractable conflicts continue to afflict the peoples of Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Yemen and Mali. Alleviating the humanitarian consequences of war and resolving conflicts in the long term requires regional and international cooperation. Development assistance must prevent and address climate

change to a greater extent. The focus on democracy in development cooperation will continue, as will efforts to strengthen women's and girls' rights. An additional 70 million people are living in extreme poverty due to the pandemic. Sweden's official development assistance will be equivalent to one per cent of gross national income.

Fourthly: Sweden must be equipped to meet the major geopolitical, technological and economic shifts of our time.

Society's capacity to manage crises must be strong, in peacetime as in wartime. Sweden is deepening its defence cooperation with Finland and other Nordic neighbours, within the EU, with the United States and in partnership with NATO. Our national defence is being expanded. Five regiments and an air force wing are currently being re-established: in Falun, Sollefteå/Östersund, Arvidsjaur, Kristinehamn, Gothenburg and Uppsala. Civil defence is being strengthened. A new, updated national security strategy is being developed. Sweden remains a strong voice for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

China's growing role represents another of the great global changes of our time. Sweden and the EU will pursue an active policy in relation to China, based on our interests and values.

New migration legislation has entered into force in Sweden. It is well-balanced with a view to ensuring that Swedish migration policy is sustainable in the long term and provides a humane, legally certain and effective regulatory framework that is not materially different from migration policies in other EU Member States.

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Mr Speaker, Honourable Members of the Riksdag,

I began by speaking about Swedish democracy and 100 years of universal and equal suffrage.

We are democracy. We who live in Sweden, we who work here, we who are raising the next generations.

We must keep this in mind when we encounter each other in our day-to-day lives. I want us to treat each other with respect. It is we – all of us, together – who bear Sweden up.

Maybe we're standing in the health centre, syringes at the ready, steadily working our way through the people queuing for vaccines.

Maybe we're coming up with funny rhymes about hats and gloves to reduce the chaos in the preschool cloakroom now that the weather is getting cold.

Maybe we've got loads to do in the garage just now, because people have a tendency to leave it until the last minute to change to winter tyres.

We all contribute to the Sweden we love. And there are many of us doing our bit for democracy, in our coffee break, when booking a slot in the communal laundry room, on the construction site, often without even thinking about it.

When we speak out. When we demand respect. For ourselves, for our colleagues, or for an unknown fellow human being who is being treated unfairly. Trusting that others are doing the same for us. We cannot have a Sweden in which one group looks down on another.

The introduction of universal suffrage in 1921 was not the end of our democracy-building – it was the starting point.

The fight for democracy, for human dignity and respect, for every person's power to influence their day-to-day lives and our common society – that never ends.

We will take this fight with us in what remains of this parliamentary session as we take forceful action against crime, surge ahead in the climate transition and take back control of the welfare system.

We will take this fight with us into the election campaign in 2022 and onward into the coming decades.

Everyone has a responsibility. And everyone's efforts are needed.

The Sweden we will build together, with respect for each other, is a stronger Sweden.

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