



Government Offices of Sweden

Op-ed by Ann Linde and Matilda Ernkrans: Stockholm+50: Drafting the narrative for a green future

Opinion piece by Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation in Politico, June 5, 2022.

It's time to take on the responsibility of leadership for a shared green future. But taking responsibility doesn't only mean doing more — it means doing better.

Following two U.N. General Assembly resolutions, and after months of work, the world descended on Sweden's capital last week for Stockholm +50 to discuss the acceleration of efforts to create a healthy planet for the prosperity of all.

Hosted by Sweden and Kenya, the U.N. meeting was more than just a commemoration of the landmark 1972 Stockholm conference — the first world gathering to make the environment a central issue. New complexities in the areas of environment and energy, security and development, and climate and equity mean that isolated responses are simply not good enough. And now is the time for stronger global action that demonstrates the potency of multilateralism.

Along with hundreds of U.N. officials, heads of state, ministers and other government representatives, Stockholm +50 was a gathering that involved civil society – including activists, businesses and scientists – in ways that set new standards for multilateral meetings. And ahead of the meeting in Stockholm, over 50,000 people from all over the world — men and women, young and old, from all walks of life — provided their insights and recommendations.

From this clamor of voices, one message arose loud and clear: the need to

speed up green and fair transitions. If 1972 was the starting point for global efforts to address environmental challenges, Stockholm+50 was about shifting to a faster gear.

The urgency isn't surprising. These are difficult times.

A triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution is already impacting people all over the world. The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over; inequalities and hunger are increasing rather than receding; and through its invasion of Ukraine, Russia's challenging the rules-based global order, causing a humanitarian crisis reaching far beyond Ukraine's borders, deepening the global hunger crisis.

All of this demonstrates the connectedness of our challenges. Human wellbeing and human security depend on a healthy biosphere, requiring broad engagement by responsible governments and vibrant civil society, as well as a functioning international system characterized by adherence to agreed principles, multilateralism and cooperation.

So how do we bring this to life?

Before all else, we must work together. If our aim is human security for all, we'll need integrated analysis and action, and with the Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security, Sweden's offering a resource for the global community to navigate a complex landscape and make sounder decisions for a safer and more sustainable future. Sweden's newly named ambassador for climate and security will also play a key role as our government moves this agenda forward. We hope that others will follow.

Time is also of the essence. We only have eight years to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and even less time to change the course on climate and the environment. There is no time to lose, and we all need to do more and do better.

International development aid can play a catalyzing role here, increasing both public and private financial flows into building resilient societies that are net-zero, nature friendly and zero-pollution. Climate adaptation is a global priority, and scaling up support for the least developed countries so they can adapt to a warming climate is a question of justice and solidarity.

The good news, however, is that the acceleration has already begun, and the transition is full of opportunities for people and our planet.

Visualizing our destination means imagining a world that's safer, healthier and more stable than the one we live in today — but transitions underway are already improving lives, while providing ecological and climate benefits.

In Sweden, for example, a green industrial revolution is emerging with flagships, such as the HYBRIT partnership for fossil-free steel, bringing new jobs and development to its neighborhood. Sweden's also one of the few countries allocating 1 percent of its gross national income to international development aid — with the intention of doubling its climate aid in the years to come as well.

But as Stockholm+50 demonstrated, it's not just Sweden — there's a wealth of such examples from all over the world. And these positive stories must feed the engine of transformation.

Today, on World Environment Day — one of the legacies of 1972 — the outcome of last week's conference brings momentum to our efforts for the months and years to come.

Together, we can change the story of the future.

Published 06 June 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Champions Group on Adaptation Finance welcome a new member and drive forward political ambition on adaptation finance on the road to COP27

Convening ahead of the Stockholm+50 conference this week, Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans and members of the Champions Group on Adaptation Finance reiterated their commitments to raise the political ambition for adaptation finance and address the barriers to increasing flows, quality, effectiveness and accessibility of adaptation finance.

The Champions Group welcomed Canada as a new member, bringing membership to 14. They discussed proposals with Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) concerning their ongoing engagement and joint advocacy. The Group also invited LDCs and SIDS to consider a series of ongoing engagements to share advocacy plans.

The meeting followed the Group's previous engagement in April 2022, when Group members met with LDCs, SIDS and other adaptation finance actors at the Lahti Adaptation Finance Ministerial in Finland to put climate adaptation finance at the forefront of climate discussions in 2022. At this meeting, the Champions Group identified shared priorities to work on together ahead of COP27, as outlined in the [Chair's Summary](#) and [statement of commitment](#) presented by the Group.

Eight weeks on, the Group used the Stockholm+50 conference as an

opportunity to discuss progress and how to jointly take these efforts forward.

The Group now have their sights on COP27 and are committed to working closely with LDCs and SIDS to galvanise stronger political action for their shared adaptation finance priorities.

Sweden’s Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans:

“Stockholm+50 is a platform for those who want to do more, who want to accelerate the ongoing work on climate, nature and development. This is what the Champions Group for Adaptation Finance is all about – walking the talk and pushing others to do the same. We also know we need to work more and better – together – so we look forward to the Champions Group working closely with Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States to encourage others to take the action needed.”

Canada’s Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the Honourable Steven Guilbeault:

“Canada is immensely proud to join the Champions Group on Adaptation Finance and the member countries leading the charge to double adaptation finance. This Group is urging international partners to do more to support the developing world to prepare and adapt to the impacts of climate change. As countries rally around the call for USD 100 billion in climate finance, adaptation must be front and center. That’s why Canada has recently more than doubled our investment in adaptation under our USD 5.3 billion in climate finance to 40 per cent.”

Finland’s Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade Ville Skinnari:

“Extremely happy to see concrete action taking place after the Lahti Ministerial. Champions Group is welcoming an important new member, Canada. Finland will continue to drive progress on adaptation finance with a special focus on bridging climate and finance portfolios.”



Sweden re-launches research partnership for increased support to the environment, climate and security

A research partnership was re-launched 18 May for the environment, climate and security. Called the Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security, it combines the strengths of four world-leading Swedish research institutes in the environment, climate and security area. The hub will receive more funding for its continuing work to promote knowledge development and policy dialogue.

The effects of climate change, in combination with environmental damage and declining biodiversity, have major implications for the planet's natural resources and the human environment. More and more people will have to share fewer and fewer resources. Extreme weather events are putting people's livelihoods at risk. Consequently, the risk of conflicts is increasing, and preventive efforts are becoming more important.

“For years, Sweden has prioritised highlighting the links between the climate and security, and we have contributed to important steps being taken in the UN, OSCE and EU. We need to continue to improve our understanding of the links between these issues to prevent geopolitical competition for natural resources and avoid new conflicts,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

“The countries that are most vulnerable and exposed to climate change and environmental damage are often developing countries, even if we are all affected. This research partnership is one step in providing the best support to the most vulnerable countries through evidence-based analysis and

dialogue,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

“Stockholm has become a hub for research on the challenges facing peace and security in the wake of the environmental and climate crisis. This research partnership is aimed at inspiring and supporting Sweden in our leading role in multilateral efforts to find and win support for sustainable solutions together with our partners,” says Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Chair Jan Eliasson.

The Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security is a partnership between the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC). Taking part in the re-launch of the partnership were Ms Linde, Ms Ernkrans, Mr Eliasson, the heads of the four institutes, and the heads and high-level representatives of a number of other Swedish ministries, government agencies and institutes, including Sida and the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Ongoing funding will be provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Published 19 May 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden and Poland mobilised humanitarian support for Ukraine

On 5 May more than SEK 60 billion in support was announced at a donor conference for Ukraine in Warsaw co-organised by Sweden and Poland together with the EU.

To meet the increasing humanitarian needs and support Ukrainian society, Sweden is allocating an additional SEK 230 million. Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson and Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki co-hosted the donor conference.

“In total, we raised SEK 60 billion, which shows that the rest of the world’s great support for Ukraine remains strong and sustainable,” said Ms Andersson.

In connection with the conference, Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans led a roundtable discussion on the economic impact of the war.

Following Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, humanitarian needs in the country are immense and expected to increase further. Approximately 16 million people are in need of help. Roughly eight million people are internally displaced within Ukraine, while over five million people are estimated to have fled the country. The UN’s humanitarian appeal to provide people in Ukraine with life-saving support and protection will amount to USD 2.5 billion by the end of August. To meet the increasing humanitarian needs and to support the Ukrainian people, Sweden has announced an additional SEK 230 million for humanitarian efforts in Ukraine.

“The war is ongoing and humanitarian needs are increasing. Sweden will therefore contribute an additional SEK 230 million. The Ukrainian people need our support and since the war started, we have contributed SEK 775 million to humanitarian efforts in Ukraine and its neighbourhood,” said Ms

Andersson.

In connection with the donor conference, Sweden and Poland also arranged a roundtable discussion on the economic impact of the war. Sweden was represented by Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

“While we focus on the acute humanitarian efforts in Ukraine, we also need to manage the long-term economic impact of the war. The rest of the world must support early recovery and, in the long-term, reconstruction,” said Ms Ernkrans.

Published 09 May 2022



Humanitarian assistance fully safeguarded as refugee costs increase in 2022

As Sweden assumes responsibility for the many people – primarily women and children – fleeing Ukraine, the increased associated costs can be counted as Official Development Assistance (ODA) in line with OECD DAC guidelines. This is due to Ukraine's classification as an ODA recipient. Like most other countries that provide development assistance, Sweden deducts asylum costs from development assistance. The Government has prioritised fully safeguarding humanitarian assistance and particularly ODA to the poorest countries. Even after deductions for refugee costs, Sweden remains one of the world's largest donor countries.

To ensure that we have coverage for asylum deductions, the Government is now setting a limit on how much of this year's aid funding can be disbursed. This ceiling is approximately SEK 9.2 billion.

The Swedish Migration Agency has presented a number of scenarios in relation to asylum seekers and people in need of temporary protection. According to the main scenario, some 76 000 people from Ukraine may seek asylum in Sweden.

Costs for reception of asylum seekers and people in need of protection from low- and middle-income countries can be counted as ODA on humanitarian grounds during the first year in the host country. This practice has been applied since 1991. The costs deducted from ODA to finance the reception of people from Ukraine would increase by just over SEK 9 billion in 2022.

If the Migration Agency's main scenario is accurate, Sweden will deduct a total of approximately SEK 10.3 billion in 2022. This is equivalent to 18 per cent of the development assistance framework and is lower, for example, than the deductions in 2015, which were equivalent to 22 per cent of the development assistance framework.

The Government remains committed to its target of allocating one per cent of gross national income (GNI) to ODA. Sweden's GNI has grown in recent years and in 2022 amounts to approximately SEK 57 billion. This means that Sweden's development assistance framework is larger than ever before. Therefore, Sweden remains a major aid donor and one of the few countries that surpasses the UN recommendation to allocate at least 0.7 per cent of GNI to ODA.

Due to the decision on deductions against the development assistance budget, the Government is setting a limit on disbursements in the development assistance budget. As a result, some disbursements will be deferred or suspended, some planned disbursements will be reduced, and reprioritisations will take place.

The Government has prioritised fully safeguarding humanitarian assistance and particularly assistance to the poorest countries. Support will go to those hit hard by the pandemic and the accelerating food crisis resulting from Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Government continues to prioritise climate aid and maintains its target of doubling climate aid.

The announced deductions are based on the Migration Agency's main scenario for the number of people needing to seek protection in the country. The number may be lower if fewer than expected arrive in Sweden. If, however, costs for refugee reception increase beyond those anticipated in the Migration Agency's main scenario, it is not certain that those costs can be counted as ODA. In that case, the Government will consider new alternatives for broader funding.

This sudden and extensive humanitarian crisis is an exceptional situation, and many refugees in Europe need to seek protection in Sweden. Sweden's solidarity with the Ukrainian people is immense, and we will help both those who remain in the country and those who have had to flee to other countries. Even after deductions for refugee costs, Sweden remains one of the world's largest donor countries.



Increased humanitarian support to Ukraine

On Tuesday 1 March, Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans held a press briefing on the humanitarian situation caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Also present at the press briefing were Director-General of Sida Carin Jämtin and UNHCR Representative in Ukraine Karolina Lindholm Billing. Ms Billing took part via a video link from Kyiv.

At the press briefing, Ms Ernkrans spoke about Sweden's humanitarian support to Ukraine. The Government had previously announced that it would increase its humanitarian support by SEK 100 million. On 28 February, the Government decided to further increase its humanitarian support to Ukraine by SEK 500 million. This support will be channelled through humanitarian organisations working to alleviate the situation for people in Ukraine and those in the region who have been forced to flee.

“Sweden's solidarity with the Ukrainian people is immense. Engagement among people in Sweden and around the world is strong and growing every day. We should be proud of this engagement, which the Swedish Government shares. In the last few days, the Government has more than doubled its humanitarian support to Ukraine to further help alleviate the humanitarian crisis,” said Ms Ernkrans.

Karolina Lindholm Billing, UNHCR's representative in Ukraine, provided an overview of the situation in Ukraine, humanitarian needs and how Swedish aid would be used.

The Government has asked Sida to work practically with its humanitarian support to Ukraine. Director-General Carin Jämtin also discussed how Sida works.

Published 07 March 2022



Sweden planning additional support to Ukraine through World Bank

Minister for Finance Mikael Damberg has informed the World Bank that Sweden plans to issue a guarantee of USD 50 million for the World Bank's loan to Ukraine. This will be added to the USD 350 million loan that the World Bank is already preparing.

– The Government's priorities are to keep pushing for sanctions against Russia, to support Ukraine and to strengthen Sweden. Ukraine is in a situation of acute crisis and its financial and economic stability is expected to weaken further as a result of Russia's aggression. By issuing this guarantee, Sweden is contributing approximately half a billion kronor in support to Ukraine, in addition to the loan that the World Bank is already preparing, says Minister for Finance Mikael Damberg.

Ukraine's economy was affected by the deteriorating security situation in the region even before Russia's aggression. An outflow of capital has drained the country's foreign currency reserves, the currency has weakened substantially and the country's Government has lost access to the international capital markets.

Due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Swedish Government has increased its humanitarian aid by SEK 500 million to support Ukraine and respond to the growing humanitarian needs. Through a committee initiative in the Riksdag last Monday, the Riksdag decided that Sweden will make a financial contribution of SEK 500 million to the Ukrainian central bank's special fundraising account to support the country's armed forces, and provide defence materiel with a maximum total value of SEK 400 million.

The extraordinary situation requires substantial measures. This is why the Government intends to further increase its support to Ukraine by issuing a

guarantee of USD 50 million for the World Bank's loan to Ukraine. The World Bank is readying a USD 350 million loan to respond to Ukraine's acute liquidity crisis. As the planned loan is a follow-up to a loan and reform programme that Ukraine received in 2021, the World Bank can begin the disbursement without delay. If Ukraine is unable to repay back the loan, Sweden's guarantee will be financed through the aid budget.

– Apart from the immediate human suffering that the war is causing, Ukraine's economic development is being seriously harmed. By giving a guarantee to the World Bank, Sweden is helping to support Ukraine financially in this very difficult economic situation, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Published 04 March 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden further increases humanitarian support to Ukraine

On Sunday 27 February, Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans held a press briefing on Sweden's support to Ukraine together with Göran Holmqvist, Director of Humanitarian Support at Sida.

Sweden has long been one of the biggest donors of development assistance to Ukraine, comprising both reform-oriented development cooperation and humanitarian support. In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Government has decided to provide additional funds to alleviate the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

“In light of the horrendous developments in recent days, the Government has now decided to donate an additional SEK 20 million to support the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Ukraine. Sweden has thus increased its humanitarian response to Ukraine to SEK 55 million,” said Ms Ernkrans.

Each year, Sweden provides substantial development aid to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which is operating on the ground at the border between Ukraine and Moldova, where many Ukrainians are fleeing. The support can be used for swift action to help refugees, where the needs are greatest.

“In view of rapidly increasing refugee flows, the Government has also decided to bring forward a payment of SEK 50 million to UNHCR to address the humanitarian needs caused by the developments in Ukraine,” said Ms Ernkrans.

Ms Ernkrans presented disbursements and support measures worth a total of SEK 100 million. This consists of SEK 50 million to UNHCR, SEK 30 million to the UN's humanitarian country-level pooled fund and

SEK 20 million to the ICRC.

Sweden has thus contributed a total of SEK 391 million in humanitarian aid to Ukraine since 2014.

Sida's Director of Humanitarian Support Göran Holmqvist stressed the seriousness of the humanitarian situation and that the greatest needs will be among those who are unable to flee. Sida can quickly approve the transfer of resources to where they are most needed. Sida is currently awaiting needs analyses from UN bodies such as OCHA and UNHCR so as to be able to respond to the situation effectively.

Published 28 February 2022



Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans to participate in UN high-level week in New York on 19–23 September

Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans will visit New York to participate in the high-level week, known as UNGA Week, in connection with the opening of the UN General Assembly on 19–23 September.

The overriding issue when world leaders meet in New York will be Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the extensive regional and global consequences that the war has brought. Other high-priority issues for the Swedish delegation will include the climate, food security and humanitarian issues, education and health. In addition, Sweden has a clear focus on actively promoting human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as well as gender equality in times of backsliding in these areas.

An overall Swedish priority during the week is also, through participation, to stand up for the UN Charter and the rules-based international order, which is particularly important in light of Russia's aggression and at a time of increased geopolitical tensions.



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden donates COVID-19 vaccines to Ukraine

The Swedish Government has today decided to donate more than 500 000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to Ukraine.

Sweden's donation is in response to a request from Ukraine last week for half a million doses. Ukraine will thus be one of the first countries in the world outside the EU to receive the new, updated vaccine.

Increased access to vaccines around the world saves lives, reduces the risk of mutations and is needed to end the pandemic. Sweden is one of the countries in the world, in terms of population, that has contributed most to global vaccine availability.

Published 13 September 2022



Government approves SEK 500 million to Ukraine for reconstruction and humanitarian support

The Government has approved another SEK 500 million to support Ukraine in accordance with what the Prime Minister told Ukraine's minister for foreign affairs when he visited Stockholm on 29 August. The funds will be used for the reconstruction of Ukraine, humanitarian procurements and transport of Ukrainian wheat.

“Sweden has supported Ukraine for many years – from the time of its independence to February this year, this support has amounted to approximately SEK 4 billion. Since Russia's full-scale invasion on 24 February, that support has been more than doubled through a number of decisions concerning another SEK 5.2 billion thus far for military support, humanitarian support, financial guarantees, reform support, civilian operations and reconstruction support,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

Following this decision, Sweden will provide increased support for the impending reconstruction process, including sustainable management of destroyed infrastructure. Sweden will also be responsible for coordinating waste management and recycling during the reconstruction of Ukraine – a request made by President Zelenskyy when Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson visited Kyiv in July.

In addition, Sweden will help with procurement funding and the delivery of Ukrainian wheat to countries most at risk of widespread starvation. The initiative aims at supporting the country's economy – and thus its independence – and the implementation of the agreement regarding the

export of Ukrainian grain from ports in the Black Sea. Sweden will cover the costs for the purchase of at least 40 000 tonnes of wheat that will be transported by sea from Ukraine.

“By purchasing 40 000 tonnes of wheat and then shipping it, Sweden is helping to mitigate the already great human suffering that Russia’s aggression has exacerbated for millions of people who suffer from hunger in other parts of the world. This will reduce the acute risk of starvation. It will also strengthen Ukraine’s economy and its independence,” says Minister for Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Ukraine was a crucial exporter of grain before Russia’s invasion. Millions of tonnes of grain are currently stuck in Ukraine following the invasion, which has had a serious impact on Ukraine’s economy and the already acute hunger crisis in the world. Fifty million people in 45 countries are already on the brink of starvation. In July, Ukraine and Russia agreed to resume grain exports from ports in the Black Sea.

The purchase and transport of Ukrainian wheat will take place via the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and be delivered to countries that are most at risk of starvation, such as Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Yemen. Since the agreement was made, the WFP has made one delivery of Ukrainian grain on humanitarian grounds. Thanks to this decision, further transports will now be possible.

Published 02 September 2022



Government further revises payment ceiling for Swedish aid

In April, the Government set payment ceilings on parts of its aid budget. The aim was to ensure the availability of resources for Ukrainian refugees. In June, the Government lowered the payment ceiling by SEK 1.3 billion. The Government has now decided to lower the payment ceiling by an additional SEK 2.9 billion.

“I’m pleased to announce that the Government will further revise the payment ceiling for the aid budget. The importance of aid has increased in light of the war in Ukraine and rising food prices, but also because of the impact of the pandemic and extreme weather events caused by climate change. We are therefore enabling further initiatives in the climate area for countries that are seriously impacted by drought, poverty and conflict,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

The Government has revised the payment ceiling for 2022 from SEK 7.9 billion to SEK 4.9 billion. The payment ceiling was revised due to the latest forecasts by the Swedish Migration Agency and the Swedish Public Employment Service, which show lower costs than previously stated for Ukrainian refugees in 2022.

When the payment ceiling was revised previously, more funds were prioritised for aid for civil society organisations, and human rights and democracy initiatives. This decision means that the Government is enabling initiatives that focus on the climate. The Government will also revise the payment ceiling for aid in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Moreover, the war in Ukraine and its impact will be given special consideration.



Government Offices of Sweden

Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson to receive Ukrainian Minister for Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba

Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson will receive Ukrainian Minister for Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba, who will be visiting Stockholm on 29 August.

During their meeting Ms Andersson and Mr Kuleba will discuss matters such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Swedish support to Ukraine, Ukraine's EU accession process and the country's reconstruction.

Minister for foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba will also meet with Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans during the visit.

Media programme

09.15: Photo opportunity when Ms Andersson receives Mr Kuleba at Björnen

08.30–09.00: Admittance and security check for photographers via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6

09.50: Joint press conference with Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde and Minister for Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba. Language: English

09.10–09.30: Admittance and security check for journalists via Kopparporten, Rödbodgatan 6

Advance registration to attend the photo opportunity and press conference is required. Please send an email to Nina Kefi by 07.00 on Monday, 29 August

(see Press contacts below).

Published 28 August 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden invests in global health with record financial support to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

On 13 July, the Government of Sweden announced its plan to increase its financial support to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to SEK 3 billion over the next three-year period. Sweden's support will contribute to the fund's goal of saving 20 million lives and reducing mortality from HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria by two-thirds.

Since its inception 20 years ago, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has helped save more than 40 million lives in more than one hundred countries and contributed to strengthening health systems and building capacity to deal with health emergencies such as COVID-19. After several years of positive trends, the COVID 19 pandemic and Russia's aggression against Ukraine have severely disrupted the work against HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. Each year, close to three million people lose their lives to these diseases. For this reason, the Government of Sweden plans to increase its financial support to the Global Fund to SEK 1 billion per year from 2023 to 2025. This represents an increase of over five per cent of Sweden's financial support.

“The Global Fund's work against HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, for sexual and reproductive health and rights and for more resilient and sustainable health systems plays a crucial role, especially for those living in poverty and vulnerable situations. I am proud that Sweden continues to make a strong contribution to the fund's work to save lives across the world,” says Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation.

Sweden is committed to global health and provides extensive development assistance for health. Sweden focuses on creating societies that promote health, improving access to quality health services for all and preventing, preparing for and responding to health threats and crises. Sweden's work against poverty, for equality and gender equality and to address the climate crisis are also important cornerstones of global health.

Published 13 July 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden pledges SEK 70 million to rebuild Ukraine

At the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Sweden pledged SEK 70 million in additional special grants for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

The conference in Lugano is an important starting point for the efforts to rebuild Ukraine.

“We have now pledged an initial SEK 70 million to help rebuild Ukraine following the horrific destruction caused by Russia’s war. This support can be used for mine clearance, initiatives to improve energy efficiency and regional decision-making,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Sweden is a strong and long-term partner of Ukraine. We provide humanitarian support, macroeconomic support, arms and other defence materiel, and extensive civilian crisis management operations.

Sweden has contributed approximately SEK 4.2 billion to Ukraine since the invasion on 24 February.

Published 05 July 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden contributes record financial support for the world's poorest countries

The Government today decided to contribute SEK 9.2 billion in financial support to the World Bank Group's International Development Association.

“Sweden is now providing a record contribution of SEK 9.2 billion to the International Development Association (IDA) when the needs are greatest, and more than 100 million people have fallen into extreme poverty during the pandemic,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Sweden is the eighth largest donor to the IDA and has played a significant role in shaping the work programme for the coming three years. More than one third of the funds will be dedicated to climate measures, and the priority will be on enhancing crisis preparedness and resilience ahead of future crises, such as climate-related disasters, hunger and pandemics. This replenishment also ensures that the World Bank can remain a central actor in helping developing countries meet the long-term goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

“The financial support through the IDA is key to addressing the many parallel global crises that are hitting the world's poorest the hardest, including climate change, war and conflicts, increased burden of debt and the global food security crisis,” says Ms Ernkrans.

Published 30 June 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Minister for International Development Cooperation hosts climate finance meeting at Stockholm+50

On 1 June, Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans will host a high-level meeting on increased support to the countries hardest hit by climate change and the loss of biodiversity. The ministerial meeting will bring together some 30 donor and developing countries, the UN and leading representatives of central organisations and funds, including the World Bank, the Green Climate Fund and UNDP.

Reports from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) show that current global efforts are far from enough, despite promises from donor countries to increase their funding.

“I have brought together key countries and organisations to mobilise political support to speedily increase funding to the worst affected countries. The Government is doubling its support to the Global Environment Facility and substantially increasing its support to Sida’s environment and climate strategy as part of the efforts to double Swedish climate aid,” says Ms Ernkrans.

On 2–3 June, the UN Stockholm+50 meeting will be held in Stockholm under the theme: A healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity. For many developing countries, greater solidarity is necessary for them to be able to take part in the green transition.

Published 01 June 2022



Sweden re-launches research partnership for increased support to the environment, climate and security

A research partnership was re-launched 18 May for the environment, climate and security. Called the Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security, it combines the strengths of four world-leading Swedish research institutes in the environment, climate and security area. The hub will receive more funding for its continuing work to promote knowledge development and policy dialogue.

The effects of climate change, in combination with environmental damage and declining biodiversity, have major implications for the planet's natural resources and the human environment. More and more people will have to share fewer and fewer resources. Extreme weather events are putting people's livelihoods at risk. Consequently, the risk of conflicts is increasing, and preventive efforts are becoming more important.

“For years, Sweden has prioritised highlighting the links between the climate and security, and we have contributed to important steps being taken in the UN, OSCE and EU. We need to continue to improve our understanding of the links between these issues to prevent geopolitical competition for natural resources and avoid new conflicts,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

“The countries that are most vulnerable and exposed to climate change and environmental damage are often developing countries, even if we are all affected. This research partnership is one step in providing the best support to the most vulnerable countries through evidence-based analysis and

dialogue,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

“Stockholm has become a hub for research on the challenges facing peace and security in the wake of the environmental and climate crisis. This research partnership is aimed at inspiring and supporting Sweden in our leading role in multilateral efforts to find and win support for sustainable solutions together with our partners,” says Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Chair Jan Eliasson.

The Stockholm Hub on Environment, Climate and Security is a partnership between the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) and the Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC). Taking part in the re-launch of the partnership were Ms Linde, Ms Ernkrans, Mr Eliasson, the heads of the four institutes, and the heads and high-level representatives of a number of other Swedish ministries, government agencies and institutes, including Sida and the Folke Bernadotte Academy. Ongoing funding will be provided by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Published 19 May 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Sweden and Poland co-host international donors' conference to support Ukrainian people

In view of the serious humanitarian situation in Ukraine following Russia's invasion, the Prime Minister of Sweden and the Prime Minister of Poland are hosting an international donors' conference on 5 May in Warsaw. The donors' conference aims to mobilise continued financial support for the humanitarian response to the Ukrainian people. The conference will discuss how Ukraine can be supported in addressing both the immediate and long-term consequences of the war.

Sweden and Poland are co-hosting a humanitarian donors' conference for Ukraine on 5 May in Warsaw. It is being held in partnership with President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and President of the European Council Charles Michel, with the participation of UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths and President of the International Committee of the Red Cross Peter Maurer.

“It is vital to continue to gather support for the UN humanitarian appeal and the Red Cross operations in Ukraine to enable the humanitarian system to respond to the ever increasing humanitarian needs. At the same time, long-term recovery and reconstruction efforts are needed. At the donors' conference, I will lead a roundtable discussion to discuss ways in which we can support Ukraine's efforts to address the economic challenges caused by the war,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Published 04 May 2022



Minister for Finance Mikael Damberg and Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans to attend World Bank Spring Meetings in Washington DC

On 20–23 April, Minister for Finance Mikael Damberg and Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans will attend the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) and the World Bank Group's Spring Meetings in Washington DC. The Spring Meetings will focus on the economic impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and what the rest of the world should do to support Ukraine and address the impact.

The IMF and World Bank play key roles in supporting their member countries in managing these crises and challenges. Mr Damberg and Ms Ernkrans will take part in discussions with representatives of the institutions, where they will emphasise the importance of strong multilateral cooperation to support Ukraine and the countries that have been affected by the economic impact of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Mr Damberg will also take part in a roundtable discussion on Ukraine's financing requirements together with President of the World Bank David Malpass and Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky.

– Russia's invasion has led to great human suffering for the Ukrainian people, and the country's economy has been hit hard. Strong international cooperation is more important than ever to stop the Russian aggression and

support Ukraine, says Mr Damberg.

At the Spring Meetings, they will also discuss the continued response to the pandemic and the need to address long-term challenges such as climate change and the growing gaps within and between countries.

– We need to do our utmost to build a more resilient future and address the many global humanitarian crises – the spread of COVID-19, climate change and support to Ukraine. Sweden will focus on helping to alleviate these crises and do its best to build a more resilient future, both in Sweden and the rest of the world, says Ms Ernkrans.

Additionally, Ms Ernkrans will meet with Linda Etim and Curtis Reid, advisers to President Biden, during a visit to the White House. She will also speak at a high-level seminar on efforts for sustainable food systems.

Published 19 April 2022



Sweden providing additional humanitarian support to the UN to save lives and alleviate suffering

The humanitarian situation in the world is acute and the situation of the most vulnerable continues to worsen at an alarming rate. To enable the UN to rapidly deliver support and meet the increasing humanitarian needs, Sweden is now making additional payments of SEK 69 million to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and SEK 35 million to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

According to the UN, even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the world was experiencing its worst hunger crisis in 50 years. Many of the worst affected countries are particularly dependent on food imports from Ukraine and Russia. The invasion of Ukraine has therefore led to the situation of many of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people continuing to worsen.

– We are in a very serious situation due to, among other things, the rise in food prices and the number of displaced people. The Government, through additional support to the UN Central Emergency Response Fund and the UN Refugee Agency, is helping the international humanitarian system respond rapidly to the increasing needs, says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.



Government Offices of Sweden

Ann Linde to present the 2022 Statement of Foreign Policy

Today, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde will present the Government's Statement of Foreign Policy in the Riksdag. This year's Statement of Foreign Policy is Ms Linde's third as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Statement, which summarises the Government's foreign policy priorities for 2022, contains a number of focus areas.

“The security situation has deteriorated. Russia's increasingly confrontational rhetoric and military activities are unacceptable. Standing up for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is essential for the security of Europe as a whole,” says Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde.

During Sweden's term as Chair of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe last year, important results were achieved, including through the decision concerning the climate and security.

“The climate is of critical importance to our security. We must take climate-related security threats extremely seriously,” says Ann Linde.

Ms Linde will deliver the Statement of Foreign Policy in the Riksdag at 09.00 on 16 February, and she will be available to the media in the Riksdag at 13.30. Please contact her press secretary for further information.

Published 16 February 2022



Government approves new strategy to strengthen democracy in cooperation with Eastern Europe for 2021–2027

Sweden has made a long-term commitment to support the countries in Eastern Europe in their efforts to strengthen democracy and for sustainable economic development. Swedish development assistance is a central part of this support and the Government has therefore approved a new strategy for reform cooperation with Eastern Europe for 2021–2027 with a total budget of approximately 600 million EUR.

Sweden is a long-term partner to the countries in Eastern Europe – Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Belarus, Armenia and Azerbaijan – in their efforts to strengthen democracy and for sustainable economic development. The Eastern Partnership – the eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy – offers the countries in the region comprehensive support and opportunities for enhanced cooperation with the EU. Swedish development assistance, or ‘reform cooperation’, is an important part of this offering. Reform cooperation is intended to support the countries’ own reform agendas with the aim of promoting sustainable and democratic development in the region. This includes development of institutions for a functioning market economy and stable states governed by the rule of law, and the growth of a strong civil society. Sweden is one of the largest bilateral donors to Eastern Europe and works with governments, regional and local authorities, and civil society stakeholders. The support in 2022 will amount to approximately SEK 940 million.

Evaluation of the current strategy for support to Eastern Europe has helped

guide development towards concrete results. However, the threat to democratic development in the region has increased due to the Russian aggression towards Ukraine, the increasing oppression in Belarus, the still unresolved prolonged conflicts and growing political tensions in a number of countries in the region. The ongoing global pandemic also places additional strain on societies that are already under pressure. In light of this, the Government's assessment is that the work going forward needs to have an enhanced conflict perspective. Options for contributing to a green climate transition through increased access to renewable energy and phasing out of fossil activities in the region, and promotion of biodiversity and a circular economy, will also be investigated.

“Sweden plays an important role in the difficult process through which the countries in Eastern Europe are going on the path towards democracy and sustainable development. With our continued support to reforms in Eastern Europe, we also contribute to fighting poverty and increasing cooperation with Europe's neighbourhood and, by extension, our own security and wellbeing,” says Minister for International Development Cooperation Matilda Ernkrans.

Published 22 December 2021



Government Offices of Sweden

Change of government, 30 November 2021

Today in the Riksdag, Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson announced the ministers who will serve in the Government. The change of government takes place at a Council of State at the Royal Palace presided over by His Majesty the King. The Council of State begins at 13.00.

Sweden's new Government consists of the Prime Minister and 22 ministers.

Prime Minister's Office

Magdalena Andersson, Prime Minister

Hans Dahlgren, Minister for EU Affairs

Ministry of Employment

Eva Nordmark, Minister for Employment and Gender Equality

Johan Danielsson, Minister for Housing and Deputy Minister for Employment

Ministry of Finance

Mikael Damberg, Minister for Finance

Max Elger, Minister for Financial Markets

Ida Karkiainen, Minister for Public Administration

Ministry of Defence

Peter Hultqvist, Minister for Defence

Ministry of Infrastructure

Tomas Eneroth, Minister for Infrastructure

Khashayar Farmanbar, Minister for Energy and Digital Development

Ministry of Justice

Morgan Johansson, Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

Anders Ygeman, Minister for Integration and Migration

Ministry of Culture

Jeanette Gustafsdotter, Minister for Culture

Ministry of the Environment

Annika Strandhäll, Minister for Climate and the Environment

Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation

Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson, Minister for Business, Industry and Innovation

Anna-Caren Säterberg, Minister for Rural Affairs

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Lena Hallengren, Minister for Health and Social Affairs

Ardalan Shekarabi, Minister for Social Security

Ministry of Education and Research

Anna Ekström, Minister for Education

Lina Axelsson Kihlblom, Minister for Schools

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Ann Linde, Minister for Foreign Affairs

Anna Hallberg, Minister for Foreign Trade and Nordic Affairs

Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation

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Published 30 November 2021



Statement of Foreign Policy

On 10 June, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde presented a new 2022 Statement of Foreign Policy in the Riksdag. Check against delivery.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

A dark new chapter has begun in the history of Europe. On 24 February, Russia launched an unprovoked, illegal and unjustifiable war against its neighbour – the democratic state of Ukraine.

The Russian threat to the European security order will persist for a long time to come.

We have all seen the images of the brutal atrocities committed by Russian forces.

Civilians murdered and entire cities bombed. Missiles targeting children fleeing. Mothers with newborn babies hiding in cellars, seeking safety from the shelling.

During my visit to the Korczowa refugee reception centre in Poland, I was told about the Russian atrocities; about the mass graves, torture, attacks on children at a railway station, and about sexual abuse.

This invasion shows how far Russia is prepared to go. Russia's war has created a new and more dangerous reality for Europe and Sweden. It is in our security interest that Russia's war does not result in political gains, for reasons including preventing further aggression in the future.

At the same time, a number of global challenges we faced before Russia's invasion of Ukraine still need to be tackled: the climate crisis, growing geopolitical competition, the threat of famine, democratic backsliding and repeated human rights abuses.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Sweden's political, humanitarian, economic and military support to Ukraine is of historic proportions. Not since Stalin's war against Finland in 1939 has Sweden provided weapons during an ongoing conflict in our neighbourhood.

Last week, the Government presented its fourth support package to Ukraine amounting to SEK 1 billion. Ukraine's legal right to self-defence is, in practice, the defence of the territory of all countries. And that includes Sweden.

The EU sanctions were adopted unanimously and at an unprecedented speed and scale. The EU's sixth sanctions package, which our Government has been pushing for, means that 90 per cent of Russian oil imports to the EU will be phased out by the end of the year. Transatlantic cooperation has been crucial regarding support to Ukraine and the sanctions adopted against Russia.

Continued support to Ukraine and continued sanctions against Russia and Belarus are our most important contributions to bringing an end to this ruthless war.

Sweden's national defence capabilities will continue to be strengthened. We will reach two per cent of GDP as soon as practicable and by 2028 at the latest. The re-establishment of regiments, reinforcements on Gotland, reactivation of national military service, defence equipment procurements, and enhanced cyber defence and intelligence capabilities have been necessary. The significant deterioration of the security environment has also highlighted the importance of continuing to deepen Sweden's defence and security cooperation. This will strengthen Sweden's security both now and in the future.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

On 13 May, the Government presented a security policy report after two months of deliberations involving all the parties of the Riksdag. It is a strength for Sweden that all parties have supported the report's analysis sections, especially on Russia.

Russia's war of aggression has led to a fundamental deterioration of the security environment in our neighbourhood. NATO's response to the war has also brought to the fore that Article 5 of the NATO treaty, the collective defence clause, applies to NATO members only.

It is the Government's assessment that the best way for Sweden to protect its security is for Sweden to join NATO. With Sweden and Finland as NATO members, the security of all NATO countries would be strengthened.

As a member of NATO, Sweden would commit to the Washington Treaty in its entirety, including NATO doctrines. NATO membership may also change the conditions for the export of defence equipment in our national regulatory framework.

We have taken the step to apply for NATO membership hand in hand with Finland, our closest partner. The crisis we are now experiencing has shown how close our two countries are and how interdependent our security is.

Consensus within NATO is required to proceed with Sweden and Finland's applications. Our applications have received broad support from NATO members.

Sweden will contribute to the security of NATO as a whole, including Turkey, in the spirit of solidarity. Our ambition is to make constructive progress on the issues that Turkey has raised.

Sweden condemns terrorism in the strongest possible terms. A new and tougher Terrorist Offences Act enters into force on 1 July and the Government is preparing further tightening of terrorist legislation.

There should be no doubt that Sweden will continue to stand firm alongside other like-minded countries in the fight against terrorism.

Our vulnerability to external threats and attempts to influence will increase until the Accession Agreement enters into force.

In response to this uncertainty, several NATO countries – including the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Norway and Denmark – have offered the Swedish Government clear assurances of support during the application period. The EU's mutual defence clause, Article 42.7, also plays a significant role in Sweden's security.

The bilateral declaration of solidarity signed by the Prime Minister of Sweden and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom also aims to enhance security in northern Europe.

Sweden's security policy is based on cooperation with NATO, the EU, the UN and through the strong transatlantic link.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Sweden will not lose its global voice if it joins NATO. We have a long history of standing up for international law, solidarity, disarmament, democracy and gender equality. This will be our future too.

We will continue to promote greater respect for human rights, a rules-based world order and global security, with mediation as a tool and against terrorism.

This is also part of building a safer and more secure Sweden. Diplomacy will remain our first line of defence and national defence capabilities are of fundamental importance.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

We have a number of security policy tools we can use to respond to the deteriorating security situation in Europe. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is one of them.

When Sweden chaired the OSCE last year, we saw accelerating negative developments in Russia and Belarus regarding their willingness to live up to fundamental commitments.

We worked to strengthen the OSCE's role as a platform for dialogue and accountability. One result of this was the Ministerial Council meeting in Stockholm, where 48 foreign ministers held political discussions and made decisions. Sweden will continue to assist the OSCE as part of the Troika until the end of 2022.

The conditions for dialogue and conflict resolution have changed profoundly since 24 February, but the need for dialogue remains. And the OSCE is an important forum for this when circumstances allow.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

We are in the midst of an accelerating climate and environmental crisis. Sweden will lead the climate transition. But the global level of ambition is far from sufficient. Climate change and environmental degradation contribute to increased tensions and conflicts. The climate is of critical importance to our security. We must take climate-related security threats extremely seriously and have therefore appointed an ambassador for climate and security.

Intensive negotiations are currently under way in the EU on the

comprehensive package of legislative proposals called 'Fit for 55'. In this context, the Government is pushing for ambitious solutions to reduce the EU's net emissions by at least 55 per cent by 2030 in comparison with 1990 levels.

Last week, Sweden hosted Stockholm+50, the international UN meeting on the environment, climate change and sustainable development. The meeting highlighted concrete solutions and financing models to speed up adaptation and transition, including in developing countries. Politicians from all around the world agreed to move from words to action.

During our term as Chair, the OSCE took a landmark decision concerning the challenges posed by climate change. The OSCE now has a mandate to work on this crucial security issue. Sweden is also helping to strengthen the OSCE Secretariat to enable a greater focus on these issues.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

The EU is Sweden's most important foreign and security policy arena. In uncertain times, the Member States stand stronger together. We will continue to build increasingly closer cooperation within the EU and with our Nordic and Baltic neighbours. Efforts to realise the vision of the Nordic region as the world's most sustainable and integrated region continue.

Next year, Sweden will hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the third time, and at a time of fundamental challenges to Europe's security.

As the Minister for EU Affairs outlined for this chamber, our agenda is ambitious. The Government wants to see an EU that can assume greater responsibility for its own security. Work on the Strategic Compass will continue with the aim of deepening security and defence cooperation. At the same time, it is important for the EU to deepen its cooperation with strategic partners outside the EU and that the transatlantic link be safeguarded.

We need to continue to deal with the consequences of the war, deepen our support to Ukraine and work to gradually integrate Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia into the EU. The EU's ability to manage its own neighbourhood is critical to its credibility as a global actor.

The EU's fundamental values must also be upheld. Europe is currently experiencing the greatest refugee crisis since the Second World War. This

situation demonstrates how important it is that EU Member States act with solidarity and shared responsibility for refugees.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Feminist foreign policy is needed. Sweden was first. And it is gratifying that a growing number of countries are now following our lead – most recently Germany, Chile and the Netherlands which, like Canada, France, Luxembourg, Spain and Mexico, are also pursuing feminist foreign policy.

Our efforts must be intensified, not least given the backlash against gender equality that we have seen in the wake of the pandemic. Violence against women and girls has increased all over the world.

The pandemic, the climate crisis and the shrinking democratic space are putting us at risk of a global gender equality recession. Feminist foreign policy is needed now more than ever.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

For the fifth consecutive year, we are seeing more countries moving in an authoritarian direction than in a democratic direction. Not only is Russia's aggression against Ukraine a flagrant violation of international law, it is also a clear example of an authoritarian state's attack on a democratic state.

The Government's Drive for Democracy therefore continues with full force. More attention must be paid to the lack of democracy and respect for human rights in the world of work globally.

This year, Sweden holds the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, where we will continue to promote Holocaust remembrance and do our utmost to combat antisemitism and antigypsyism.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

The nuclear threat is an increasingly worrying reality. Sweden will remain a strong voice for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control even as a future NATO member. The common goal is a world free of nuclear weapons.

Within the Stockholm Initiative, Sweden and 15 other countries have proposed 22 concrete and constructive steps for nuclear disarmament and a package of measures to reduce the risk of nuclear weapons use – an area of growing importance.

An increasing number of countries back our proposals. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has made our work more difficult, but all the more important.

We have also directly appealed to the five nuclear-weapons states. A number of the initiative's proposals for steps forward have been accepted. In a joint statement in January, the five affirmed that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought". Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons is unacceptable and in glaring contrast to this statement.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Humanitarian needs in the world are increasing dramatically. The pandemic has pushed more than 100 million people back into extreme poverty. Inequality and global gaps are growing.

More than 300 million people need humanitarian aid to survive. Almost 50 million women, men and children are on the verge of starvation. Roughly 100 million people have now been forcibly displaced.

Sweden's development assistance policy is world-leading in terms of both scale and quality. Setting aside funds for people in need of protection in Sweden due to war on our continent does not change this. Sweden's development assistance will continue to be equivalent to one per cent of our gross national income.

Sweden will step up its climate and environmental action. The target of doubling climate aid remains unchanged.

When anti-democratic forces gain ground, Sweden's development assistance will, with unwavering ambition, remain a counterweight. More democratic societies make the world a better place – and increase security in Sweden.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Sweden's foreign policy continues to be global, multilateral and based on international law. The European security order that we defend rests on the United Nations Charter and its principles.

This is also part of building security with others. A solidary world view goes hand in hand with the understanding that Sweden's security is furthered by a more secure and prosperous world.

Sweden continues to invest politically and financially in the multilateral

system with the UN at the core. This means support for peacebuilding and conciliation, deep commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, gender equality and broad environmental and climate action.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Russia's aggression also cast the world into a deep food crisis that is hitting those who were already most vulnerable the hardest. Sweden is part of the global response to alleviate its effects. We are a large donor to the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which together save lives and improve livelihoods.

Russia must immediately cease blocking Ukrainian grain exports. This blockade is a major cause of the rising global food prices.

The EU is accelerating its initiatives for global food security. Free trade must be protected, and the root causes of hunger and starvation must be addressed. Sweden's efforts for sustainable development and peacebuilding are also critical in this context.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

The COVID-19 pandemic has hindered implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Some of the global progress achieved in recent years, such as improvements in maternal and child health and gender equality, has been undone.

Global hunger and extreme poverty are on the rise for the first time in 20 years. The 2030 Agenda is our roadmap for reversing this trend.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

Global challenges require global solutions. The pandemic, the climate transition and harsh sanctions against Russia require more trade, sustainable value chains, new sources of key raw materials, new output markets and strategic partnerships.

It is more important than ever to stand up for free, fair and sustainable trade and its significance for welfare in Sweden and Europe. This is needed at the same time as historically severe sanctions are imposed on Russia.

EU trade agreements with partners around the globe enable us to diversify trade and strengthen resilience ahead of future crises. The multilateral trade system, based on the World Trade Organization, is fundamental to growth

and welfare.

Innovation capacity and expertise is prevalent throughout Sweden, building the future's sustainable goods and services for the global market. By giving the green transition an export boost, we contribute to reducing climate impact globally. We also create the jobs of the future here in Sweden – thereby strengthening Sweden and Europe's competitiveness.

Mr/Madam Speaker,

A war is raging in Europe, and many feel a deep sense of global gloom. Yet, I want to say this: our joint efforts are important.

It may feel like an endless undertaking, but there is hope: through hard work and a clear direction, change is possible. We must not lose hope for peace and a better future. Or as a 14-year-old Ukrainian girl, Daria Chebotariova, wrote in a poem:

“We still believe in a happy future,
Where we will live in harmony and peace.
We'll not forget those who have fallen,
That's why we need to hurry up.”

Published 10 June 2022



Government Offices of Sweden

Remarks by Minister for International Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs Matilda Ernkrans, at the Joint Launch of the Humanitarian Flash Appeal and the Regional Refugee Response Plan for Ukraine

1 March 2022. As delivered.

Secretary-General, Excellencies, Colleagues,

Sweden condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian aggression and invasion of a country in the heart of Europe. The invasion of Ukraine is a flagrant violation of international law and in complete contradiction of the UN Charter. Russia bears full responsibility.

Through your appeals, we start to see the grave humanitarian consequences. It is indeed shocking to hear that up to 18 million people may need humanitarian assistance.

But we all heard the numbers – each representing individuals who are forced to flee, whose lives are being shattered, whose safety is under threat. We must focus on how we can demonstrate our solidarity and alleviate human suffering.

Sweden is ready to substantially increase its response. We welcome today's launch of the flash appeal and the refugee response plan.

Last night, the Government decided to allocate an additional 53 million US dollars to humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. This is in addition to 13 million US dollars already allocated last week. We are ready to disburse this funding urgently.

These contributions are also in addition to our significant un-earmarked funding to all UN agencies operating in Ukraine, as well as to the Central Emergency Response Fund, CERF. This has allowed the UN and ICRC to conduct contingency planning, to respond rapidly and to scale up without waiting for appeals, responses and disbursements.

As we respond to support these appeals, we must not forget about other humanitarian crises in the world. Our support to the people of Ukraine must not take place at the expense of assisting people in Yemen, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. These are exceptional times that require exceptional decisions.

In a situation such as this, it is of utmost importance to respect international humanitarian law, to protect civilians and civilian objects and to protect essential civilian infrastructure. Rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access must be ensured.

I would like to express our deepest appreciation for all brave humanitarian workers who are working tirelessly to assist those who have been forced to flee.

The time to assist the people of Ukraine in a time of dire needs is now. I hope that everyone will respond generously to the appeals that you have just launched.

Thank you.

Published 03 March 2022



Statement of Foreign Policy

On 16 February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Ann Linde presented the 2022 Statement of Foreign Policy in the Riksdag. Check against delivery.

Mr Speaker,

Our security situation is serious. Russia's increasingly confrontational rhetoric and military activities, both visible and covert, are unacceptable. The heightened Russian military presence at Ukraine's borders and Russian demands for security guarantees threaten the core of the European security order.

The European security order is not negotiable. Standing up for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is essential for the security of Europe as a whole.

Ukraine, like Sweden, has the right to make its own security policy choices. It is not Russia's place to dictate these through threats and violence. The rules of international law on state sovereignty and political independence are part of the European security order.

The way forward in terms of reducing tensions is continued dialogue and diplomacy, but at the same time we must prepare for the possibility of Russia choosing a different path.

Mr Speaker,

The right to make our own security policy choices is central to our security. The Government does not intend to apply for NATO membership. Our security policy remains firmly in place. Our non-participation in military alliances serves us well and contributes to stability and security in northern Europe.

We combine this with a defence policy that rests on two pillars: strengthened national capability and deepened international defence cooperation. Our

cooperation with Finland has a special status in this. Since 2014 we have built up a functioning defence and security network, and have concluded more than 30 agreements and around 20 cooperation agreements, not least with our Nordic and Baltic neighbours. We are building up our military capability both bilaterally and with NATO. And we are building up credible national defence capability through the largest investment in Swedish defence since the 1950s.

Sweden will not remain passive if another EU Member State or Nordic country suffers a disaster or an attack. We expect these countries to act in the same way if Sweden is affected. An armed attack against Sweden cannot be ruled out. We must therefore be able to both give and receive support, civilian as well as military. But we alone decide with whom we cooperate and in what forms – in times of peace, crisis and war.

Sweden's foreign and security policy builds on cohesion in the EU and increased cooperation on a broad front: in the Nordic region, in the Baltic Sea region, through the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and through deepened partnership with NATO. The UN and international law remain cornerstones of Swedish foreign policy. A strong transatlantic link is vital for Europe's security.

Mr Speaker,

We have a number of security policy tools with which to address the deteriorating security situation in Europe. The OSCE is one important tool. Sweden recently concluded its term as Chair of the OSCE, during which we made an impact that will endure.

We strengthened the platform for dialogue. The need for dialogue is greater now than at any time since the end of the Cold War. This was exemplified during the Council of Ministers in Stockholm, where some 50 foreign ministers held important political discussions and made decisions.

We also strengthened the platform for conflict resolution. As Chair, we focused on conflict resolution in Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia and the South Caucasus.

Meetings with civil society are always a priority, and Sweden's term as OSCE Chair was no exception. In Russia, the human rights situation has progressively deteriorated. An increasingly repressive society has made it impossible for human rights defenders to carry out their important work. The

closure of the human rights group Memorial is one of many alarming examples of this.

In Belarus, we have seen how the regime has cynically exploited migrants for political objectives. Belarus must release all political prisoners and hold democratic elections.

As Chair, Sweden also worked to ensure that Russia's aggression against Ukraine and Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea have remained high on the OSCE agenda. Eight years will have soon passed since the situation arose, and more than 14 000 people have lost their lives. But the passing of time does not make these violations of international law more acceptable. We now carry this work forward as a member of the OSCE Troika.

Mr Speaker,

We are living in the midst of an accelerating climate and environmental crisis. Sweden will take the lead in the climate transition. But the global level of ambition is far from adequate. Climate change and environmental degradation contribute to increased tensions and conflicts. The climate is of critical importance to our security. We must take climate-related security threats extremely seriously.

During our term as Chair, the OSCE took a decision to address the challenges brought about by climate change. Thanks to Sweden's catalytic role, the OSCE now has a mandate to take preventive action against the effects of climate change on security in the region.

We will appoint an ambassador for climate and security. We will incorporate new expertise into our international crisis management operations, peacebuilding, international development cooperation and climate diplomacy. We will continue to strengthen the Swedish-initiated UN mechanism for climate and security. In just a few years, this mechanism has become a mainstay in countries and regions affected by climate-related conflicts.

In June, Sweden will host Stockholm+50, an international UN meeting aimed at advancing an equitable and global green transition.

Mr Speaker,

The COVID-19 pandemic has hindered implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Some of the global progress that was achieved in recent years, such as

improvements in maternal and child health and gender equality, has been undone. Global hunger and extreme poverty are on the rise for the first time in 20 years.

The 2030 Agenda is our roadmap for reversing this trend.

Mr Speaker,

The need for a better global health system and the realisation that the pandemic's consequences have hit women and children the hardest are painful lessons.

The Government pursued the issue of more equitable COVID-19 vaccine distribution from an early stage. The COVAX global vaccine initiative has now delivered 1 billion vaccine doses to 144 countries around the world. Sweden is the world's largest per capita donor to COVAX and the fifth largest donor overall.

Efforts to strengthen global health security, not least efforts to combat antibiotic resistance and to develop a robust new global pandemic treaty, are a priority. The Government will therefore appoint an ambassador at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to work on global health security.

Mr Speaker,

The EU is Sweden's most important foreign and security policy arena. In uncertain times, the Member States stand stronger together. We will continue to strengthen our close ties with our partners within the EU and with our Nordic and Baltic neighbours. Efforts to realise the vision of the Nordic region as the world's most sustainable, integrated and digitally advanced region will be intensified.

The Government wants to see a strong EU that can take greater responsibility for its own security, but we also stress that this is not incompatible with openness to developing partnerships or a strong transatlantic link.

Next year, Sweden will hold the Presidency of the Council of the EU for the third time. The Minister for EU Affairs recently outlined how work on the Government's priorities will be pursued at EU level. It is an ambitious agenda.

The situation of refugees and migrants demands our continued attention. The

EU must establish a common asylum system that provides legal certainty and is humane and sustainable, in which everyone takes their share of responsibility.

We continue to maintain close cooperation with the United Kingdom, not least on security and defence policy, trade, and education and research.

The United States is once again a constructive partner in the global arena. This is encouraging for continued and enhanced cooperation, not least in the areas of climate change, democracy and gender equality. Cooperation with the US is central to security and defence policy, trade and technology.

Mr Speaker,

Feminist foreign policy continues to grow. Sweden was first. And it is gratifying that Germany is now following that lead, like Canada, France, Luxembourg, Spain and Mexico, who are also pursuing feminist foreign policies.

Our efforts must be intensified, not least given the backlash against gender equality that we have seen in the wake of the pandemic. Violence against women and girls has increased all over the world. The pandemic, the climate crisis and shrinking democratic space are putting us at risk of a global gender equality recession. Feminist foreign policy is needed more than ever.

In 2022, we will produce a new national action plan for women, peace and security, and we will also produce a new global strategy for gender equality in aid. Sweden is leading the action for women's economic empowerment within the UN Generation Equality Forum.

Mr Speaker,

For the fifth consecutive year, we are seeing more countries moving in an authoritarian direction than in a democratic direction. Military coups in Myanmar, Sudan, Mali and Burkina Faso, the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, a deterioration in the situation in Belarus and the conflict in Ethiopia are dramatic examples of democratic backsliding.

At the Summit for Democracy hosted by US President Joe Biden, Sweden was an active partner in several activities in which both the Prime Minister and I took part. Sweden's message was that the rise of right-wing populism and nationalism undermines democracy, and that human rights, the rule of law and women's political and economic participation are crucial to

democracy. LGBTIQ people's rights must be fully respected internationally.

This year, Sweden holds the Presidency of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, where we will continue to promote Holocaust remembrance and do our utmost to combat antisemitism and antigypsyism.

More attention must be directed at the lack of democracy and human rights in working life globally. Workers are harassed, lose their jobs and are even killed for their trade union activities. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs will continue its efforts in these areas, including within the Global Deal.

Mr Speaker,

The nuclear threat is a reality, and we must continue our disarmament efforts. The aim is a world free of nuclear weapons. Within the framework of the Stockholm Initiative, we have proposed 22 specific steps that provide a constructive and pragmatic approach to nuclear disarmament. An increasing number of countries now back Sweden's proposals.

We have actively addressed the five nuclear-weapon states. Gratifyingly, the Stockholm Initiative's message on the need for progress has been heard. On 3 January, the five affirmed in a joint statement that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought".

Mr Speaker,

Humanitarian needs in the world are increasing dramatically. Inequality is growing. Almost 275 million people need humanitarian aid to survive. Some 45 million women, men and children in 43 countries are on the verge of famine.

Sweden's aid policy will maintain a high level of ambition in terms of both scale and quality. Sweden's official development assistance will continue to be equivalent to one per cent of gross national income. And it will be used to reduce poverty and injustice around the world. It is a matter of solidarity – and also of the conviction that a better world makes for a more secure Sweden.

Sweden will step up its efforts to prevent climate change and its effects on food security and the environment, and promote sustainable living conditions. In 2022, we will increase climate aid by a further SEK 1 billion.

When anti-democratic forces gain ground, Sweden's aid will, with

unwavering ambition, remain a counterweight. More democratic societies make the world a better place – and increase security in Sweden.

Mr Speaker,

My visit to Israel was the first by a Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs in ten years. It is important that the Government has improved our relations with Israel. At the same time, we continue to recognise Palestine. Sweden continues to act for a two-state solution based on international law.

Terrorist groups have dramatically increased their activities in Mali. It is unacceptable that the Malian junta has postponed democratic elections and engaged in cooperation with Russian mercenaries. Sweden's military and civilian engagement in Mali aims to promote security, counteract terrorism and build sustainable development with respect for human rights.

The war in Yemen is now in its eighth year. It is one of the world's greatest humanitarian disasters. Sweden will continue to emphasise the need for peace talks in the UN. The inclusion of women in these talks is a prerequisite for a lasting peace.

Syria is a deeply ravaged country. The conflict is in its twelfth year. Millions of people are living in acute humanitarian need. Sweden is and will remain one of the largest humanitarian donors.

The conflict and humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia undermine stability throughout the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia is heading towards famine. Thousands have been killed in the conflict, including 24 UN aid workers. We will continue to work through the EU and the UN for an immediate ceasefire.

Mr Speaker,

As the Prime Minister has said: "We will leave no stone unturned in breaking segregation and cracking down on gangs." The underlying criminal structures are almost always transnational. The digital transformation of our societies brings an increase in international cybercrime. Shootings and explosions, often using smuggled weapons, remain a considerable security challenge. Far too often, the young men involved are tools used by more heavyweight international criminal actors.

Eighteen months ago, I appointed a special envoy on organised crime to identify how the Swedish Foreign Service can best support law enforcement authorities. A number of embassies have received special assignments to

work to combat organised crime. In the next stage, several embassies will be equipped to contribute more effectively to crime prevention. Cooperation between law enforcement authorities and embassies will be strengthened.

Mr Speaker,

We must stand up for free trade, particularly at a time when the winds of protectionism are blowing stronger. The multilateral trade system, based on the World Trade Organization, is fundamental to growth and welfare. A threat to the rules-based trade system is a threat to Sweden's economy and our trade relations. While cooperation is important, not least in trade, we will take action against any security-threatening activity directed at Sweden and Swedish companies.

Sweden and the EU need to work even more closely with likeminded partners to safeguard and develop global trade, focusing on the green transition to a fossil-free society. Our trade policy will contribute to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

Through Sweden's participation in Expo 2020, we are showcasing how Swedish solutions enable a transition in a green and sustainable direction.

China's international significance also affects Sweden and Swedish interests, not least in trade. We engage in a frank and open dialogue with China in which human rights and freedom of expression are key. Sweden and the EU see global challenges that we can only address together with China – such as climate change, health and a functioning and fair free trade order.

Mr Speaker,

Last year, Sweden evacuated around 2 000 people from Afghanistan. In August, the situation at Kabul airport was at times chaotic and very difficult. Swedish Armed Forces personnel were just seconds away when a bomb exploded close to the airport.

On behalf of the Government, I would like to reiterate our thanks to everyone in the Swedish Foreign Service, government agencies and municipalities who worked day and night on the evacuations. I am proud of the collective operation that Sweden implemented.

Despite the grave sense of global darkness that many are undoubtedly feeling right now, and although the need for our joint efforts may seem never-ending, I would like to conclude by saying that there is hope that,

through hard work and clear lines, change is possible. Or as Archbishop Desmond Tutu said: “Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.”

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