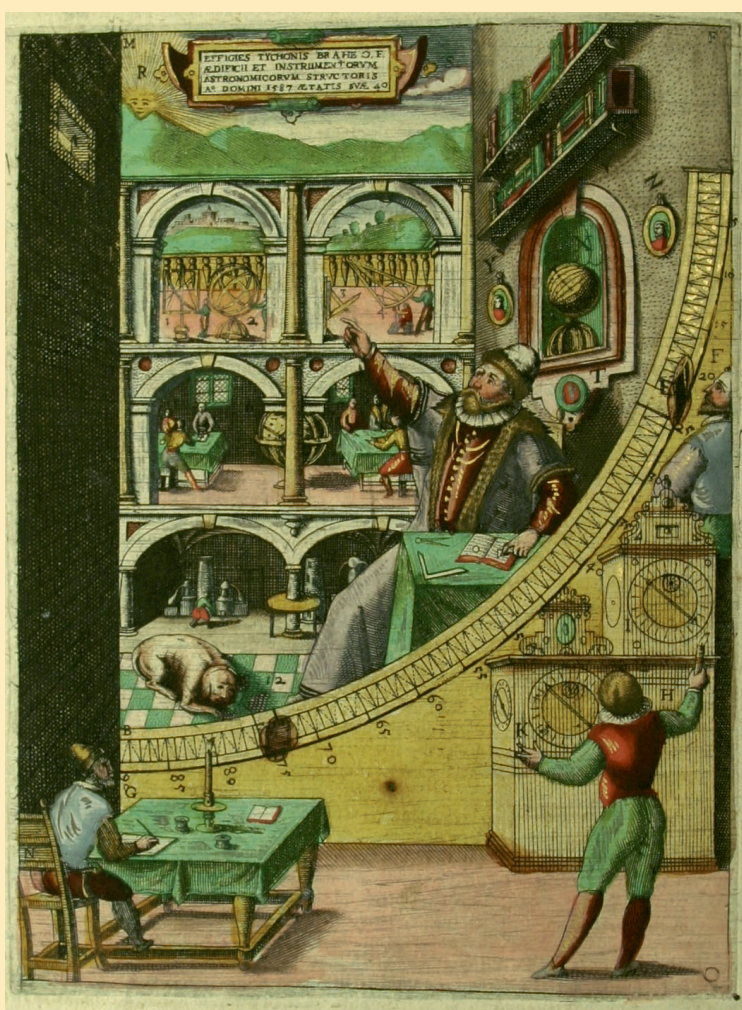


# Thinking about the world

*Report from the Committee on Foreign and Security Policy Resources*

The global upheavals of recent decades have implied changed conditions for foreign and security policies. In Sweden we produce too little of relevant and forward-looking analysis of the surrounding world and policy-oriented studies. This report seeks to identify problems and obstacles and suggests how these obstacles can be eliminated or diminished. It identifies opportunities and makes proposals on how to create environments and incentives for those who should have the opportunity to implement the ideas in this report.



Analyzing the surrounding world has at all times fascinated and occupied people. In the picture we see Tycho Brahe at work in his foundation Uraniborg on the island Ven. Tycho Brahe lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and contributed, along with other prominent scientists such as Copernicus, Kepler and Galilei, to shaping a new conception of the world.



REGERINGSKANSLIET

Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden

## **Committee on Foreign and Security Policy Resources**

**Summary of its report “Thinking about the world”, “Tänka om världen” Ds:2004:46, as presented to the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ms. Laila Freivalds October 27, 2004**

### **Introduction**

We live in a time of new opportunities, new challenges and new threats. For Sweden, as well as for other countries, the great global upheavals of recent decades have entailed changed conditions for foreign and security policy.

This report does not present a new view of the world, a new view of our surroundings. This was not its assignment. But we know and everyone we have spoken to knows that we now live in a world in which an increasing number of phenomena, sometimes geographically far from our everyday world, affect our lives and our view of the future. Some people call this globalisation, others use different terms. It concerns us all.

Our assignment has consisted of proposing ways in which to strengthen the capacity for policy intelligence and research in Sweden within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' sphere of activity. The purpose of the work was to meet the need of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the rest of the Government Offices for more and better background material as well as to take other stakeholders' needs into account. Other stakeholders may include the Riksdag (Parliament), government agencies, organisations, the business sector, academia and the interested general public.

### **Problems and points of departure**

The inquiry has based its work on a number of hypotheses:

- We produce too few relevant, forward-looking policy intelligence and policy-oriented studies in Sweden. What we do produce is often obscure for decision-makers, opinion formers and other interested parties. It is too narrow in content and often difficult to penetrate/unfamiliar or, for reasons of format, is inaccessible to decision-makers and a wider circle of stakeholders.
- The gap between the academic environment and the practical world is too great. On the one hand, there are often no systems in place for dialogue about or transmission of the material, and on the other, existing opportunities for exchange are not fully exploited.
- The central government agency culture is marked by too much compartmentalisation.
- There is far too limited circulation of people between the various working environments. This has a negative effect on creativity and hence on the ability to produce relevant and sufficient material.
- A change is needed and is possible. It will take time and will require patience.

Practically all the people interviewed agree with the inquiry's hypotheses and consider it important that measures are taken to bring about a change. The objectives of the inquiry were felt to be important. The first four hypotheses are also felt to be linked.

### **Areas to analyze**

One of the tasks of the inquiry has been to try to identify the policy areas in which needs are greatest and to define these needs. Chapter 1 discusses this.

For Sweden, as well as for other countries, the global upheavals of recent decades have entailed changed conditions for foreign and security policy. They have brought new opportunities and new threats. What is unique in our time is the lack of boundaries.

In the talks held by the inquiry, a wide range of themes and issues that need further elucidation have emerged. In view of this, we have identified five policy areas where the need for knowledge seems to be particularly great at present, and where more Swedish research and analysis is desirable. They are of varying nature, overlap with each other and are sometimes both policy issues and instruments.

1. Many of the greatest challenges of our time are related to the security of both people and states. Security is the area in which most people we spoke to see a need for more research and analysis. Practically everyone also agrees that there should be some change of focus.
2. The great visions of a Europe of peace are a unifying force, but are not sufficient to create a feeling of European identity. There needs to be greater clarity about what Sweden wishes to achieve in the EU and using the EU as an instrument for change.
3. The objectives and contents of the new policy for global development are clear, but its realisation raises many issues concerning their implementation and so concerning the analysis that must be linked to this process.
4. The capacity for research and analysis in Sweden in the field of migration is very limited, particularly regarding long-term trends and interrelated factors.
5. Globalisation affects concrete financial policy levers, international regulatory frameworks, development trends and lines of action. How is globalisation to be balanced by global cooperation that accords central importance to the welfare and security of human beings?

Chapter 2 gives **an international perspective** to the inquiry's assignment. What do other countries do? The USA is the promised land of the think-tank and the number of policy-forming institutes and think-tanks in Europe is growing.

Chapter 3 describes experiences from **universities and other higher education institutions**. The chancellors and researchers that the inquiry team has met have been positive towards reducing the distance between those in the field and researchers. Research improves if researchers can draw on experience from real life. There is frustration at the fact that more extensive use is not made of the research produced at universities.

Chapter 4 contains an overview of **the main actors in Swedish foreign and security policy**. As well as examining the inquiry's hypotheses, it describes the problem of client competence and the need for new forms for cooperation.

## Proposals

Chapters 5 and 6 contain the inquiry's various proposals.

Chapter 5 concerns on the one hand, the drafting of policy and on the other, proposals regarding the subject areas previously mentioned.

In the first category, the following proposals are presented, which **concern the Government Offices**:

- Prioritised issues for research should more often be collectively defined by the Government Offices.
- Policy levers should be used more actively. Commissions should be more clearly formulated.
- A foreign and security policy council should be established, but with varying participants.
- Time and opportunities for reflection must be integrated into daily work.
- Closer cooperation is required between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and other relevant ministries on the focus needed for security policy research and analysis and procedures for addressing this need. Overall responsibility for analysis should better reflect today's security policy.

In the second category, regarding **subject areas**, the following proposals are presented:

- The EU should allocate funds, from its research budget for example, to actively encourage European think-tanks and institutes focusing on different policy areas.
- Sweden should take a general initiative to develop Sweden's capacity for research and analysis on coherence and development issues.
- An initiative to develop research and analysis capacity to be able to predict future migration patterns more effectively.
- The capacity for research and analysis on economic internationalisation and the international institutions needs to be strengthened.

Chapter 6 discusses proposals for **organisation and working methods**. The concrete proposals for change are concentrated to three concepts: the gap (between academia and those in the field), mobility and working methods.

### 1. On the **gap between academics and those in the field**:

- Strengthen information exchange, create a functioning clearing-house.
- Set up and develop an annual Researchers Forum.

### 2. On **mobility between different working environments**

- Review qualifications assessment at university and higher education institutions, taking into account the third task set out in the Higher Education Act.
- The Ministry for Foreign Affairs should initiate and find appropriate forms for a coordinated exchange programme with interested universities.
- As part of its modernisation process, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs should review its principles for qualifications assessment.
- The Ministry for Foreign Affairs/Government Offices should consider participation in a doctoral programme.

3. On **working methods**, it is proposed that:

- Initiatives be taken to promote policy-forming institutes and other think-tank institutions in foreign and security policy.
- The activities of these institutes should target those working in the field.
- Universities and higher education institutions should develop an institutional culture as part of the third task set out in the Higher Education Act.
- Sweden should advance the idea of an EU-oriented institute development.
- A Nordic or Nordic-Baltic alternative could be considered.
- Institutes closely associated with political parties should be given support for their own policy intelligence.
- Several different financiers should be encouraged to take part in funding, preferably through co-financing.
- The commissioning body should use procurement procedures. Contracts could include several of the inquiry's proposals.
- Develop a joint bank of specialist skills to assist clients.
- Assessments and evaluations should be dealt with both by academics and those working in the field.
- It is important to develop a critical mass in institutes to achieve ambitious results. Be selective.

The committee does not believe that creativity and the will to think in a new and different way can be achieved simply by a decision. What an inquiry of this type can do is to identify obstacles and problems, suggest how these can be eliminated or reduced and present proposals for how an environment and incentives can be created for those given the opportunity to realise ideas. **The impetus and will to act must come from the different actors discussed by the committee.** Since the inquiry concerns several different environments, it is, of course, impossible for all the proposals to apply to every single situation.

To achieve changes in what can be termed a culture primarily requires a will to think innovatively and differently, to be open to other ways of reasoning about methods and working organisation.

In its work, the committee **has met with a considerably greater degree of willingness to discuss new ideas and approaches than it had expected.** Throughout Swedish society, in politics, the business sector and in public administration, there is an awareness that the new situation requires partially different knowledge and analysis. At universities and higher education institutions as well as popular movements, there is a willingness to widen perspectives and to take more systematic responsibility for the different problems and opportunities offered by these developments.

## **Committee's organisation**

Ambassador Bengt Säve-Söderbergh has chaired the committee assisted by i.a. Senior Adviser Monica Andersson.

The Committee has worked with a reference group, recruited within the Government Offices and with good knowledge of both the subject area and procedural issues. The group includes:

Ambassador Sven-Olof Petersson; Sweden's EU Delegation in Brussels; Director Anna Brandt, Africa Department, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Director Gunilla Törnqvist, Global Development, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Ambassador Mia Horn af Rantzien, International Trade Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Director Anders Rönquist, International Law, Human Rights and Treaty Law, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Ambassador Lars-Erik Wingren, Policy Analysis Office, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Administrative Officer Elinor Hammarskjöld, European Security Policy, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Director Jan Knutsson, Global Security, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; Director Lars-Göran Larsson, Planning Staff Secretariat for Administrative Development, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; and Director Mariann Samuelsson from the Ministry of Education and Science.